

An Olympian effort



© Artist Jo Coles with pupils Chynna Danna and Shihabur Rahman Right: Kings Furlong Junior School Year 6 pupils with their birds

Pics by Sean Dillow

LOCAL schoolchildren have helped to create a work that will be part of an Olympic Games-inspired event in Basingstoke.

The youngsters from Kings Furlong Junior School assisted artist Jo Coles by making a flock of animated chickens to go with her three-metre-high wooden Polska Pani (Polish Lady) for display at Basingstoke's World Party in the Park on July 2.

Jo is one of four artists selected through national competition to work with local schools on artworks for the new festival.

Having just returned from six months in Poland, she used her experiences there and her love of Polish folk art as a starting point.

Jo said: "Poland has such an extraordinary - and often tragic - history, yet out of this adversity, its people have an exceptional confidence and pride in their motherland.

"I hope that my Polska Pani will reflect the secrets that the people harbour and the mystery and magic that I always feel when in Poland."

The Polska Pani forms part of Festival Makers, an Olympics-inspired

arts project, initiated by The Making, the craft and design education charity based in Basingstoke. Money for the project came from the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

Three other "Festival Makers" have been selected to make work for World Party in the Park, which will take place in Eastrop Park.

Ceramicist Rosanna Martin has been helping all 187 pupils at Merton Junior School to make ceramic medals to wear on the Children's Parade to launch the World Party.

Designer Nick Sayer is creating a 1.5-metre globe made up of children's silhouettes, and Canadian-born graphic artist Ian Kirkpatrick, inspired by the stories carried by classical Greek vases, is using cardboard boxes and paper plates.

All four artworks can be seen at the World Party. A sample of the children's work can also be seen at the Festival Makers exhibition at the Willis Museum in the town between June 25 and July 16.

Further information is online at worldpartyinthepark.org.uk.

