

CHELTENHAM

Music
Festival

**MUSIC
FOR
SCHOOLS
2016**



MUSIC FOR SCHOOLS 2016

Over 3,000 children and young people from 30 primary and secondary schools participated in this year's Music for Schools programme.

The programme comprises high-quality opportunities for children and young people across Gloucestershire to access, enjoy and make music.

We work closely with our local Music Hub, Make Music Gloucestershire, and other partners to ensure that the activity we offer fulfils identified needs and does not duplicate activity offered by other providers.

Increased support from a number of funders meant that in addition to:

- an extended programme of Workshops for Schools, featuring Festival artists and the Cheltenham Festivals Gamelan
- the annual Concert for Schools, followed by Music Explorer sessions

we were also able to deliver:

- a day of high-quality music-making and performance with Nicola Benedetti in a local secondary school, plus a day with the Tibetan Monks
- open rehearsal opportunities for secondary students

MARKETING TO SCHOOLS

Information about the music programme is posted on our website in early March, and disseminated by email to every school in Gloucestershire. Bookings are made using an online booking form.

In addition, we ensure that schools receiving significant levels of pupil premium (30%+), as well as a number that have been identified as less likely to engage with Cheltenham Festivals because of rural isolation, are particularly encouraged to take part through support in the form of travel grants or subsidised tickets.

Early take up for the core programme was very good. By the Easter holidays more than two thirds of the Workshops had been booked, and the Concert for Schools was over-subscribed. This is the first time that bookings for the Concert have exceeded capacity.

In addition, every school that interacts with our programme goes away with comprehensive information about all the music-making opportunities on offer across Gloucestershire.

1. WORKSHOPS FOR SCHOOLS

INTERACTIVE AND INSPIRING MUSIC EXPERIENCES

These accessible and inclusive workshops enable both pupils and teachers to explore a genre of music they might previously have had little exposure to; they are also a valuable opportunity for teachers to learn from professional musicians and artists.

Workshops in schools were delivered by:

- pianist and composer Anne Lovett
- oboe player and workshop leader Luke Crookes

Schools could also choose a gamelan workshop, led by gamelan expert Jonathan Roberts, and take a trip to Cheltenham's beautiful Pittville Pump Room.

WORKSHOP 1: Piano works with Anne Lovett

Anne's workshops were designed to excite pupils about the piano by showing them the inner workings of this amazing percussion instrument, taking them on a whistle-stop tour of iconic piano music across the centuries, and opening their minds to the influence of great composers on today's music.

The pupils discovered how the piano evolved from the clavichord, harpsichord and virginal to today's beautiful concert grand, and were all able to get their hands on the piano actions that Anne had brought with her.



Anne had created some short films about all these instruments in London's Royal Academy, illustrating how the different dimensions and inner workings influenced composers at the time, and we had planned to use the video in the workshops.



In practice, although the films were very good, they did not significantly enhance the experience for children of this age. The technical logistics outfoxed even the most well-equipped school, while stopping to show the films interrupted the flow of the workshops and created a barrier between Anne and the pupils. After the first day we decided to stop using the films, and the workshops really came alive.

The icing on the cake in Anne's workshops was when children were given the chance to play piano beside her. The many that volunteered learned a simple left-hand sequence for the opening bars to '*Someone like you*' by Adèle, and then played it with Anne accompanying on right-hand. They were thrilled, not only to have performed with a published composer and concert pianist, but also to have played the music of a world renowned artist that they all admire so much.



WORKSHOP 2 a last-minute change!

James Mayhew had planned a new painting-to-music workshop, *Mark the Music*, inspired by the music of Shakespeare. Schools were quick to book, and to receive the supporting information regarding logistics and the activities involved.

Unfortunately James had to pull out of the programme with less than a week to go, leaving us facing the very real possibility of cancelling for the very first time. Unexpectedly and serendipitously, at a planning meeting for our music education project Musicate, it turned out that not only was one of the musicians – Luke Crookes- an experienced creative workshop leader, and a leading bassoonist, but he was also available on the appointed days.

An alternative is always far preferable to a cancellation, and all the schools readily accepted the change we put forward.

Luke and the children explored some of the music from Prokofiev's ballet *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare. Together they went on an interactive and creative journey through the music, exploring rhythms, melodies and other musical devices Prokofiev employed to bring the story to life.

These interactive workshops all began with Prokofiev's music, listening, exploring, and interpreting; and ended with the music created by the children. During the workshops they shared ideas, shaped the material, rehearsed, and then performed. Luke recorded the performance, which they listened to as a group, and kept as a memory of the day.



WORKSHOP 3

Gamelan: A Different Beat

We were delighted to be able to offer this additional workshop this year, including subsidised transport for our target schools.

Gamelan is a fantastically versatile educational resource. It is accessible to everyone no matter their current or previous music experience; with a focus on concentration and listening to each other, it develops listening and teamwork skills in players; and it is relatively easy to learn and to be able to play an authentic piece of Javanese music without notation. It is also great fun.



STATS AND FEEDBACK

19 schools booked 30 workshops, plus one all-day visit from Luke Crookes

6 schools were on our target list

7 were new bookers to Music

4 were both target schools and new to Music

We received feedback from 15 of the 19.

All rated their workshop EXCELLENT or GOOD

100% said their pupils benefited, and 100% said they would book a workshop again.

Teacher feedback

The opportunity for the children to have the experience of playing such beautiful instruments was wonderful. All children were able to access the session. The children who find concentrating difficult remained focused and on task all session. The children who have had some musical experience were all stretched and were engrossed in the music. Greatfield Park Primary, Gamelan workshop

Fabulous in every way - an unforgettable experience for the children and so very interesting. The children loved opening up the piano, as well as hearing Anne play her music. Two children were inspired to take up the piano again. Queen Margaret Primary, Anne Lovett workshop

Very engaged and interested in the music session. Appreciation of musical compositions and instruments. The Rissington Primary, Luke Crookes workshop

Pupil feedback

*Wow . The beaters and gongs were huge. The instruments were amazing. It sounded awesome. It was really tricky trying to play and then hold to stop it vibrating. I know it was a water dragon because it didn't have any legs.
Greatfield Park Primary*

*We loved it. Her fingers were flying across the piano so fast that we couldn't see them move! I enjoyed feeling the vibrations in my tummy when I leaned against the piano. Anne was amazing.
Queen Margaret Primary*

And from Anne Lovett

I have had such a brilliant time doing these workshops. Really enjoyed motivating the kids and getting them interested in music!



2. THE CONCERT FOR SCHOOLS and MUSIC EXPLORER SESSIONS

Interactive, surprising and engaging, the Concert for Schools is always a dynamic introduction to classical music for primary school pupils in Key Stage 2, and features artists from the Festival programme who want to inspire the performers and audiences of the future.

This year's eclectic programme featured

- Tibetan Monks of the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, who performed fantastic costumed dances accompanied by drums, cymbals and spectacular long horns
- Anne Lovett, who played some of the most iconic works for piano, as well as one of her own exciting compositions
- And the Benedetti Elschenbroich Grynyuk Trio, who dazzled the pupils with their technical brilliance and musical passion

Following the Concert, all the pupils jumped on the Music Explorer carousel, an opportunity to get their hands on a variety of musical instruments under the expert guidance of county instrumental teachers.

The side room in the Town Hall became a riot of sound as the schools moved around three of the instrument stations during their hour-long Music Explorer session. Insofar as we are able, we organise the stations so that each group experiences string, wind and brass instruments. This year we explored Bassoon, Cello, Clarinet/Sax, Double bass, Flute, Oboe, Trombone, Trumpet and Violin.



FEEDBACK

Ten school groups attended from nine primary schools, and eight returned their forms. The majority rated it 'Excellent' or 'Good' while 2 rated it 'Adequate'. One commenting that:

'The musicians in the concert were fantastic. As a musician I could appreciate the skill and ability of the musicians involved. However, I think that the concert was a bit beyond the children and far outside most of the children's experiences. The Tibetan Monks showed a great deal of character to bring something of their culture to the children, but the lack of explanation in the beginning meant that this was lost on the children. The classical pianist was fantastic; however, again I think it was lost on the children as classical is quite an acquired taste, perhaps shorter pieces of classical with some explanation of the piece would have improved this.' Mitton Manor Primary School

This feedback is very pertinent, particularly in view of our new Musicate project, one of the aims of which is to train musicians to communicate effectively with non-traditional audiences. Other feedback:

'An amazing chance for our children to hear such diverse music performed by superb musicians.' Powell's Primary

'We thoroughly enjoyed it. In particular Anne and Nicola's interactions with the children.' The Catholic School of St Gregory the Great.

FEEDBACK contd

MUSIC EXPLORER SESSIONS: EXCELLENT (3), GOOD (3), ADEQUATE (2).

The mixed response was due to noise levels. Happily, there was a lot of positive feedback too.

'The children really enjoyed the music explorer session - the only thing we would change is that we had a bit more time.' Meysey Hampton Primary

'Extremely well organised. A very generous provision and opportunity for children to try some of the 'rarer' instruments.' Powell's Primary

'It did encourage the children to believe that they could learn an instrument. Many had not handled stringed or brass instruments before.' The Catholic School of St Gregory the Great.

STRINGS DAY AT ALL SAINTS' ACADEMY

This was a unique opportunity for accomplished young string players from Gloucestershire and Worcestershire to rehearse Ralph Vaughan Williams' Tallis Fantasia with their tutors and Nicola Benedetti during the day, and then to perform to young students at All Saints' Academy; and to inspire and engage students with limited access to classical music.

Musician and composer William Carslake worked with the year 7s throughout the day to familiarise them with the music: exploring the historical period, learning to play short sections of the music, composing a song, and performing together at the end of each workshop.

The day culminated in a performance in the main hall for an audience made up of Y7 students, Y6 pupils who were there for an induction day, the ASA students who have started learning a stringed instrument, and staff, including the head teacher. The audience was fully engaged throughout, and the hall was so packed that we had to bring in extra benches. After the performance Nicola answered questions from the audience, and also awarded the young string players their grade 1 certificates.

FEEDBACK

Y7 Workshops

All participants rated their workshop 'Excellent'.

'William was really engaging; he was weaving a story the whole time so that when the pupils got to the point of playing they really understood what they were aiming for. Each group was different in terms of ability and level of knowledge, and William was excellent at assessing this so that each workshop was tailored to the pupils. William was very dynamic, able to change things on the hoof. One group was significantly less able, but in many ways the end result was the best. William talked to them all with respect, and treated them like fellow musicians. They really understood the different elements of the music, and were able to recognise them in the live performance eg Fate knocking on the door.' (Naomi Austin, Head of Music)

'That was brilliant. You can't teach that level of engagement.' (Glyn Oxley, Gloucester Academy of Music)

Performance

Audience feedback was 100% 'Excellent'.

'Once we opened the curtains (big window into main corridor), it really stimulated conversation - everyone was talking about it. The fact that students the same age were making amazing music amazed and delighted students and teachers alike; they were so impressed with it. Some of our students fear being mocked, so seeing their peers engaged in this type of activity (and not being mocked) helps to reinforce a can-do attitude ie It can be done, it is done, and I know there are avenues for me if I want to do it too.' (Mark Aitchison, Drama and Music Teacher)

TIBETAN MONKS VISIT ALL SAINTS' ACADEMY

This was a day of cultural workshops and music performances, to enable pupils to access a different ethos and traditions.

The workshops were a great success, with all pupils and staff completely focused. The performances were perhaps less successful; there was a distance between audience and the monks both in terms of limited interaction and striking cultural difference. In light of this I took the view that the final performance should be changed to a Tibetan music and dance workshop. This worked very well; everyone took part - despite initial reluctance – and enjoyed it.

Despite the challenging nature of some of the day, 85% of pupils rated their experience 'Excellent' or 'Good'.

'It was of real value to the school. The pupils are still talking about it now.' (Mark Aitchison, Drama and Music Teacher)

WHAT WORKED WELL

WORKSHOPS

- Flexible approach to workshop format ie deciding early on not to use the films
- Being able to offer schools an alternative workshop with Luke Crookes instead of cancelling them all
- The variety and number of opportunities eg being able to offer Gamelan as an additional workshop
- Offering travel subsidies to target schools for Gamelan workshops

CONCERT & MUSIC EXPLORER SESSIONS

- Variety of music, and Festival artists
- Variety of schools, including new and target
- Comprehensive pack of information given to all pupils, signposting them to music-making opportunities
- Excellent sound quality

STRINGS DAY AT ALL SAINTS' ACADEMY

- Logistics worked well
- Lovely opportunities for pupils of all ages to interact with Nicola Benedetti

TIBETAN MONKS AT ALL SAINTS ACADEMY

- Hands-on and dance workshops were very successful
- A unique cultural experience for the school

EVEN BETTER IF

WORKSHOPS

- We would like to explore ways of supporting schools to be better prepared so that the children – and teachers - get the maximum benefit.

CONCERT AND MUSIC EXPLORERS

- Prepare guidelines and listening suggestions for schools in advance
- Use our Musicate musicians to broker the Concert
- Amend the format to include audience questions
- Ensure good quality microphones (for audience too) are included in the budget
- Ensure that all schools are fully briefed in advance about noise levels in Music Explorer sessions
- Ensure that all schools understand these sessions do not promise that every pupil will have a go
- Explore the potential for a 'Music Trail' in the gardens

STRINGS DAY AT ALL SAINTS' ACADEMY

- Deepen the engagement. William could visit for a couple of days 3-4 weeks in advance to work with all Y7 (and Y10 gcse students); they could continue to prepare and/or compose; workshops on the day would consolidate this preparation.

TIBETAN MONKS AT ALL SAINTS' ACADEMY

- Ensure all activity is interactive

WHO TOOK PART IN 2016

All Saints' Academy
Benhall Junior School
Churchdown Village Junior School
Dinglewell Junior School
Gotherington Primary
Greatfield Park Primary
Heron Primary
Hesters Way Primary
Holy Trinity Primary
Meysey Hampton Primary
Mitton Manor Primary
Naunton park Primary
Offa's Mead Primary
Powell's Primary
Queen Margaret Primary

Rowanfield Junior School
Springbank Academy
St James Primary (Cheltenham)
St James Junior (Gloucester)
St John's Primary (Cheltenham)
St Mary's (Churchdown)
St Thomas More Catholic Primary
St White's Primary
Stratton Primary
Swindon Village Primary
Temple Guiting Primary
The Catholic School of St Gregory
the Great
The Rissington School
Waterwells Primary

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