

# Your Geordie Symphony School

**In Harmony Newcastle Gateshead**

---

Dear friends,

After the busyness of December, the new year can often feel quiet. But at In Harmony Newcastle Gateshead, the last few months have flown by. So much has happened and been achieved by the young people.

December was jam-packed with performances at Hawthorn and Bridgewater schools, and in the wider community. It's always inspiring seeing so many young people perform, and for those who performed for the first time ever, bravo! The incredible support the programme receives meant it was standing room only at many performances. Music has the power to really bring people together.

We're incredibly proud of the four West Newcastle Symphony Orchestra musicians who travelled to the Midlands last October to represent our programme at the national Nucleo Young Leaders Residential. Over three days, they played in an orchestra alongside children from other In Harmony and Sistema-based programmes.

This term, many children have taken part in Arts Award, a national initiative encouraging creativity, confidence, and leadership skills in young people, as well as promoting a lifelong relationship with music. On completion of the award, each young person receives a qualification - congratulations to all the young people who achieved their award during this time.

This newsletter only scratches the surface of what happens within In Harmony Newcastle Gateshead. We remain incredibly grateful to all the supporters, staff, colleagues, and friends who make this possible.

**Matt Wigley**  
Head of Young People's Programme

# In Harmony in the community

The string quintet from the West Newcastle Symphony Orchestra were delighted to return to St. Matthew's Church in February to perform at their Shrove Tuesday Community Dinner. Around 40 members of our community enjoyed a feast of pancakes while the quintet entertained them with pop song arrangements, classical quintets and some upbeat folk songs. The firm favourite was 'Blaydon Races', which the diners enjoyed singing along to! The young musicians then enjoyed their own pancakes and chatted with members of the community.

*"In Harmony and WNSO have a very positive impact on the community. It brings us joy!"*

-WNSO Audience Member



## Nucleo residential

Last October, four musicians from West Newcastle Symphony Orchestra attended the Nucleo Young Leaders residential, four days of rehearsals, creative music making sessions with professional musicians, networking and hang outs with young musicians from across the country.

They also enjoyed bonus high ropes adventure activity. Here's what some of our young musicians had to say about the experience:

**ALFIE:** We travelled to the Pioneer Centre near Birmingham to take part in a variety of activities to develop leadership skills in order to make everyone who attended more confident leaders. There were sectionals with either individual instruments, as was the case with the cello section, or small multi-instrumental groups to learn the repertoire of new music which included lots of contemporary forms of music making allowing the exploration of instruments. The teachers and staff were always helpful and interested in what the students had to say and would give appropriate and helpful guidance when teaching a specific phrase or piece. The improvisation aspect of the residential was also important with the group composing our own song based on improvisations making a comfortable atmosphere for people who wouldn't typically be comfortable in doing so. I found this very enjoyable although I'm not usually a person who enjoys improvisation. As this was a group experience, I knew there were people in the same situation as me. It also helped that I really liked the music that we were playing.

**JESSICA:** Attending the Nucleo residential was an experience that allowed me to explore music and my musical ability outside my comfort zone. The trip was full of inspiring young people who were full of great ideas. I made many new friends who I will try to keep in contact with through my life and the opportunity allowed me to create and interpret music beyond just reading of a page on a stand. The guidance from all the teachers and young leaders encouraged and inspired me to be better. My favourite part of the trip was the improvisation and singing we did. The atmosphere we created with our instruments and our voices was so radiant and I had never felt such a great atmosphere in my life. I also enjoyed the social aspect and the adventure courses. I hope that Nucleo make something like this again and I will definitely attend an opportunity like this.



# Royal Northern Sinfonia visits

In February, 10 players from Royal Northern Sinfonia visited both Hawthorn and Bridgewater schools and gave a performance. The children in Years 3 and 4 at Bridgewater enjoyed asking the players questions about their music making and were given some top tips! The group, split into two quintets, one string and one wind, played a range of music which sounded like pirates. The children were praised by the RNS players for listening and concentrating so well.

At Hawthorn, the players played the same programme this time to several children of a whole range of ages across the school and their families. It's always so nice seeing families enjoying music together - a wonderful way to end the half term.

*"I really liked how they played. They are the best, I now want to become a professional cellist."*

- Year 4 student



## Winter concerts

Almost 700 children from the In Harmony programme performed to their families and friends at the end of the Winter term. It was fantastic seeing Year 5 children from Bridgewater School performing as Bridgewater Sinfonia for the first time, the sell-out crowd of Bridgewater Symphony Orchestra (Year 6) and the wonderful solos/small groups heard throughout Key Stage 2.

Children from the Beethoven String Ensemble and Armstrong Brass ensemble at Hawthorn Primary School performed at the Grainger Market for the general public - complete with sleigh bells and Santa hats!

Hawthorn Primary Wind Orchestra also performed for our friends at The Home Group.

A huge thank you to all the staff and tutors who make these performances possible, it's so impressive to see and hear the children's progress at the end of the term.

*"Music has a vital impact on our lives, In Harmony affects the mental state of the children and boosts the positive energy in the school's atmosphere."*

- Parent, Hawthorn





# Arts Award

Children from Hawthorn Primary School have been very busy in Arts Award Club since the start of the school year, with visits to venues across the North East and workshops lead by professional artists in school. In November the group went along to The Lit & Phil for a lunchtime concert by pianist Kate Halsall and flautist Alessandra Amorino, followed by an inspiring Q&A. The children came away with lots of souvenirs and leaflets about the venue and answers to their questions about being a professional musician. This wasn't the only exciting trip for our Arts Award group though. At the start of the Spring term, the group headed down to Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, where they had the opportunity to interact with exhibitions, immersing themselves in sounds, touch, and visual elements on display in the space. They chatted to the Baltic crew, asking fantastic questions, and finding out things to report in their log when they returned to school.

Back at school, the Arts Award group welcomed Toby Heaps, a local graffiti artist who led a fun and interactive graffiti workshop where, using paint pens, sharpies, canvases, and lots of graffiti books for inspiration, the children were able to create their very own graffiti canvases to take home with them.

Arts Award is an arts-based qualification encouraging young people to explore new arts activities and arts venues, taking them on their own creative journeys to discover their potential as artists. We have more fun lined up for the rest of this term, including a pottery workshop and presenting our art and work to the rest of the Arts Award group.



# About In Harmony Newcastle Gateshead

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 works in partnership with Hawthorn Primary and Bridgewater Schools to run In Harmony Newcastle Gateshead. Now in its tenth year, the programme continues to enhance the lives of children through community-based orchestral music-making.

*"He loves his cello! It's his favourite part of school."*

- Year 1 Parent, Bridgewater School

From their very first day in Year 1, children at Hawthorn Primary School and Bridgewater School in Newcastle's West End begin learning an instrument – and the benefits extend far beyond the classroom into the wider community.

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

- Teacher, Hawthorn Primary School

The music-making skills, confidence, self-esteem, health, wellbeing and resilience of the children improve through the power and disciplines of ensemble music-making and music being part of daily life. In Harmony helps to build a sense of community and supports parental engagement with the schools – some have been so motivated by their children's development that they are now learning instruments alongside their children.

*"In Harmony improves self-esteem, confidence, life chances and future health. I see the effect on children when I see them at my work – pride, confidence, self-worth and I see the effect on parents when I see them too."*

- Dr Guy Pilkington, Local GP

## Support us

**Every year we rely on support from donors to sustain this inspiring programme. Whether you choose to make a regular donation or a single gift to In Harmony Newcastle Gateshead, your support will make a real impact on the lives of young people today.**

### Ways to give:

- **Regular Direct Debit** – on a monthly or quarterly basis. These gifts are particularly helpful as they enable us to better plan for future needs.

To set up a Direct Debit, or make a card payment, please contact Natalie Heath at Sage Gateshead on 0191 443 5038. Cheques can be posted to In Harmony, Sage Gateshead, St Mary's Square, Gateshead. NE8 2JR

- **Regular and Single gifts by Text message**, where your donation is added to your phone bill.

To donate a £5 single gift, text INHARMONY to 70085. You will be charged £5 + your standard message rate

To set up a £5 monthly text donation, text IHMONTHLY to 70085

- **Single gifts can be made by cheque** (payable to North Music Trust), and posted to In Harmony, Sage Gateshead, St Mary's Square, Gateshead. NE8 2JR







## With thanks to

Supported using public funding by



**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



**Gateshead  
Council**



**Netherton  
Park Trust**



**The Harrison-Frank  
Family Foundation (UK) Ltd**



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

Sage Gateshead is a registered charity,  
North Music Trust (Reg. Ch. No. 1087445).

We would also like to thank all of our donors for their generous support.