



Your Geordie Symphony School In Harmony Newcastle Gateshead

Issue 7

Autumn 2017

Dear Friends ...

I am delighted to write to you with another update on the progress of In Harmony Newcastle Gateshead.

We've had a busy Summer; performing alongside Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Orchestra at Sage Gateshead, enjoying a three week Summer School, and taking part in the Sistema England Young Leaders Residential at the end of the holidays. The children who sign up for these events show so much resilience, confidence and overall joy – what this project is giving the children is worth so much more than I can put into words!

I'm thrilled that we will be expanding into Bridgewater Primary School after half term. The year 1 students will be learning the violin, viola or cello and will have the same ensemble based learning as they do at Hawthorn Primary School. We are very excited to bring this project to more children and families in the west end of Newcastle.

At Hawthorn, the term has begun really well, with four parents learning alongside their child in year 1 – this is the first time this has happened and we're very excited to see their progress – watch out for them in our next concert! West Newcastle Symphony Orchestra is growing – we're up to 25 children and 2 adults, which is fantastic, and so is the sound they're making!

Since the last newsletter, we are delighted to have been given a substantial donation from a lady who wishes to remain anonymous. Her gift will help strengthen the amazing work at Hawthorn Primary.

We are extremely grateful for her generous support.

Keep an eye out for our upcoming Christmas concerts, we'd love to see you there. Your donations and presence at our events is invaluable and we love having your support – thank you again from the bottom of our hearts.

Lorna Wright – In Harmony Manager

New Recruits

Fifteen parents of the new Year 1 children came into school at the start of term to help them choose their instruments.

We were particularly thrilled that one of the parents asked to learn too and they are now joining in the music lessons! What's more, other parents are also thinking of doing so too!



"For those who are not confident during school lessons, they shine during music and it has helped them in group situations."

– Hawthorn Primary teacher



Summer School

This year's Summer School was open to children of all abilities. Over the three weeks, they developed their understanding of music language through a variety of musical games. There was a greater emphasis on singing than in school activity, and we hope this will inspire children to attend the new after-school choir. As a result, children improved their musical technique, made progress with their understanding of the language of music and developed better vocal skills.

To help measure the benefits of the Summer School, each child was asked the same series of questions at the start and end of the period. These were about feeling happy with their musical ability, working with others, confidence and self-esteem. In all these areas, the children rated themselves higher by week three. For example, when asked "What have you learnt this week at Summer School?" one Year 4 pupil replied "coping with mistakes and fears."

It is truly heart-warming to hear the children talk more positively about themselves and to see their increased determination to succeed in their music.

"Some of the children were so confident with singing that they were able to lead groups themselves when we were singing in parts" – *Clarinet tutor*

"I really enjoyed the singing and seeing the joy that music brings on everyone's faces"
– *Parent of a Summer School child*

"They showed fantastic attitude and attention, plus very impressive sight-reading skills with the varied repertoire." – *String tutor*

Young Leaders Residential

This summer, eight children had the opportunity to attend the Sistema England Young Leaders week-long residential to help improve their instrument playing.

Musically, the children were all challenged throughout the week with pieces that were more complex than they had previously attempted. They all made significant progress with one child having the experience of leading his section and another being given the responsibility of holding the 'A' for the orchestra to tune to.

Many of the children put themselves outside of their comfort zones to learn new things. A wonderful example of this was shown by one of our bassoonists, who actively chose to be part of a composition collective, based on New Orleans style, improvisation and big band. This genre of music is not typical for the pupil or his instrument, and he showed a real eagerness to learn a different musical style.

It is a great testament to the power of music, and the benefit it brings to not only the individual, but to the whole group, as well as beyond the school gates into home life too. It is so rewarding to see the increasing levels of confidence and self-belief in these children.

InHarmonyNE
@InHarmonyNE
Our Hannah is giving the A to tune the entire orchestra - we're all so proud!



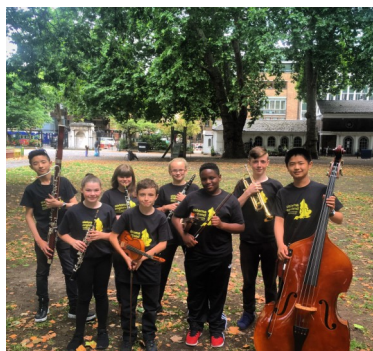
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This has been the best day. I've had so much fun. I'm coming next year, you should too, because I'm definitely coming!"

Year 6 child talking to a peer after the residential



In Harmony project is expanding

In Harmony Newcastle Gateshead is expanding into Bridgewater Primary School in Scotswood., its attached nursery and Rye Hill Community Nursery. This will mean more children and young people in the west of Newcastle will be given the opportunity to learn instruments and engage with orchestral music.

At Bridgewater Primary, pupils in year one will be learning the violin, viola or cello and reception children and nursery pupils will receive weekly music-making sessions. The children will have regular opportunities to learn, perform and attend performances with Royal Northern Sinfonia.

At the launch in September, members of RNS, visited the new In Harmony school and performed for pupils. They also answered questions about learning an instrument. Earlier this month, children from Hawthorn Primary Symphony Orchestra performed for pupils at Bridgewater Primary and Rye Hill Community Nursery.



Wendy Smith, Director of Creative Learning at Sage Gateshead, said: "The In Harmony programme has been incredibly successful over the last five years at Hawthorn Primary School and we are delighted to be able to extend the programme to include more children and young people in west Newcastle.

The children at Hawthorn Primary School are fantastic young musicians. They work really hard at school and show incredible commitment to learning and playing music. We know that orchestral music making helps with their confidence, well being and education, as well as giving the children and their families a real sense of achievement and pride."

Sam Robson, Head Teacher at Bridgewater Primary School, said: "We are really excited about working with Sage Gateshead on the In Harmony project this year. It is an amazing opportunity for our children to learn to play an instrument, be part of an orchestra and work with musicians.

We have watched in awe as the orchestra at Hawthorn has developed and blossomed and we can't wait for this to happen for our children too. We believe strongly in developing the whole child and giving them rich opportunities in the Arts as well as in their academic learning.

We are very proud to join the 'Geordie Symphony!'"

"In Harmony is important because it gives the children such fantastic opportunities!
– audience member

Summer Music Festival

Parents, carers and visitors turned out in record numbers at the school in June to see In Harmony in action and help celebrate a year of musical achievements.

The weather may not have been kind, but the day was thoroughly enjoyable with something for everyone – including family workshops tombola's, pop-up café and afternoon ceilidh. Every child in the school performed to a hugely appreciate crowd of teachers, parents, friends and members of the public.

It was a truly lovely way to round off another super In Harmony year.

"The festival had a wonderful atmosphere throughout : children, helpers teachers, visitors. You have worked wonders for Elswick

– audience member



More exam success

This summer, children sat 26 ABRSM exams in total. Four succeeded at Grade 3 (2 passes and 2 merits) and a further 7 took Grade 2 exams (3 pass, 3 merits and 1 distinction). At Grade 1 level, there were nine entries (6 passes, 3 merits) with 6 children taking the Prep Test. On top of all this, three children took exams in multiple instruments.

We are particularly delighted that one child received a distinction, as this is the first time since In Harmony began five years ago that this level of exam excellence has been achieved! This is all fantastic news. Congratulations to all of them! Keep up the good work.

"Her certificate came today. I'm so proud of her. I just knew she could do it."

Parent of a Grade 1 clarinettist

"The children are very proud of their music. They share their love with peers and teachers. They want to take their instruments home to show their parents what they have learnt."

Hawthorn Primary teacher

Increasing musicality

In July, nineteen of the In Harmony children had the chance to work alongside older, more experienced musicians from the Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Orchestra at Sage Gateshead.

They rehearsed and performed the BBC 10 pieces arrangement of 'The Firebird' and an arrangement of the Sailor's Hornpipe. Each child played a part that was slightly beyond their technical level, and succeeded in performing the "intermediate" parts for Grade 3-5.

The children have undoubtedly achieved a higher level of performance than was initially expected. It is a mark of their dedication and enthusiasm for their music-making and learning. It also reflects well on teaching staff and the general learning environment that the In Harmony project is able to create and support.



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 music making. In our region, Sage Gateshead is delivering the programme in partnership with Hawthorn Primary School.

Web: www.sagegateshead.com/inharmony for photos, videos and more

Email: inharmony@sagegateshead.com

Telephone: 0191 443 4562

Post: In Harmony, Sage Gateshead, St Mary's Square, Gateshead, NE8 2JR

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).

