

Welcome to the first newsletter under our new name and logo of Wessex Schools Music. Having to deal with the repercussions of the cyber-attack last summer and spending time closing the DASP Music charity, has meant that our relaunch as Wessex Schools Music has been a little more delayed than I hoped. But we are pretty much there now!

This marks a new chapter in music education in Dorchester. We at Wessex MAT are actively supporting not only extra-curricular music in the area, but also the curriculum music that goes on within the local schools. From a delivery point of view, not that much will change and our main aim is still to enhance the musical education of young people in the local area by providing opportunities for all.

I can't believe that it is Christmas already! – this term has completely flown by, with many events having taken place or being planned. Full news of what's been going on can be seen below, but I'd like to draw your attention to the poster for our annual Christmas Concert and for the Thomas Hardye Carol Service – both of which are open to all and truly display the breadth of young musical talent that we have within our schools.

As the festive season approaches, I hope you all find an opportunity to enjoy some music to add to the festive cheer!

Hanna Trevorrow  
Head of Wessex Schools Music

## Steel Pans come to Hardyes



In September, we kicked off the musical year at Hardyes with a music workshop day, which included a fabulous Steel Pans workshop by a visiting professional organisation called *Inspire Works*.

Students took part in three workshops throughout the day, samba, singing and steel pans. It was a fantastic way to welcome interested year 9s to the department and to welcome the new year 10s and 12s to their GCSE and A level music courses.

Here is a summary of the day:  
<https://youtu.be/16n4gOyaaQU>

***Why not give the gift of music lessons this Christmas? Lessons can be booked online to start in January!***



90 beginner string players took part in the Benedetti Foundation String Day in October

## Follow Wessex Schools Music on Social Media



To keep up to date with the latest news from Wessex Schools Music, please do follow us on X (Twitter) and like us on Facebook!



The annual Wessex Schools Music Christmas Concert is taking place on 6<sup>th</sup> December. We are really looking forward to hearing all the students share their work from this term with us. The concerts will feature most of the Wessex and THS Ensembles.

We are not ticketing the event, but will be collecting donations at the end of the concert.

There will be two concerts;

Concert 1 (mainly first school/middle school students)

5:30 – c.6:30pm, Concert 2 (mainly middle school/Hardyes students)

7pm – c9pm.

All are welcome to attend – we hope to see you there!

### Damers Sing for the King!



In the last newsletter, we mentioned that several schools from the area joined together to perform for the Dorchester Town Coronation celebrations at Salisbury Fields. The children performed a song called 'Sing for the King' at that event. When we reported the event, we accidentally forgot to mention that children from Damers had taken part along with the other schools (and I apologise for this). The other news that we didn't know about then, is that children from Damers school actually did get to sing for the King in real life! They sang for HRH when he visited Poundbury in the summer. Well done Damers choir for being so brave and entertaining The King so well! I'm sure this is something you will remember for the rest of your lives!

### Benedetti Foundation in Dorset



In October, Wessex Schools Music hosted the Benedetti Foundation's Dorset residency, organised by the Dorset Music Hub. Musicians from the foundation ran KS2 workshops with children from Manor Park, St Mary's Catholic, Damers, Prince of Wales, Puddletown First and St Mary's Middle throughout the day.

They also spent a whole day at Thomas Hardye working with around 90 beginner string players and 20 more advanced string players, as part of their String Day. This saw professional string players and music college students

working with our children to produce two brilliant performances for parents to watch after school. We were also lucky enough to offer our A level students a Q&A session with the college students. The two days were a great success and inspiring for all involved!

### TOPs Beginner Lessons Project

This term we have had a new wave of children starting on our Tomorrow's Orchestra Programme (TOPs). This scheme currently involves 70 students in years 5 and 6, learning a selection of orchestral instruments in small groups. Some of the students have also started to access our beginner after-school ensembles and we are really pleased that some of them are joining us for the Christmas Concert this week. We very much hope many of them will enjoy playing their instruments for many years to come!

### Join a Wessex Music Ensemble



Students who play in groups often make quicker progress than those who don't and also benefit from developing other musical and social skills. There are many instrumental and vocal ensembles available in the middle schools and at Hardyes (there are groups of various different genres suitable for all instruments, including guitars, drummers and pianists!). In addition to the free offer of ensembles available in the schools, Wessex Schools Music is also able to offer a selection of cross-school ensembles.

We are currently looking for new students to join our ensembles in January.

Weds

4pm - 4.50pm *Stringalings*  
(Training Strings) (Grade 0-2)  
@THS

4pm - 4.50pm *Bandemonium*  
(Training Windband) (Grade 0-2)  
@THS

5pm - 6.00pm *Dorchester*  
*Children's Orchestra* (approx Grade  
2+) @THS

Thursday

3:45 - 4:30pm *Skylarks Choir*  
(Years 2-4) @ Prince of Wales

Friday

4pm - 5pm *Nightingales*  
*Choir* (Years 5-8) @ THS

If you think your child might be interested in joining one of these groups, please complete an online [application form](#)

### Dates for your diary:

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2023** – Wessex Schools Music Christmas Concert – Thomas Hardy Carol Service

**2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024** – Thomas Hardy Singers in Idomeneo in Sherborne Abbey & Weymouth Music Festival

**9<sup>th</sup> March 2024** – Thomas Hardy Orchestra in joint concert with Dorset Chamber Orchestra

**16<sup>th</sup> March 2024** – Joint concert with Dorchester Choral Society

**17<sup>th</sup> March 2024** – Fundraising concert for Julia's House

**11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024** – Year 4 Concerts

**20<sup>th</sup> March 2024** – Hardyes Spring Fundraiser concert

**18<sup>th</sup> May 2024** – Wessex Arts Fest

**10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> July 2024** – Shrek the Musical (performed by Thomas Hardy School)

### Pop Club...

are looking for new members. The group meet on a Saturday morning at the Corn Exchange and rehearse as a band. They often play at local festivals and events. All instruments/singers are welcome! Music is taught by ear. Contact Dorchester Arts for more info:

[Dorchesterarts.org.uk](http://Dorchesterarts.org.uk)

