

We have had a very busy term with so many musical activities taking place! One of the highlights for me has been working with the 450 Year 4 children across the pyramid, to help them to prepare for their Singing Schools festival which took place last week. The festival took place over three evenings and the pupils performed brilliantly! In addition to these concerts, pupils from the Thomas Hardy School have been active in several concerts over the last few weekends - read on to find out more!

Our 'Tomorrow's Orchestra Programme' of subsidised lessons for certain instruments continues to work well as a way to allow students to experience learning an orchestral instrument, and we still have around 60 pupils signed up to take part for the final term. Look out for details of how to apply for the new programme in Sept 2024 soon.

We are just starting to make preparations for our summer Arts Fest and please do get this date in your diaries as I'm sure it will once again be a wonderful event for all the family.

I wish you all a relaxing Easter break.

Hanna Trevorrow
Head of Wessex Schools Music



Students from Thomas Hardy taking part in Idomeneo at Sherborne Abbey

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Singing Schools Festivals



Over the last term, Mrs Trevorrow has worked with all 14 first schools to prepare pupils in year 4 (and some year 3s) for the Singing Schools festival which took place on 11th-13th March. The children learnt five songs, which they performed in harmony altogether, and in addition, each school chose one song to sing on their own. The children performed brilliantly and we hope that they all enjoyed the experience. Some quotes from

our audience: "It was lovely to see how engaged and committed they were, and above all, the joy they exuded." "everyone did such a great job!" "An amazing performance thank you." "Tuesday's concert was magnificent and full of joy."

Idomeneo at Sherborne Abbey



On 2nd March, the Thomas Hardy Singers and selected instrumentalists from Hardyes were lucky enough to take part in

a wonderful performance of Mozart's Idomeneo in Sherborne Abbey, alongside students from a couple of local private schools. The performance included a professional orchestra and soloists and was conducted by Andrew Griffiths who works with the Royal Opera House. The concert was organised by one of our singing teachers, Mr Valender, who has launched an education charity with the aim of bringing the experience of opera to more young people (<https://www.destinationopera.co.uk/>) It was a fabulous experience for all of our students and we are so grateful to Mr Valender for giving our students such a wonderful opportunity.

Hardyes Orchestra with Dorset Chamber Orchestra



On 9th March, 22 students from Thomas Hardye School joined forces with the semi-professional Dorset Chamber Orchestra for their 'Concert for Youth' in St Mary's church. The students joined with a selected of pieces from the Nutcracker and 'Mambo' from West Side Story. It was a wonderful opportunity to be part of such a large and high-level orchestra. We hope we will be able to work with the orchestra again in the future.

Nightingales and TH Singers with Dorchester Choral Society



On 16th March, around 20 students from the middle schools and Thomas Hardye joined forces with the Dorchester Choral Society for a concert in St Mary's Church. The students performed two pieces on their own (with wonderful harp accompaniment) and also took part in the large choral work, Pieta by Richard Blackford. For many of the younger students, this was the first time they had experienced

singing with an adult choir and performing with an orchestra – a fantastic experience for them.

Julia's House Fundraising Concert



On 17th March, 40 students took part in a concert in United Church to raise funds for Julia's House Hospice. The Stringalings and Bandemonium both performed brilliantly. In addition, ten talented soloists from the middle schools and the Thomas Hardye School performed. This was a great opportunity for the younger students to hear some of our more advanced students playing solos and I hope it was inspiring for them. Well done to everyone who took part!

Wind and Brass Day at Sunninghill



On 8th February, 30 of our students from the middle schools joined students from Sunninghill Prep School for a Wind and Brass day, led by Dave Andrews from Music Makers. This was a wonderful day and our students got to play both

as a massed ensemble and in smaller groups, and received coaching from a variety of experience instrumental teachers. At the end of the day, the students performed a quick concert for parents, which was very well received. A huge thank you to Sunninghill for organising the day so brilliantly.

Skylarks Choir – join us!



The Skylarks Choir is our flagship choir for children in Years 2-4 and is on the look out for new members. This auditioned choir is for children who feel that they would like to take their singing to the next level. Kathie Prince, who runs the choir, focuses on good singing technique, vocal tone and harmony singing. Many of the students who started out in life as Skylarks have progressed on to being excellent solo singers and some have gone on to win choral scholarships at university! The choir meets 3:45 – 4:30pm at Prince of Wales school and costs £35 per term.

If you would like your child to be considered for a Skylarks audition to join the choir in the spring term, please email Wessex Schools Music.

Wessex Schools Music

Ensembles



We are currently looking for new students to join our ensembles in April. If your child plays an instrument, do consider encouraging them to join one of our ensembles, or an ensemble that is available in their school. Children who play with others often make much faster progress and gain a wealth of musical and personal skills. And it's fun!

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 form](#).

Wessex Arts Fest 2024



On Saturday 18th May, we are planning on holding an all-day arts festival. We ran something similar last year and it was very well received, so we are doing it again! There will be performances (music, dance and drama), workshops, 'come and try' sessions, refreshments and much more. More information to follow very soon, but please make a note of the date! There will be something for all the family – young and old!

Spring Fundraiser

The Thomas Hardy School Spring Fundraiser takes place on Weds 18th March and will include performances by all the school ensembles: choirs, orchestra, jazz band and more! If you are looking to inspire your younger musician with some brilliant performances from other young people, please do consider bringing them along! Free entry with a retiring collection.

