

In Harmony NewcastleGateshead



Welcome to our latest In Harmony newsletter - so much has changed since we started this wonderful project here at Hawthorn Primary School back in 2012.

In Harmony has become the “norm”, it is no longer surprising or unusual to see the children perform. Each year, the orchestras and ensembles become more tight knit groups as their skills improve at an ever faster rate. They are now seasoned performers full of positivity, confidence and supportive of each other. They cooperate together, appreciate other performers and work extremely hard. In Harmony enables social change – through music – many of the children and their families have unimaginably tough lives outside school. We can now see that we are making a very real difference to their lives and future life chances.

The children themselves are different as a result of In Harmony - not only have they become musicians but they have also developed the soft skills of employability that will be so vital in their adult lives: communication, leadership, a work ethic, time management, teamwork, problem solving and interpersonal skills. The challenge is to help the children to maintain these skills once they leave us, when they have to face all the pressures of growing up in this area: puberty, peer pressure, instability in their home lives, poverty, ill health, lack of aspirations all around them and so on. Those of you that play music know the pleasure and satisfaction that comes from playing with other people, the excellent mental health that it promotes and the positive use of leisure time.

Our focus now is to really take In Harmony into the heart of our community so that young people continue to thrive and use their new found talents long into the future.

Judy Cowgill, Head Teacher, Hawthorn Primary School

Performing in care homes

The Friday After School Orchestra have been getting out and about in the local community with performances in care homes in the west end of Newcastle.

At Christmas, the 15 children who commit to attending every Friday after school for 2 hours went to Orchard Mews Care Home and St. Joseph's Care Home to entertain residents. More recently they have also performed at Elswick Hall Care Home.

The children played full orchestra items, solos and small group pieces, giving them a real opportunity to show off their growing talents. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves and the feedback from residents on the day and since has been amazing.

The children are proud of their achievements and want to do more and we are learning that this kind of 'live' performance in the community can be a major factor in keeping the children engaged with the In Harmony programme and striving to become better musicians.

All three venues have invited the children back to play in the future.



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Playing live on the radio

Our Hawthorn Primary Symphony Orchestra is now over 50 strong, and those children who are new to HPSO have really immersed themselves into the group and are feeling very proud of their achievements. We have seen a definite improvement in their general confidence and playing ability.

Three children from the orchestra enjoyed a wonderful experience when they **played live on local BBC radio**. Last term, HPSO had **two major performances**, including one on the concourse at Sage Gateshead and a musical soiree at the school for parents and members of the local community. Both events were well attended and the children played with confidence.

We plan to build on these achievements by attempting even more challenging repertoire as well as improving on some of the more familiar repertoire.

Music and football share the stage

In November, eight children from Years 5 & 6 got the chance to perform at St. James' Park, home of Newcastle United Football Club, in a community project called **We, The Crowd**, run by Unfolding Theatre, Newcastle United Foundation and Sage Gateshead.

The production was all about music and football, and its impact on people's lives in the West End of Newcastle, and ended with a song sung by all of the performers.

The children wrote a graphic score that displayed sounds of a football match onto their instruments, and they played this alongside musicians from Royal Northern Sinfonia. They were also able to showcase some music they had already been learning from Hawthorn Primary Symphony Orchestra.

Prior to the 'We The Crowd' project, Sage Gateshead and Newcastle United had limited experience of working with each other. However, both are keen to work together in future – especially as the school and the stadium are based in the same Westgate ward.

Photos courtesy of Sophie Teasdale



InHarmonyNE
@InHarmonyNE

Our team are ready to play in We, The Crowd tonight with @RNSinfonia @unfoldingtheatr at St. James Park!



RETWEETS 4
LIKES 5



We raised £198 in donations on the door. Thank you for your support.

Christmas concert success

West Newcastle Symphony Orchestra, In Harmony's community orchestra, is open for all children aged 11 or over who play an instrument. This year, one of our key aims is to engage more students, especially those who come from outside the School. We have 14 children signed up with 7 from our local secondary school (Excelsior Academy), where two of the In Harmony tutors also teach.

11 children (including Daniel and Tyler, pictured right) performed in the WNSO **Christmas concert** at St Matthew's Church, alongside music staff and two other young string players keen to be involved. (pictured practicing)

The appreciative audience, of around 70 people, were treated to a variety of music including La Rejouissance, Winter from Vivaldi's Seasons, and White Christmas. Festive refreshments were provided after the concert by church volunteers and gave the children a great chance to talk to those who had supported the concert.



Helping to celebrate a birthday milestone

In November, fifteen of the most talented children from Hawthorn Primary Symphony Orchestra were invited to perform for the 35th Birthday of the local Riverside Community Health Project (which works to improve the health and well-being of disadvantaged communities). The birthday celebrations were supported and attended by the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Councillor Hazel Stephenson. The community building in which RCHP is based is in the heart of the west end of Newcastle so it was a real pleasure to perform for such a likeminded cause.



Lark Ascending

The children of Hawthorn Primary Symphony Orchestra showcased their developing musical talents ahead of a sold-out Classical concert at Sage Gateshead recently.

They played an extract from Dvorak Symphony No.9 and an arrangement of The Lark Ascending (which Royal Northern Sinfonia were playing in Sage One that very night!).

The children, concert-goers and parents thoroughly enjoyed the performance and £118.62 was raised on the night.

One audience member commented: "your students were phenomenal at the Sage last night. The talent in the orchestra was exceptional. As a retired headteacher, I know how important music is to young people and the pressure that is on schools to maintain music tuition. Keep up the good work! You have every reason to be proud of the orchestra and the work that you are doing."

Exam Update

Two of the former In Harmony children who are continuing their musical studies at the Centre for Advanced Training, at Sage Gateshead have had recent ABRSM exam success.

One of the boys passed his Grade 3 on Double Bass whilst the other achieved his Grade 4 on trumpet.

Congratulations to them both!

Upcoming events and diary dates

A trip to Leeds

On Tuesday 21st March, Hawthorn Primary Symphony Orchestra will be travelling to Leeds to work alongside children from In Harmony Opera North in a very special collaboration culminating in a performance at the Howard Assembly Rooms. The theme of the performance is fairytales, in keeping with the current theme of Opera North's programme.

Masterclasses

Following the visit to the school by Lars Vogt, Music Director of Royal Northern Sinfonia in the autumn term, a small ensemble of RNS musicians will be visiting school at the end of this term.

As well as performing, RNS will listen to the children playing and give feedback with some useful tips on technique and performance skills: a wonderful sharing opportunity. Later on this term, HPSO will also get to see RNS in rehearsal in the superb surroundings of Sage Gateshead's main hall.

Summer Music Festival

On Thursday 29th June, Hawthorn Primary School will open its doors again to the public to witness the full flow of In Harmony.

Every child in the school will be performing, and there will be special guests. There will also be workshops for families to get involved with – as well as the regular tombolas and 'cafe in the car park'. Get the date in your diary now; we look forward to seeing you there!

About In Harmony

In Harmony is a national programme that aims to inspire and transform the lives of children in deprived communities in the UK, using the power and disciplines of community-based music making. In the North East, Sage Gateshead is delivering the programme in partnership with Hawthorn Primary School.

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To Donate: You can donate to In Harmony via our website by clicking on the 'Donate Now' button, or via telephone or via post. (Please make any cheques payable to North Music Trust, the registered charity name of Sage Gateshead, and put your postcode on the reverse of the cheque).

