



Welcome to our second education newsletter

Since our last newsletter in the Autumn term, The Octagon Theatre's Creative Learning & Educational Schools Programme has continued to be busy. Wise Children, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Motionhouse Dance Company have been working hard with our partnership schools and have inspired students of all ages to create and develop their performance skills. It has been fantastic working with our partnership schools across South Somerset and we hope to continue working with them and building up new relationships with schools in the area for the next academic year.

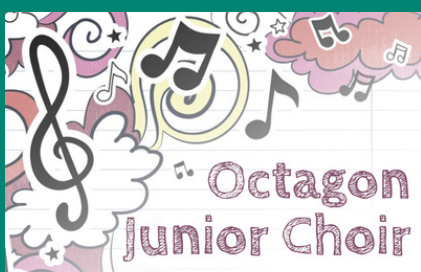
Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra performs in concert to 1,500 KS1 pupils:



On the 17th April, 1,500 primary school students in KS1 from across the county came to Westlands Entertainment Venue to watch and interact with, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO). Designed especially for a KS1 audience, the hour-long concert featured a 14-piece ensemble, who performed a fun programme of movie theme tunes. This event allowed young children to be introduced to the world of music in a professional environment and gave them the opportunity to see first-hand how an orchestra plays together with all the different sections such as woodwind, brass and strings.

The KS1 Schools Concert comes as part of our creative partnership with BSO, who this year delivered CPD training for teachers and interactive music workshops for students of St Gildas (Yeovil), Oaklands (Yeovil), Manor Court (Chard), and Wincanton Primary Schools. The music education programme has focused on upskilling teachers and introducing students to different instruments whilst working together to compose a new song with actions to perform at the concert. The song composed by BSO's Associate, Sam Mason, Stories in Sound, was also taught to teachers at a CPD training event held in February.

"Brilliant concert. Our pupils were mesmerised. Loved the way you introduced pupils to the instruments." (Teacher)



Our Octagon Junior Choir is run by qualified leaders and accompanied by a professional pianist. Open to ages 7 - 12, there are no auditions for taking part, the choir is open to all abilities and everyone is welcome. Come and learn a wide variety of music across different genres from musicals, pop, classical and everything in between.

Venue: Westlands Entertainment Venue

Time: Wednesday 5 - 6.30pm

SCAN ME!



Motionhouse inspire 50 students from Chard & Yeovil to move:



Since September, 50 students from Westfield Academy (Yeovil) and Holyrood Academy (Chard) have taken part in a series of workshops led by Motionhouse Dance Co. In April each school was once again visited by Motionhouse, where GCSE students participated and built on their learning as led by company dancers but were also fortunate enough to watch a duet performance by the company, as performed to the whole school.

It wasn't just students who got to work with Motionhouse, in January, 17 teachers from across Somerset attended CPD training which enabled the teachers to take these experiences and implement them into their own work and teachings to further support their students. Students have been able to use their new skills towards their exams, whilst also increasing their confidence in the subject and giving them the opportunity to collaborate with industry professionals.

“Motionhouse created a truly outstanding experience for our students. They were able to scaffold tasks to suit every student's abilities but at the same time inspire the students to challenge themselves and to want to do more! It was really lovely to see ALL of our students growing in confidence and working with the professional dancers on such a complex level. All in all it was a wonderful learning experience. - ”
Teacher

Drama workshop with Wise Children:

Year 9 and 10 students from Preston Academy, Yeovil and Stanchester Academy, Stoke Sub Hamdon, were welcomed to Westlands Entertainment Venue. Over 45 students took part in a professional drama workshop run by Wise Children Theatre Company. The students explored devising techniques, improvisational games to create theatre and stepped out of their comfort zone to create. It was inspiring to watch the students apply themselves and jump straight in.



“Having the opportunity for our students to work with inspirational artists such as Tom and John from Wise Children is invaluable in professionalising our young people. Not only is it great to give them new experiences, but for them to collaborate and play with Wise Children helps skill them up for their GCSE as well as offer careers experience. Thank you for Westlands for leading on such a great programme!”
Dan Morgan – Head of Performing Arts at Stanchester Academy

Work Experience

Work Experience – giving young people a practical, hands-on insight into running a busy receiving venue

We recently completed our second Work Experience week, an intensive practical insight into how The Octagon Theatre & Westlands Entertainment Venue runs. 12 students aged 16-18 from Sixth Forms and FE Colleges across Somerset & Dorset met our Management Team to discover the myriad of progression routes for working in the creative industries, before having a go at mini-tasks associated with each job. Alongside having a go at the things our Programming, Marketing, Events, Arts Engagement and Technical departments do on a daily basis, the young people worked with Little Bulb Theatre Company on their new project Listen Dance (which, incidentally, Somerset Council is commissioning and is being performed at Westlands in July). We'll be running a similar week for Year 10 pupils at the beginning of the summer holidays.

"I really enjoyed the week. It was great to meet different people and have a go at the actual jobs."

"Like Dom from Little Bulb said, I learnt that it begins now." (Participants)

Get Involved



The Octagon Theatre & Westlands Entertainment Venue, hold two work experience weeks each year, with one programme open to Yr10 students (ages 14-15) and the second programme open to Yr12 & 13 students (ages 16 - 19). Both programmes run for one week for up to 15 participants, Monday to Friday at Westlands Entertainment Venue.

Dates for 2025:

Application open: Monday 6th January 2025

Applications close Friday 21st February

Year 12 Work Experience Week: Monday 7th - Friday 11th April 2025

Year 10 Work Experience Week Monday 21st - Friday 25th

For more information on our Work Experience week go to the 'Discover More' area of the Westlands website. www.westlandsyeovil.co.uk



Summer Schools



A fantastic opportunity to work alongside ZooNation and take part in a week of workshops in dance styles that originated from, and have been influenced by Hip Hop Culture including Breakin', House, Groove, Waacking, Krump and the Funk Styles of Popping and Locking.

Increase your skills, knowledge and confidence in styles of dance theatre, working towards an entertaining evening performance, where you can invite friends and family to watch.

Dates: Mon 29 Jul – Fri 2 Aug

Times: 10am – 4pm daily

Final show: Friday 2 Aug, 6pm

Ages: 10 - 16 years

Course fee: £135

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Click [here](#) to book or use QR code:



Tread the boards this summer with Castaways Theatre Group.

By the end of this exciting production week, you'll have cast the show, rehearsed the numbers, fitted the costumes, practiced on the stage with sound and lighting and be ready for a performance to friends and family.

Dates: Mon 5 – Fri 9 Aug

Times: 10am – 3pm daily

Final show: Friday 9 Aug, 6pm

Ages: 7 - 16 years

Course fee: £135

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Click [here](#) to book or use QR code:



Calling all budding actors, story-makers, song-writers, puppeteers and entertainers!

This summer take part in a week of workshops with Stuff & Nonsense Theatre Company, using your ideas to create puppets, songs and poems, working towards an entertaining evening of informal 'cabaret style' performance, where you can invite friends and family to watch.

Dates: Mon 19 – Fri 23 Aug

Times: 10am – 4pm daily

Final show: Friday 23 Aug, 6pm

Ages: 10 -16 years

Course fee: £135

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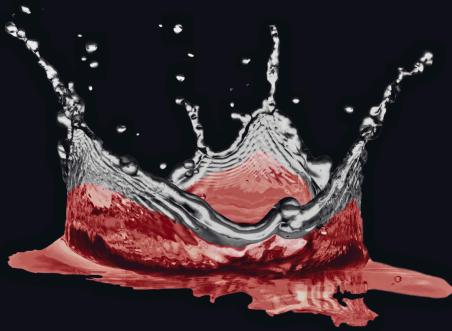


Click [here](#) to book or use QR code:

Upcoming Productions & Events

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S MACBETH

NPC



A full-scale production set in the murky Dark Ages where love, politics and witchcraft collide. A warworn Macbeth is told by three sisters that he is fated to become King of Scotland so beginning a series of events that lead to the destruction of Kings, friends and souls as he, and his Lady, try to cling to the tainted crown.

Enjoy this classic tale as portrayed by William Shakespeare with sorcery, ghostly apparitions and spectacular sword fights!

Thursday 10th October - 7:30pm

School tickets £13.50 - 1 free teacher for every 10 students

Click the image to book

This year join London's world-renowned Science Museum as they bring you this brand-new stage production aimed at igniting your curiosity, fuelling your imagination, and inspiring you in new and exciting ways.

Produced by Mark Thompson Productions in partnership with London's Science Museum this unmissable family show will ensure to capture the fascination of the whole family whilst learning something new and exciting too.



Sunday 8th September - 2pm & 6pm

Tickets from £16.50

Click the image to book

**Free
PLAYDAYS**

Save The Dates | 11am-3pm



**YEOVIL, Mudford
Wednesday 7 August**



**WINCANTON, Cale Park
Tuesday 13 August**



**LANGPORT, Cocklemoor
Thursday 15 August**



**CHARD, Jocelyn Park,
Thursday 29 August**

Panto



13 Dec 2024 - 5 Jan 2025

Fe-fi-fo-fum, a GIANT of a family panto, full of fun! Join us for Christmas 2024 as we present the classic pantomime and the ultimate adventure – Jack and the Beanstalk! Packed with music, magic, fun and plenty of laughter, come on an adventure as Jack climbs the beanstalk to discover there are giants in the sky living in a magical world...

Book today and grab the best seats for this adventure that promises to delight audiences of all ages.

Tickets from £18

**SCAN
ME! >>**



Click [here](#) to book or use the QR code



Be a part of The Octagon Youth Theatre's Company, where you'll get opportunities to perform and be involved in performances both on and off stage. Play games, create and tell your own stories, develop characters, work from scripts and learn to work as part of a team and theatre company. Our sessions are designed to build confidence, and are the perfect opportunity to make new friends and have fun.

Thursdays - Juniors (Age 7-11) 5-6pm Seniors (Age 12-18) 6:15-7:15pm £5

Creative Learning and Education Programme 2024 - 2025

We are delighted to announce that for 2024-2025 we will be continuing to deliver, in partnership with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO), Motionhouse Dance and Wise Children, The Octagon Theatre's Creative Learning & Education Schools Programme.

Our programmes aims are to offer Somerset schools the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with world-class performance companies from across the UK.

Access to this programme will inspire students, raise aspirations and build creative confidence in teachers.

The offer for schools will include:

- **CPD for teachers**, with training and resources to support lesson plans, knowledge and understanding of practices and processes of our leading partner performance companies.
- **Workshops in-school for students**, led by partner performance companies, with schemes of work which build towards performance opportunities.
- **Priority tickets to live performances**, with the opportunity for students to watch a live performance by the partner performance company.
- **Performance opportunities**, with students invited to perform at our venues as part of large-scale community production.
- **Backstage Tours of our venues**, with opportunities to see behind the scenes, gain insight into venue operations and stage tech, and learn about careers in the industry.
- **School Cultural Network, a support network for teachers** enabling opportunities for networking and collaboration with other creative art teachers in the area.
- **Access and signposting** to additional workshops, learning packs and discounted tickets by world-class companies as opportunities present.

Our programme seeks to broaden familiarity with the arts from a young age, convey the message 'this is for you', offer all students a platform and increase appetite for engagement.

All our programmes are designed to enrich classroom teaching and ensure every child has the opportunity to be inspired by the arts.

If this is something your school would be interested in becoming a part of, or for more information please contact:

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