

THE POWER OF PLAY

DESIGN BRIEF & KEY CONSIDERATIONS

“Children learn as they play. more importantly, in play children learn how to learn” – O. Fred Donaldson

The aim of this project is to design and produce an interactive play space for families at the Sunday Spot, South London Gallery. They have collaborated with my university to Commission a six-month programme in which I am required to engage the younger audience, aged between 3-12 years old. The activities should be self-directed create opportunities for exploration and follow COVID save guidelines.

Introduction

In the past year there has been a drastic transition in how space is utilised as we have seen an increase of constraints and imposed boundaries. This led to me to question – how do you design for children, who don't know any?

My inspiration originates from our first task, which required us to play at home ourselves – immediately I was drawn to the idea of shadow play. I found the way light travels or can be manipulated quite fun and experimental; so, I attempted various ways of distorting it through colour and materials. In the next stage of my development, I began exploring the idea of Covid related boundaries and how I can potentially incorporate them to be a part of my design. I wanted to create something that allowed collaboration and interaction to promote the social development of children, especially as it been extremely limited. This led me to the idea of using protective transparent boundaries, as transparency and lighting can allow children can engage with one another without feeling as if there are constraints.

The project will open at the South London Gallery in October 2021



BUDGET & TIME-SCALE
Materials and production costs - £900
The production of the commission will be between Feb-May 2021 and commence in Oct 2021.



DURABILITY
The activity will be in place for 6 months. It will need to be durable, sustainable and engaging as an activity that is repeated on a weekly basis.



COVID FRIENDLY
Activities need to follow COVID-secure guidelines. This may include social distancing and clear equipment and material that can be sanitised.

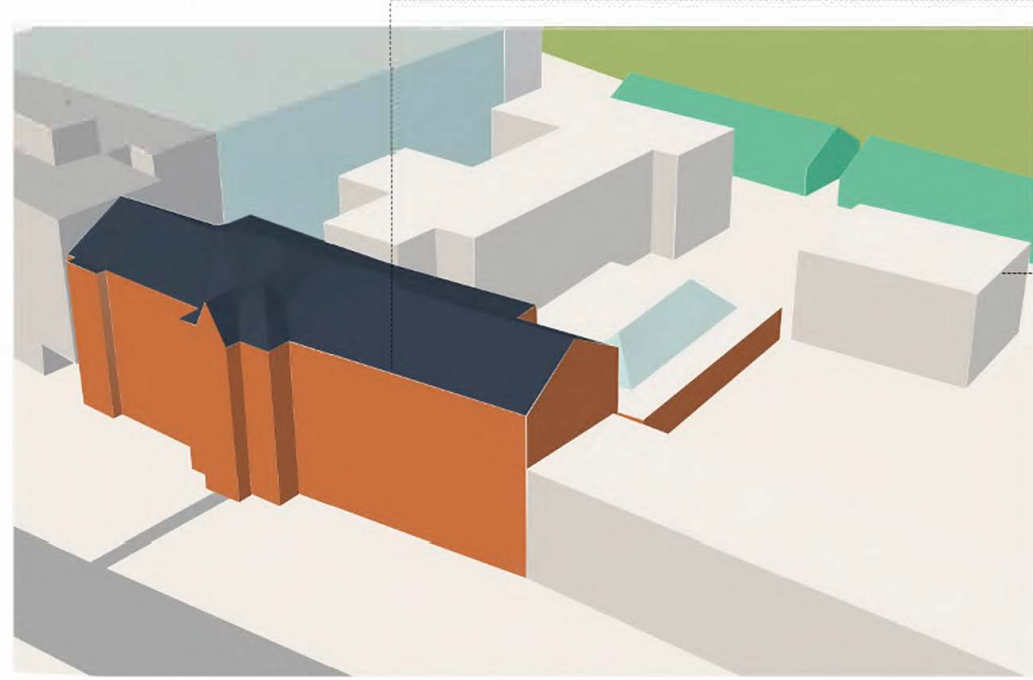


INSTALLATION & STORAGE
Elements of the activity must be portable and fit within a storage cabinet (maximum 1.5m x 1m x 1.8m height).

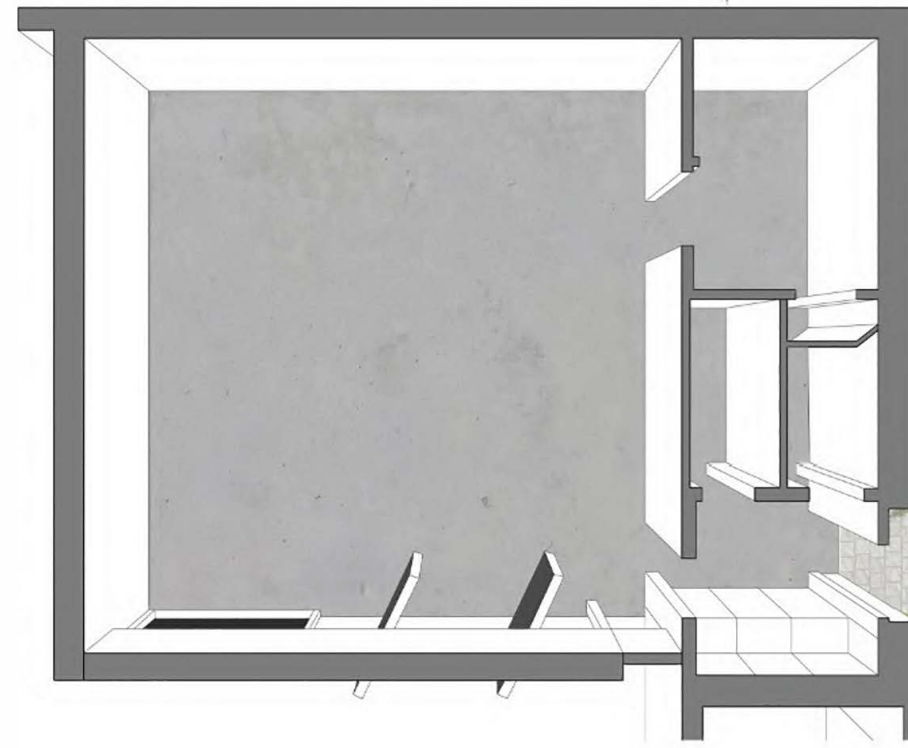
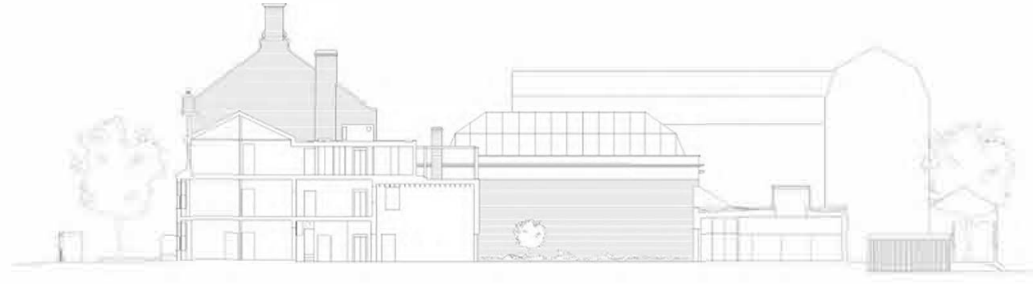


USER AUDIENCE
The self-directed activities must be accessible and engaging for users aged between 2-10 years old.

SITE SURVEY



The South London Gallery, founded 1891, is a publicly funded gallery. It hosts various types of exhibitions, such as contemporary art, interactive installations, films and performances. It allows for the local community to come together as there are various workshops and creative activities for families to do for free.

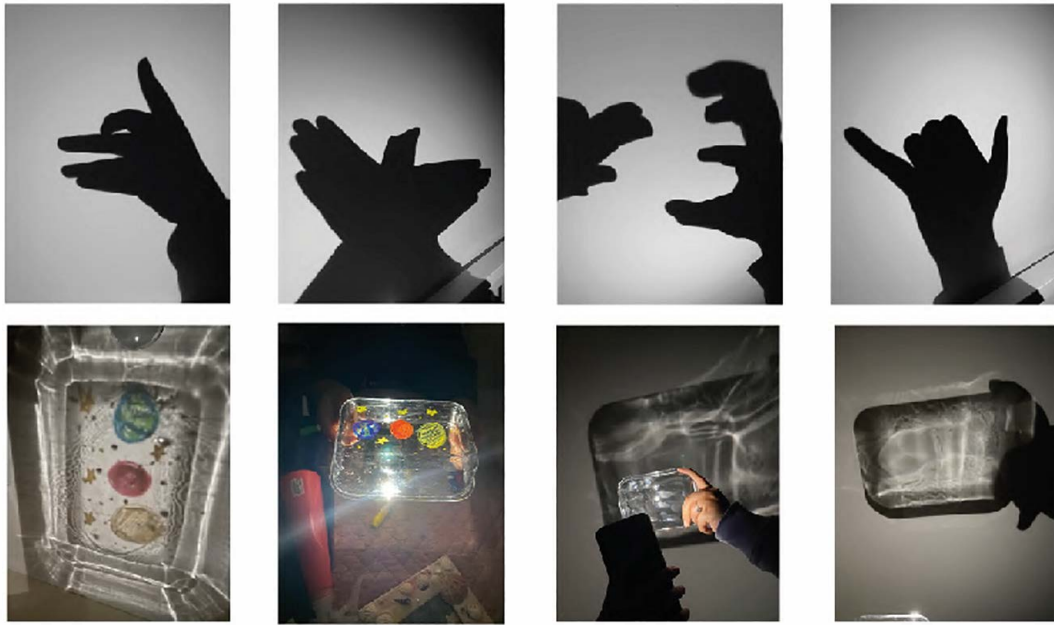


The Clore Studio is an educational space, which is situated at the rear end of the South London Gallery. It has unique features such as pivoting doors and large contemporary roof windows. I like that the space can be transformed through lighting and combining indoor and outdoor spaces.



CONTEXT

For our first task, we were required to use household objects and materials to create games. I was instantly drawn to the idea of shadow play through using my hands and a light source. It is interesting how casting shadows and manipulating light can transform a space. I experimented further by adding elements such as glass, water and marker pens - this added depth and patterns to the shadows.



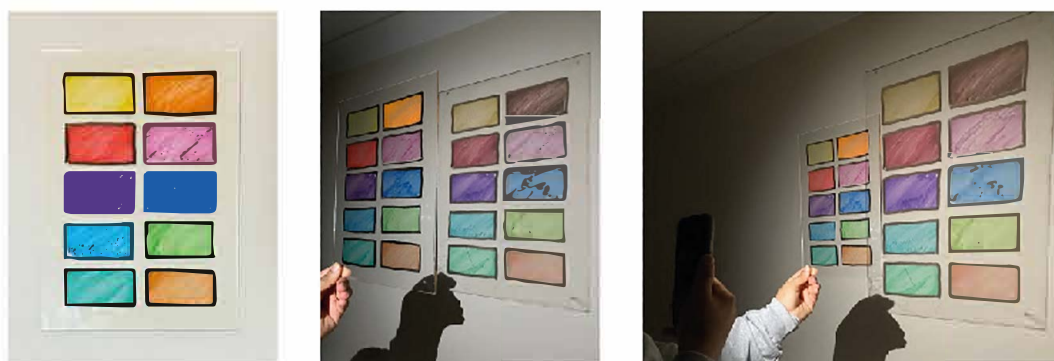
Colourful shadows



step 1: draw on acetate step 2: cut around your drawing step 3: glue your drawing to a stick



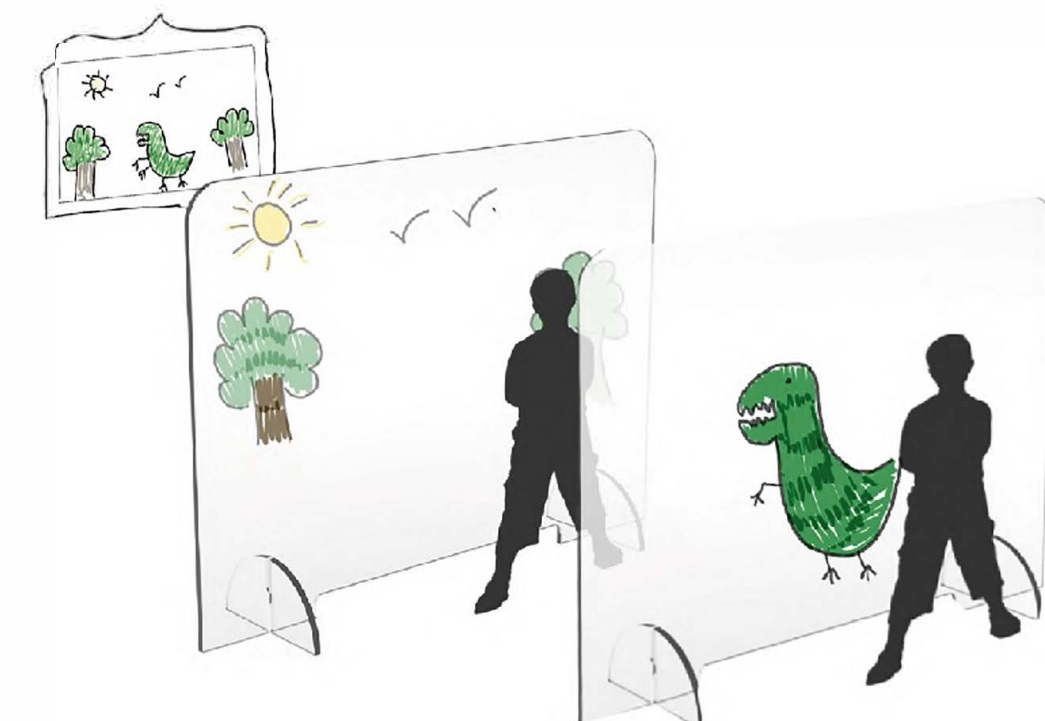
I used marker pens on acetate and other clear objects and found that the colour translated onto the walls using light. It was important for me to test this on acrylics, which would imitate Covid screens. Upon testing, I found that most colours are used reflected extremely well. Not only are they extremely affordable but they are easy to clean and refillable.



Proposal

Covid screens have become a prominent and recurring feature in our space – they act as invisible barriers that allow us to connect safely. However, they don't always have positive connotations for everyone, as it is a reminder of the tragic consequence of the pandemic.

My initial design proposal is centred around these screens – I would like them to be interactive and fun for children as opposed to associating them solely as boundaries. There are numerous design possibilities as the screens are transparent, I would like to experiment with light, layering and various materials.



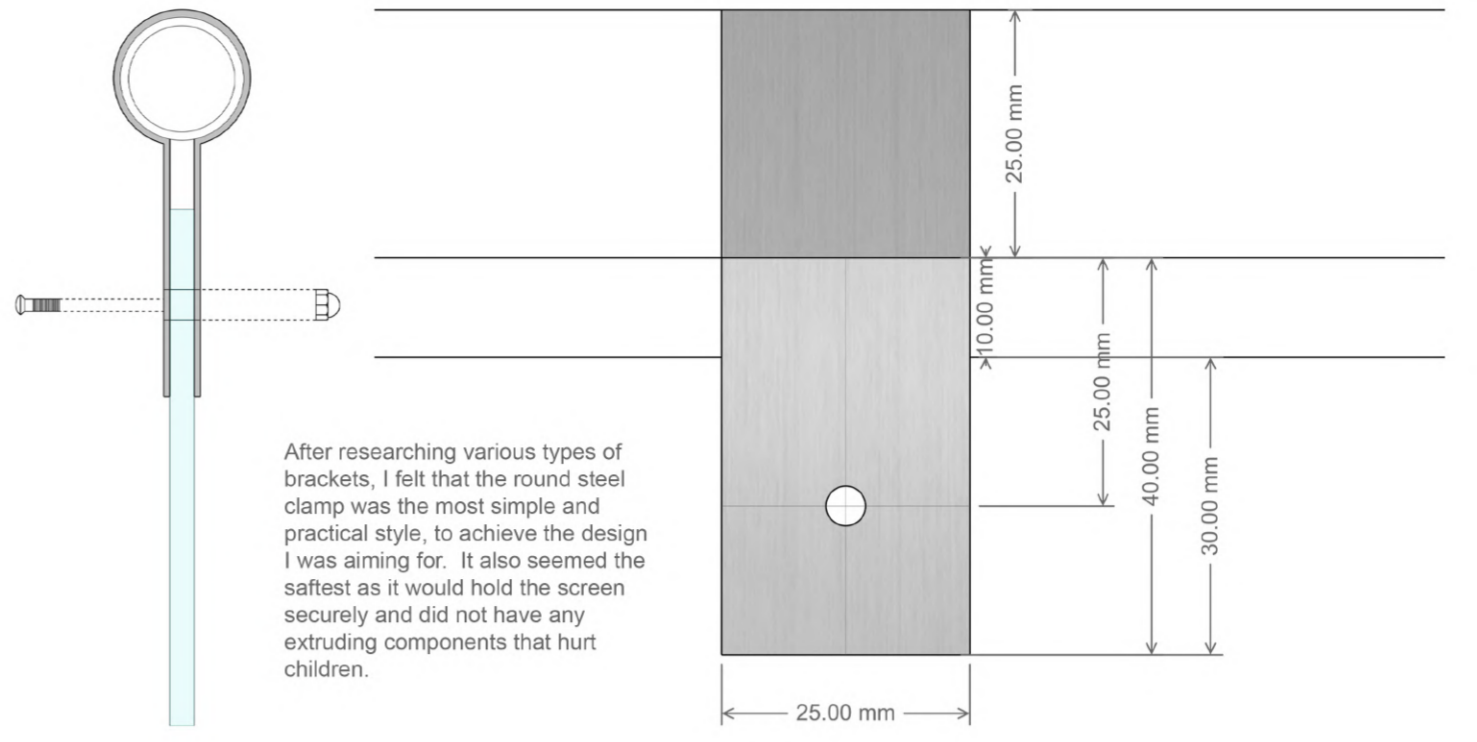
I would like to change the narrative of COVID screens by making them playful and interactive. one way in which kids could do this, is by drawing on them, collaborating and layering their work or shining light through them

CONSTRUCTION

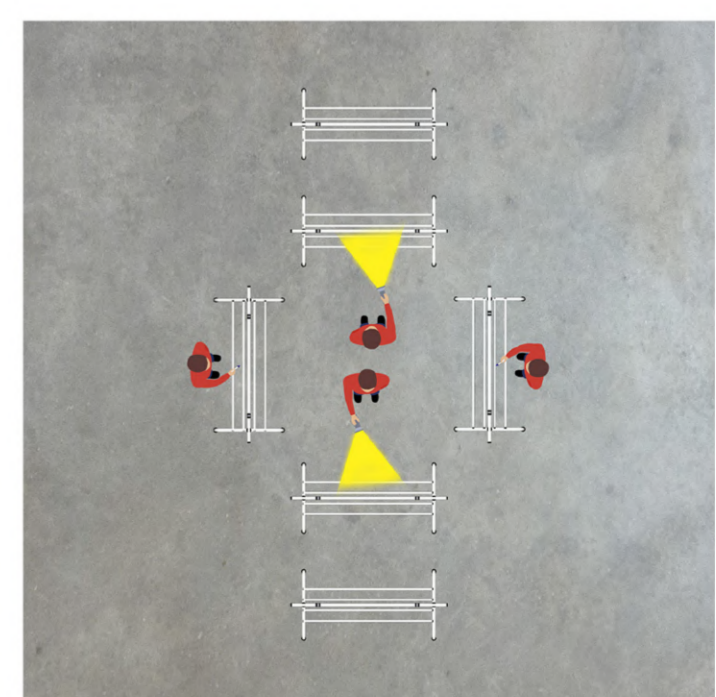
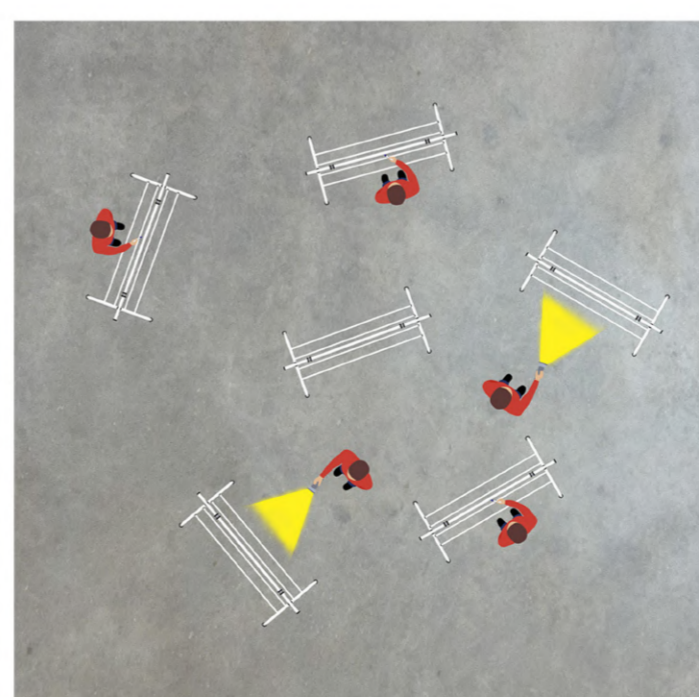
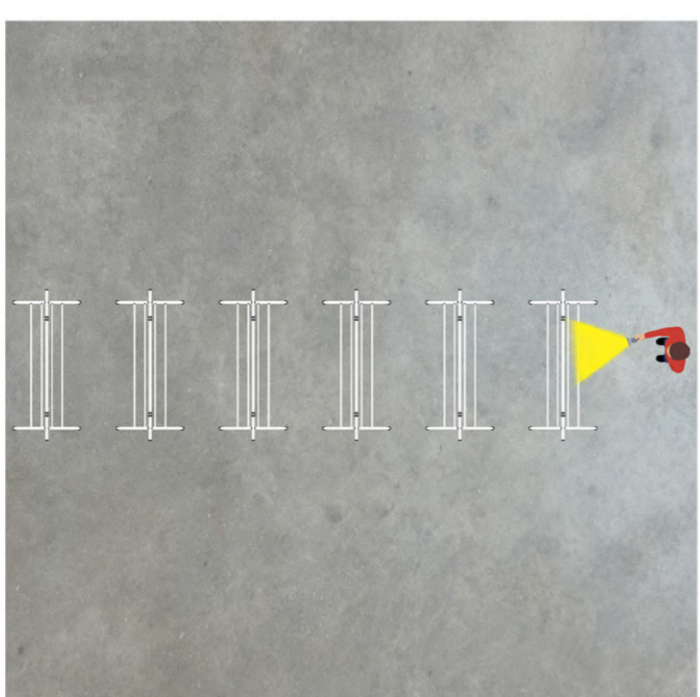
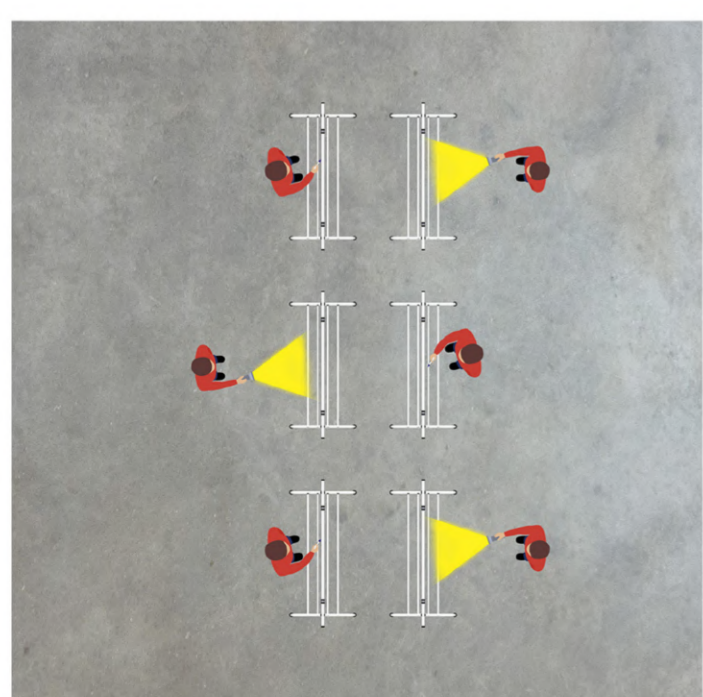
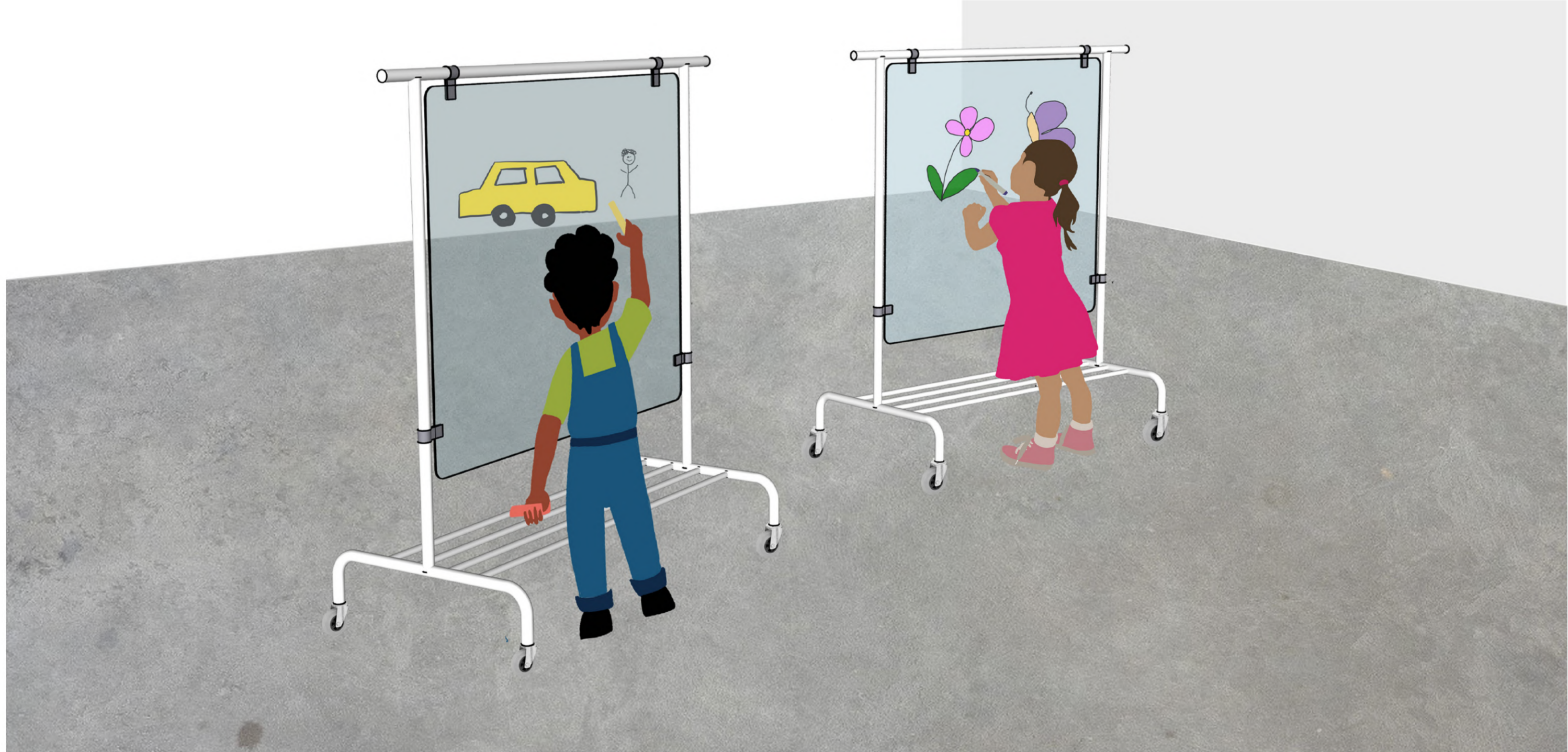
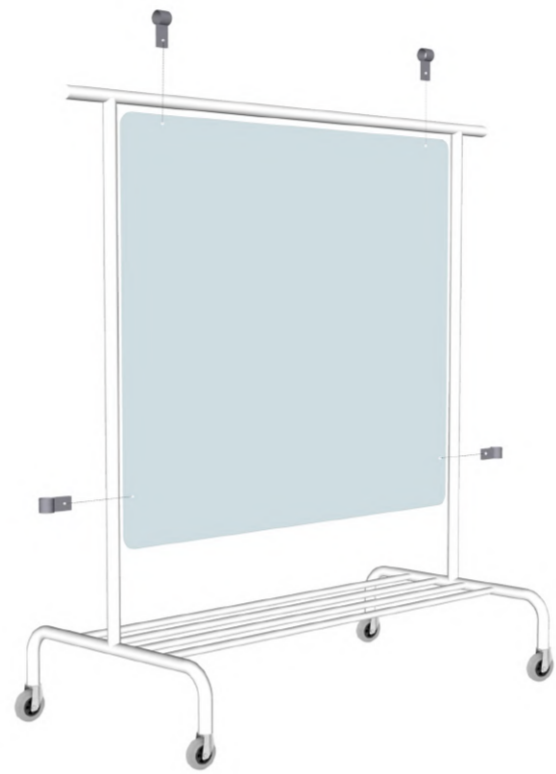
One of the major challenges I faced when designing a frame for my covid screens was cost – many bespoke designs cost anywhere between £400-£900, as this was not within my budget, I decided to find a better solution. I researched metal frames with wheels and found that clothing rails resemble the design outcome I'm trying to achieve. The Ikea RIGGA clothing rail cost £15 per/unit and have various design features such as adjustable height mechanism.



Image source: <https://www.ikea.com/gb/en/p/rigga-clothes-rack-white-50231630/>

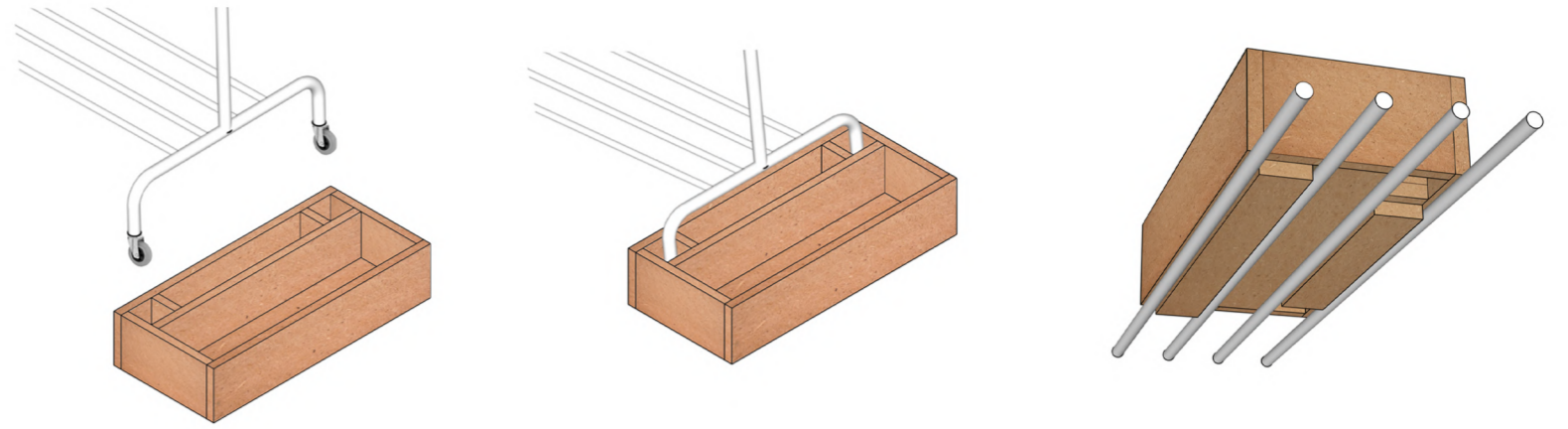
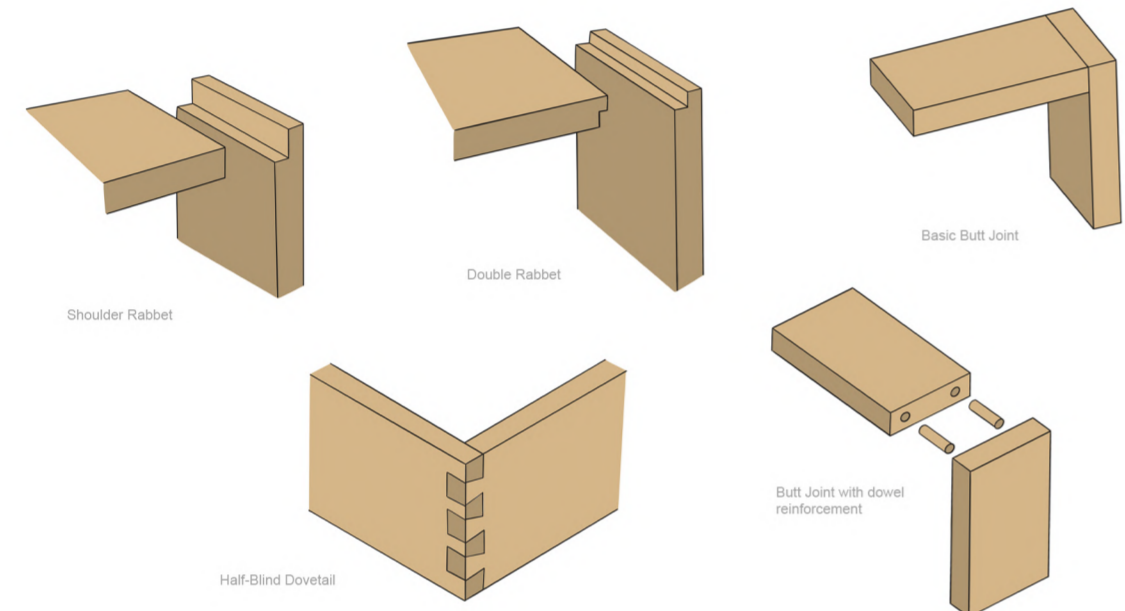
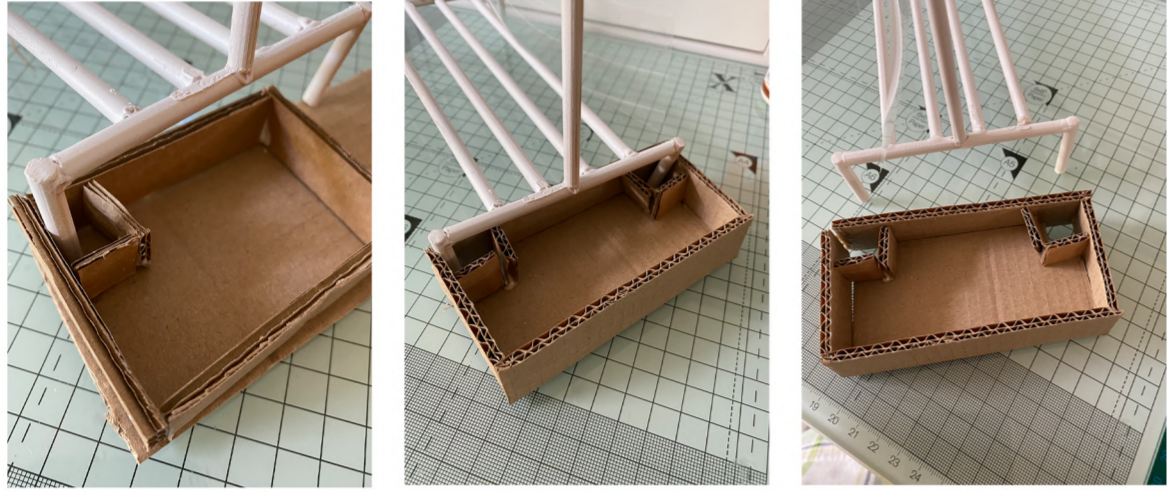
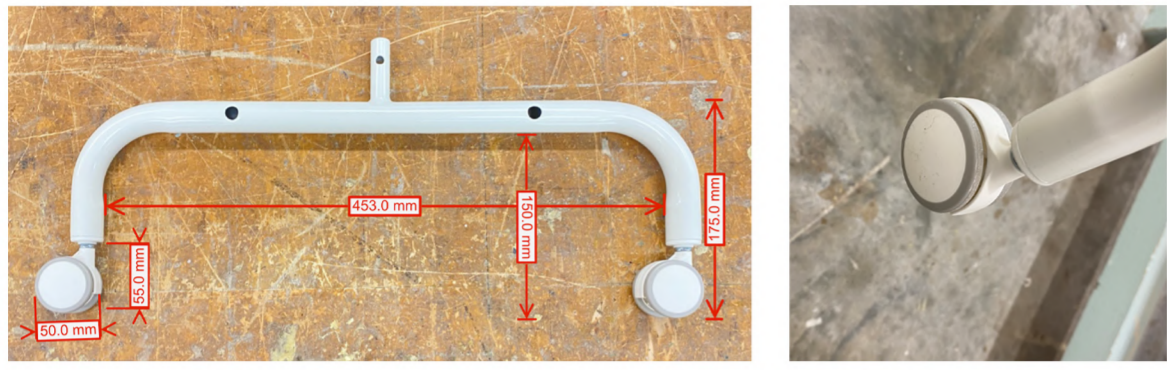


After researching various types of brackets, I felt that the round steel clamp was the most simple and practical style, to achieve the design I was aiming for. It also seemed the safest as it would hold the screen securely and did not have any extruding components that hurt children.

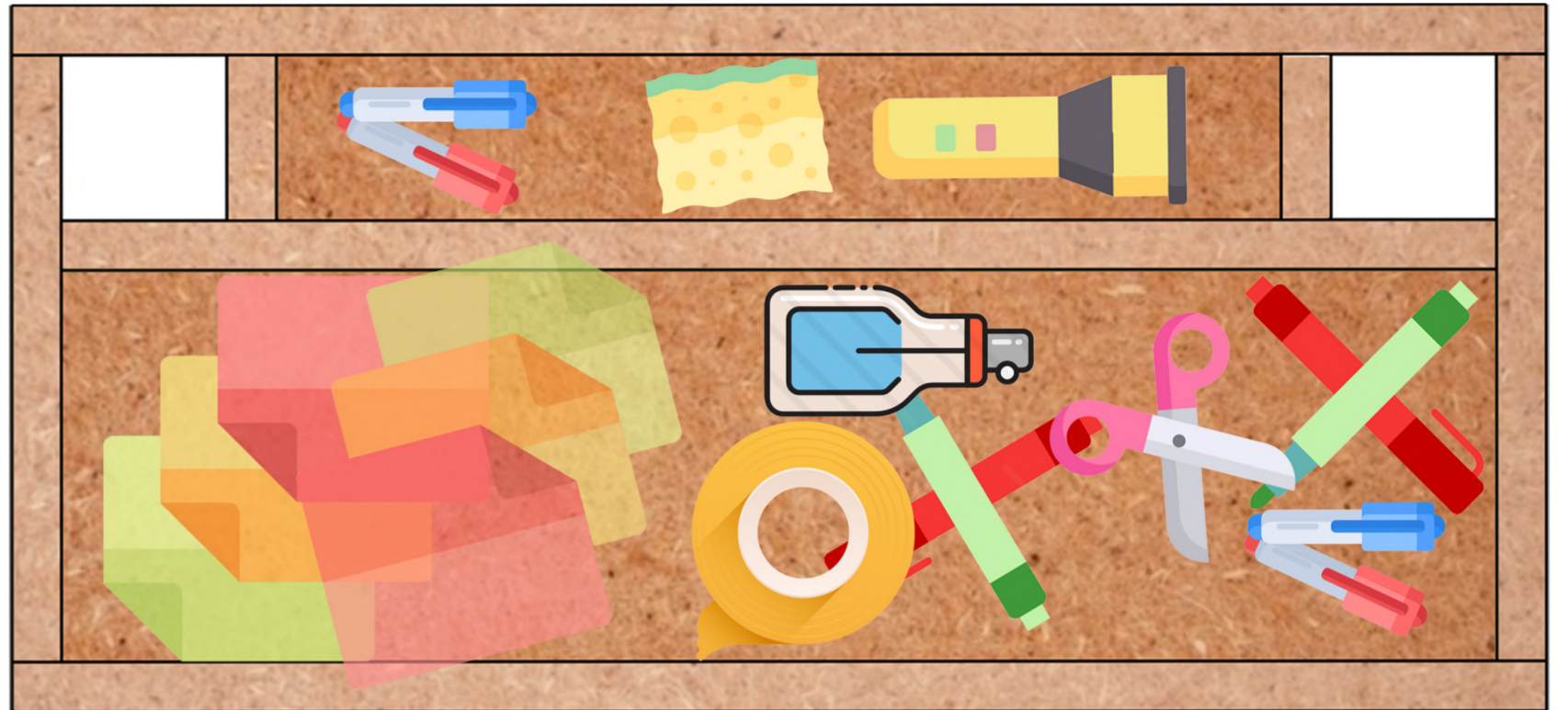


PROCESS

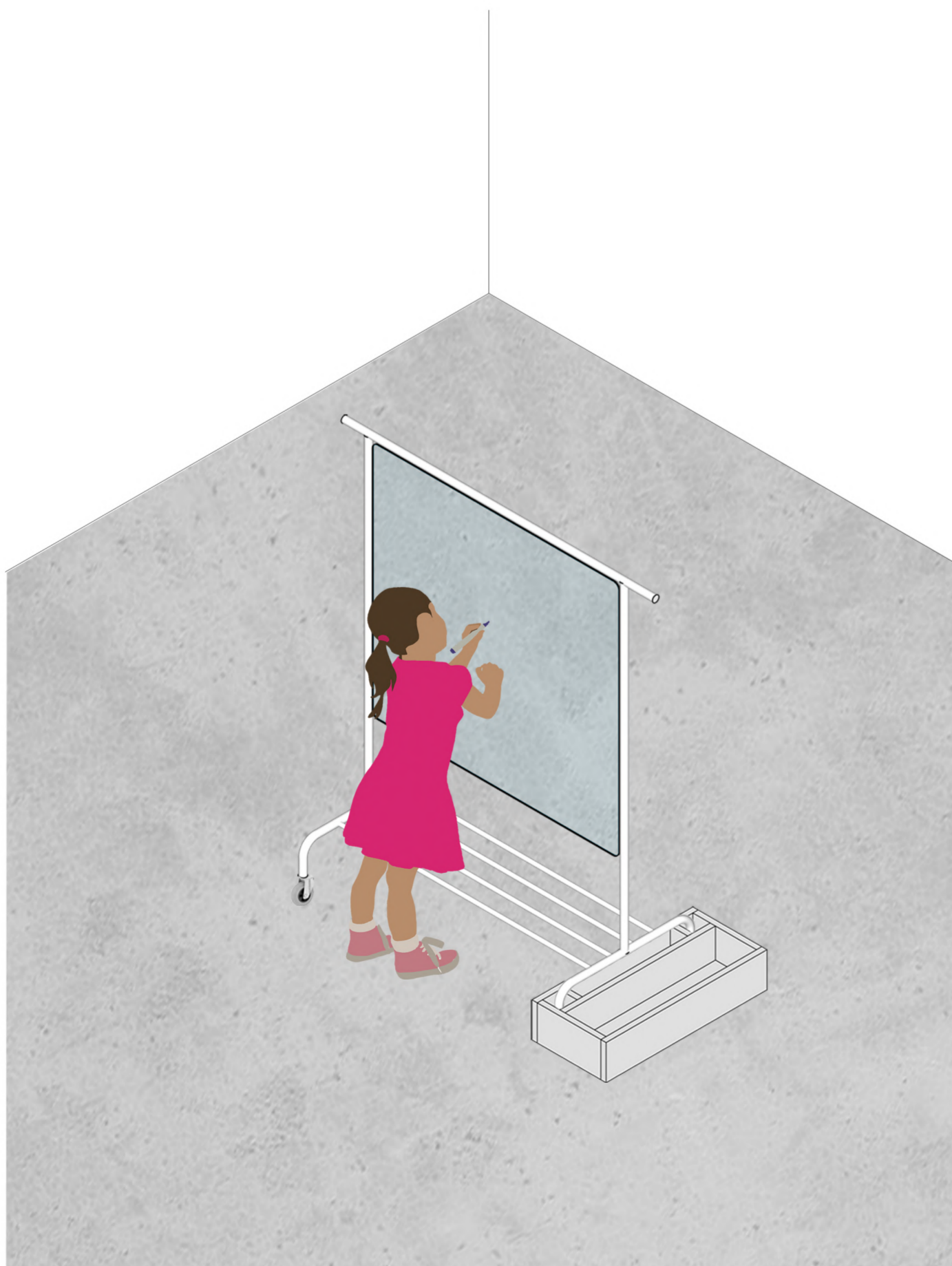
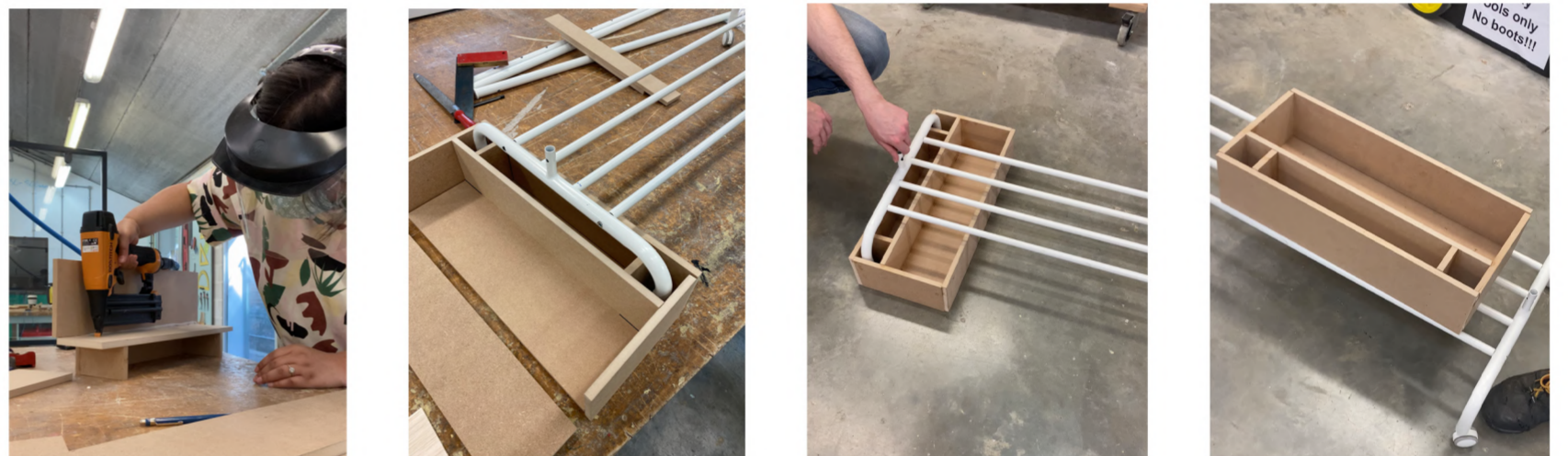
After testing the 1:1 prototype in the Clore Studio one of the main concerns was that the wheels do not have brakes on them. As this could potentially be dangerous, I came up with a solution of create a storage box that also acts as a will stop.



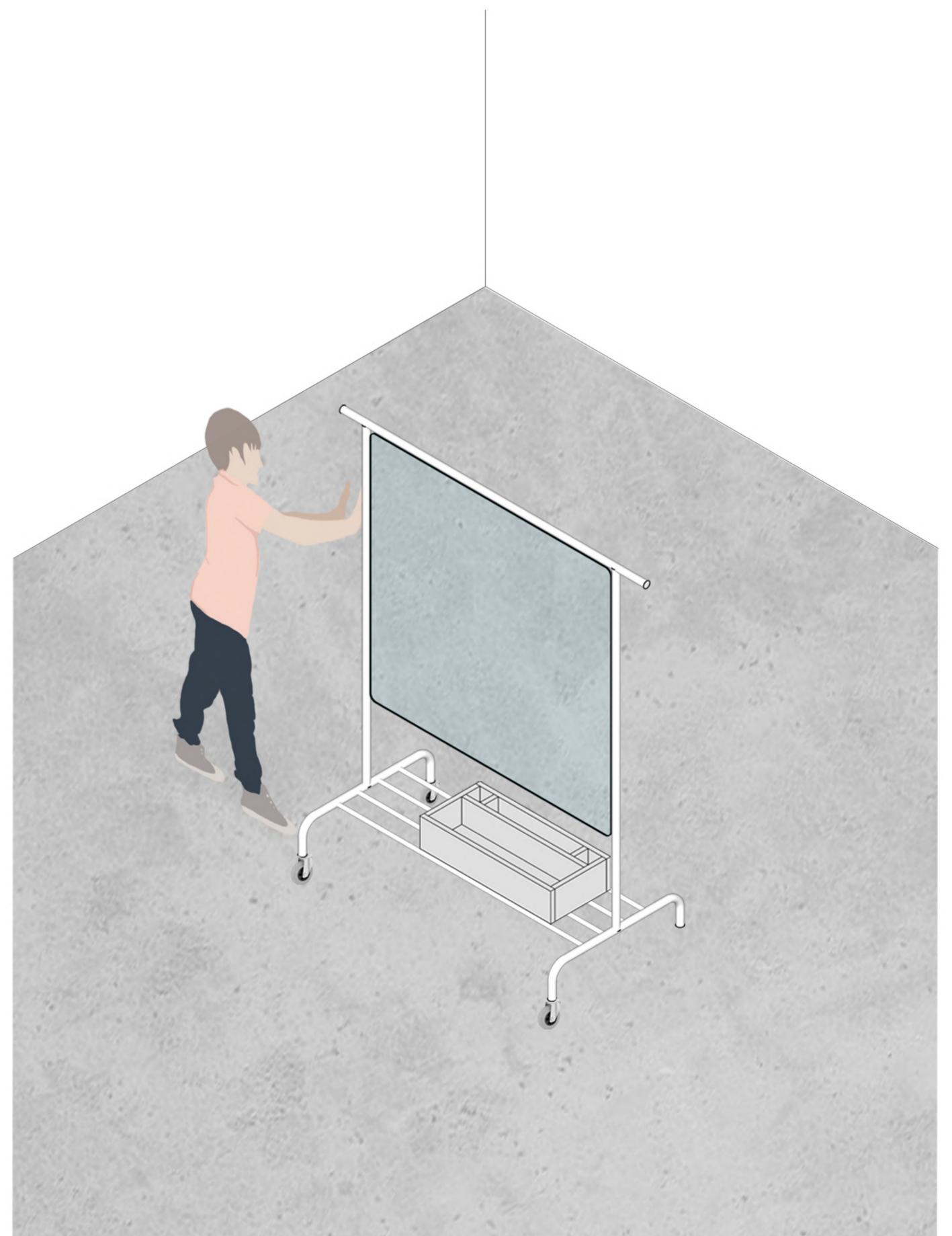
I designed this unit to be extremely functional. I added two panels at the bottom so that when it is placed on top the frame it will not slide off. They also enable you to stack multiple units on top of each other, making it practical for storage.



Scale 1:1 Prototype

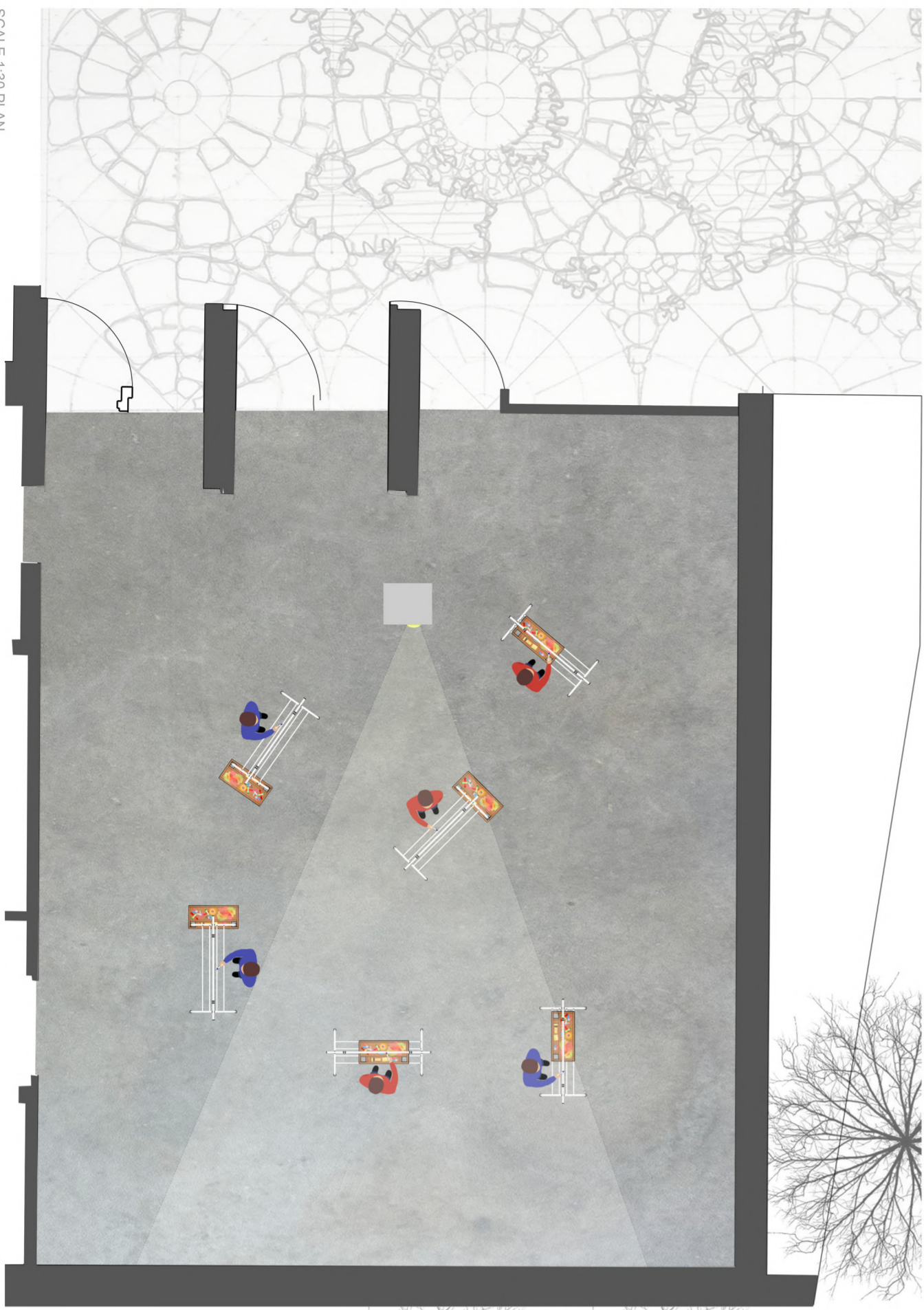


Whilst the kids draw on the screens the frame slot into the unit to prevent it from moving around a lot.

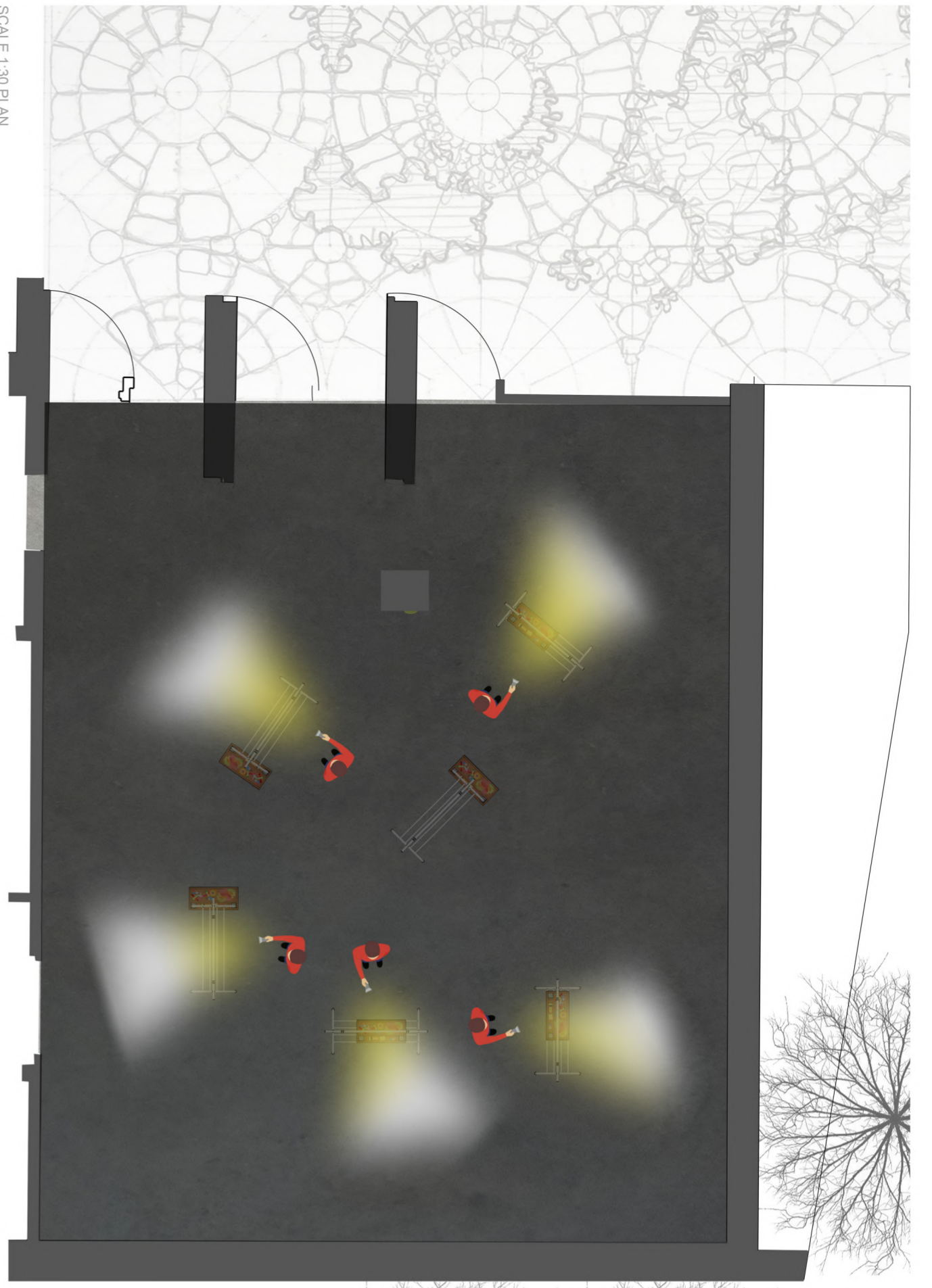


when the kids are finished drawing, they can put the unit back onto the frame and it will securely remain in place when they move it around.

SCALE 1:30 PLAN



SCALE 1:30 PLAN



SCALE 1:30 SECTION

