

# The Cloth Place

Fitzroy Street, Cambridge



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Big Wide Talk will run a Theatre of Learning, 'The Cloth Place', from 15th June - 3rd July 2009 in the old Habitat building: 17 Fitzroy Street, Cambridge, CB1 1ER, with the kind assistance of Prudential, owners of The Grafton Centre.

The Cloth Place will take up three floors of this Grade II listed building. The idea is to give the children a familiar context, i.e. what they might find in a Cloth Village, to explore in their own way.

The ground floor of the building will accommodate: the reception area, where children and adults will be greeted by Big Wide Talk guides and given their maps; the faith place, including a cloth sarcophagus with the cloth bones of an entire skeleton; the launderette; the cloth farmyard, including 2 potting sheds with wellies and compost; wheelbarrows; a chicken coop, a central 'island' of tree ferns and cloth hedges, an animal sanctuary and a host of cloth animals including two itinerant giraffes. There will be seating around the perimeter and at strategic points for parent and practitioner observation.

The first floor will house the cloth kitchen, complete with fridge, dishwasher, kitchen units and sink, microwave, serving trolleys and juicing station; the cloth cafe; the beauty parlour; the milliners and ladies and gents outfitters; the butcher's counter; the fishmongers; the bakery; the florist and dry goods stall; the fruit and veg market and the Letter Shop, all with an abundance of real and cloth objects. There will be an electronic checkout, scales, baskets and shopping trolleys.

The second floor will provide our discussion and documentation centre, complete with Mobile Edit Suite and seating area.

Filming is an important element of our work and, with suitable permissions, we will film in The Cloth Place. All adults will be invited to view footage relevant to their children at our documentation centre using our Mobile Edit Suite, within two hours of their child having attended. We intend to make a film as the final document for this work, incorporating the dialogue between children and adults and the way this vital interaction shapes the future. The film will focus on some of the social constructions, fairness; justice; collaboration, sharing and so on, which we know the children are actively engaged in.



The Cloth Cafe



Big Wide Talk is a strictly not for profit organisation, which reaches out to and speaks with children, parents and practitioners where they live and work, strategically connecting them to government.

Big Wide Talk is dedicated to documenting debate about children's lives regardless of race, religion, politics or gender and to raising awareness about needs and the ways in which they can be addressed.

Above: The Cloth Farmyard; right: the Animal Sanctuary



We are inviting schools, nurseries and other settings as well as community groups and individual households to take part. However, attending the Cloth Place itself is only part of the offer. We very much want to engage parents and practitioners in conversation about this opportunity for learning outside the classroom. To this end, we will run: Cloth Workshops, where parents can get together to learn how to make cloth leeks, cauliflowers, cakes, oranges, fried eggs, and lots more; editing sessions with our Mobile Edit Suite, and reflective sessions, which will contribute to the creation of research stories. Sessions should all be booked in advance.

We think that the venue will easily accommodate 50 children but there is room for up to 60. There will be four two-hour sessions available per day. These will be:

- 09.00 - 11.00
- 11.30 - 13.30
- 14.00 - 16.00
- 16.30 - 18.30

To book, please email us on [events@bigwidetalk.org](mailto:events@bigwidetalk.org), or call **01223 364727**.

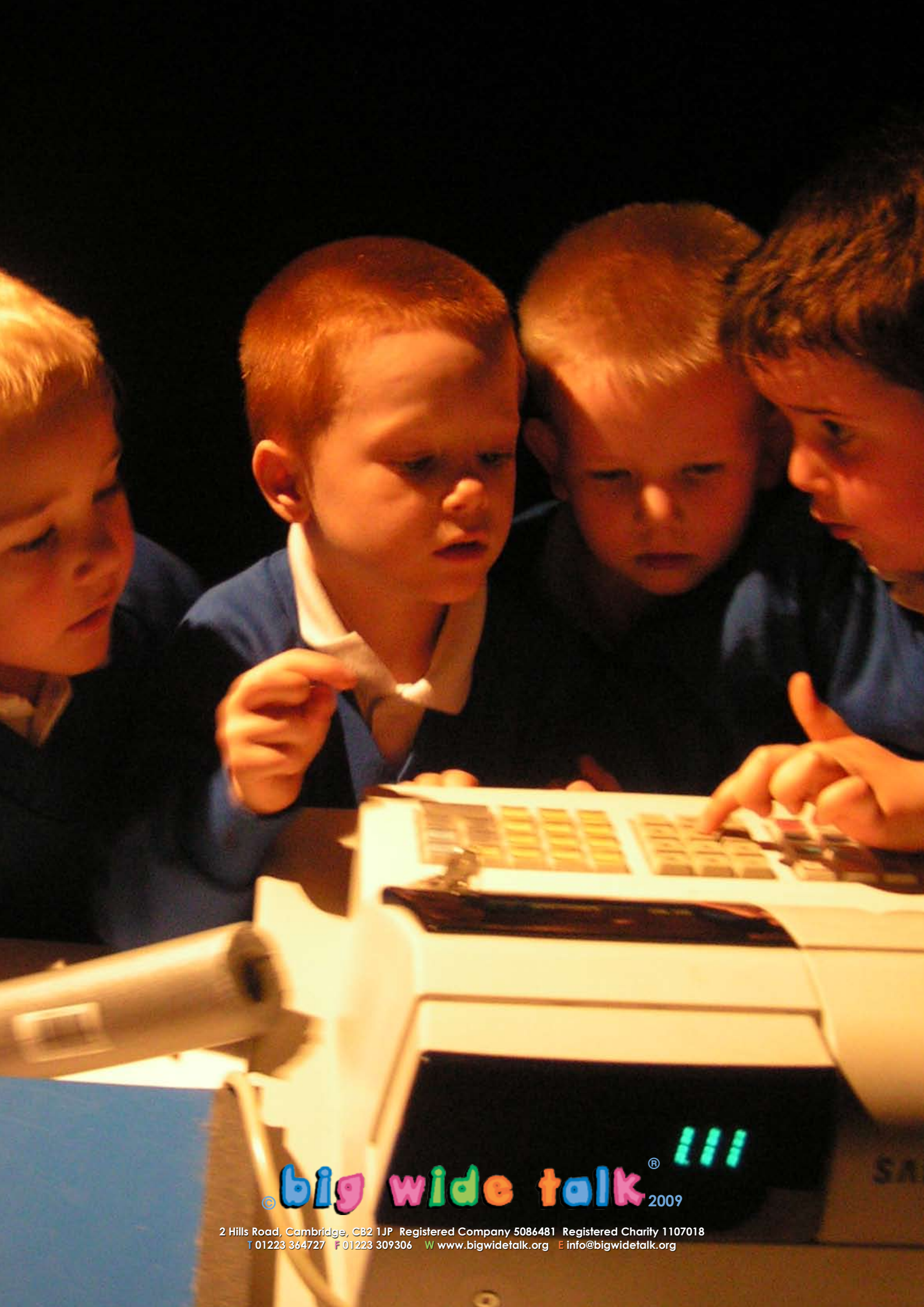


Above: An abundance of cloth objects; right: The Letter Shop and the Millinery Department

Fitzroy Street has good public transport links and it is anticipated that those taking part in The Cloth Place will either walk to the venue or use public transport. For those schools using coaches, we will seek permission for them to disembark at an appropriate drop-off point.

Children and adults will be met at their point of arrival outside the building by a Big Wide Talk guide and then brought into the reception area on the ground floor, where they will receive maps of The Cloth Place. The spaces will all be carefully supervised by Big Wide Talk staff. Adult-child ratios will be set at a safe level at all times.





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