



High Arts



Welcome



Creativity is a golden thread woven into every aspect of life at Northampton High School. From the clay work in Reception to an award-winning sculpture by a member of 6.2, from millinery à la mode to experiments in mod roc with our Artist-in-Residence Martyn Steele, our eyes are beguiled by expressions of creativity we encounter at every turn in our daily progress around school.

From West End-style productions to pop-ups and busking, the variety and quality of music and theatre never fail to impress – whether it is the juniors ‘spreading a little happiness’ or the seniors rocking us, Queen-style. These performances touch the lives of all of us, whether as performers, backstage technicians or as spectators, and, for some, bring life-changing inspiration too. We are proud to see three of our current students going on to study acting, one preparing to pursue professional ballet training and one taking up a place at the Royal Northern College of Music.

Film has progressed apace this year too, with our first generation of AS Film Studies students completing their courses while one 6.2 prepares to study Film at university and a member of 6.1 looks forward to a coveted placement at the National Youth Film Academy this summer. Our budding playwrights gained early success in the longlist of the National Theatre New Views project while our creative writers took full advantage of the many opportunities offered by the Girls’ Day School Trust to showcase their talents.

Sir Ken Robinson, one of our leading educationalists and a passionate advocate of creativity in education, has said, ‘*You can’t just give someone a creativity injection. You have to create an environment for curiosity and a way to encourage people and get the best out of*

them!’ Under the guiding hands of Mrs Beacroft and her talented team, every corner of the school is an ‘environment for curiosity’. Our belief in the capacity of each and every girl to find her style and her voice makes every moment of each day an occasion for inspiration and a spur to self-expression. This kaleidoscope of talent and originality, skill and imagination is brought together triumphantly in our annual Arts Festival in late June, celebrating all that is finest in art, drama, fashion and textiles, food and music, but, just as importantly, every day brings us a home-produced taste of the arts – and the mental and spiritual nourishment that it brings.

Dr Helen Stringer, Headmistress



There are many opportunities for the girls at Northampton High School to express themselves through a wide range of media. Students across all year groups write, design, make and perform extraordinarily personal work, communicating their ideas and extending their personalities. It is a great privilege to be able to witness their creative journeys unfold. We listen to music rehearsals being perfected. We walk past the food room and cannot help but go in as our young chefs create their mouth-watering dishes. We are treated to excellent productions, films and creative writing. Fashion in school is exciting and vibrant. Our artists from Nursery to Sixth Form never fail to delight us, as they busy themselves around their learning spaces, exploring their individual creativity. We hope you enjoy this new publication that showcases the huge variety of Arts throughout the School.

Mrs Beacroft, Head of Creative Arts Faculty

Theatre

In September all examined drama groups attended a workshop at the iconic Pineapple Dance Studios before attending a matinee performance of Orwell's *1984*. The workshop was run by a director of the theatre company and gave the girls an insight into how the cast had been prepared for the show. The play was a thought-provoking piece of theatre and gave the students much information for the written component of the examinations.

After an intensive rehearsal period at the start of the term, the Senior Drama Company wowed their audience with a hard-hitting adaptation of Büchner's tragedy, *Woyzeck* in October. Imogen Roberts took the lead role with a strong portrayal of the troubled soldier. Phoebe Abbott played a convincing part as his long-suffering girlfriend, Marie. The Senior Play was a great kick-off to the busy year of productions and performances and the seniors did a fantastic job.

Theatre Practical Uniform was officially launched and examined classes now have the opportunity to wear the kit during their practical lessons and rehearsals.

A Level students studied *Equus*, the play by Peter Shaffer, and created a montage of the key moments, which they presented at the Schools' annual Awards Ceremony in November.

Mr Laubscher and I led a Saturday workshop as part of the SHINE outreach project in which the students explored a mystery story, to examine theories and create images and scenarios related to the questions raised.

The LAMDA classes run by Mrs Seaford, had the opportunity to present their rehearsed Christmas-themed readings and poems to an audience and it was a lovely way to launch the festive season. A Shakespeare workshop was delivered to sixth form students by James Gillam who runs Masque Theatre Senior group.

The House plays were a celebratory end to Autumn Term with each House performing

their half-hour adaptation to rest of the school. The theme this time was stories by Roald Dahl. Hestia took the crown with their well-rehearsed performance of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

Outreach activities play an important role and this year have included a Fairy Tale Character Workshop to a group of Year 7s and *We Will Rock You* workshops, during which pupils were introduced to the plot and created essence machines and character walks for the GaGa Kids at Globalsoft. They then learned a dance routine to *Radio Gaga*.

The highlight of the school year was the production of *We Will Rock You* which is based on the smash hit West End musical featuring a collection of classic Queen songs including *We Are the Champions, Bohemian Rhapsody, Radio Ga Ga, I Want to Break Free, Somebody to Love and Under Pressure*. The students and staff produced polished and vibrant performances each night and the reviews were overwhelmingly positive. The actors and musicians had a great journey through the rehearsals and performances, immersing themselves in the wonderful musical and forging new relationships with fellow musicians and actors.

A Level Theatre Studies students were treated to a production of *Much Ado about Nothing*, one of Shakespeare's most popular comedies at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket. This assisted with their exam preparation. Girls in 6.2 presented their final practical performance, based upon living with OCD, which they had devised themselves using Frantic Assembly as a practitioner influence. All GCSE practical exam pieces were of a very high standard.

A number of students will be pursuing their careers in the creative arts fields including Imogen Day, who will study acting as an undergraduate, Grace Gividen, who has been awarded a place at a Specialist Drama Site for Camp America during her gap year, Mia Matthews has been awarded a place at Emil Dale Academy studying Extreme Musical Theatre and Elizabeth Mitchell will be attending the Tring Park School for the Performing Arts.

Mrs Care, Director of Theatre



Pineapple Dance Studios



George Orwell's 1984



We Will Rock You



Woyzeck



Art

The creative year began with the opening of The Studio, which provides each 6.2 A Level Art student with her own working space. The girls immediately began to build on their studies alongside their inspirational images and personal photography.

The girls in the Art Department explore a huge range of materials and techniques across many disciplines but drawing underpins so many projects. U3, 6.1 and 6.2 have explored recording with Indian ink and willow sticks, achieving expressive lines and diverse mark-making. This approach allows girls to broaden their repertoire of techniques and move away from realism towards experimentation.

The Film and Art Department trip to Warner Bros Studios in Leavesden enabled girls to gain insights into a range of potential career paths in the British film industry. We enjoyed examining so many artistic processes including set design, concept art, costumes and props. The latex and clay models of all the characters from the Harry Potter films captured my attention. The visit and the enthusiasm of the girls has inspired me to research and develop future projects back in our Ceramics Room.

Trips to Tate Modern have been particularly fruitful this year with GCSE and A Level girls engaging directly with art and subsequently documenting pieces that interested them in their sketchbooks. This process is important and allows girls to open their eyes to contemporary art and be brave with concepts and choices of media.

Our collaboration with Modern Foreign Languages resulted in a fantastic trip to the beautiful city of Seville. The girls, together with Mr Laubscher, Miss Orvoen and Mrs Bull, saw the Plaza de España and went on a river cruise. Other highlights included Museo de Bellas Artes de Sevilla, Catedral de Sevilla, a flamenco show at Museo del Baile and on the last day, exploring Granada.

Mr Martyn Steele, Artist-in-Residence, joined us in January and has been working with tactile mixed media and printmaking projects. It has been exciting to see how he has passed on his enthusiasm for sculptural processes to the girls who have been exploring the properties of wire, mod roc, straw and wood in their projects. We are delighted that girls in Senior and Junior School have been able to work alongside him. Mr Steele's own sculptures are on view around the school site.

Ceramics at Northampton High School has been firmly rooted in Ancient Greece this year and the L4 girls broadened their choice of media to include papier mâché and wire sculpture with

exciting results including Trojan horses, Medusa and helmets and urns. U4 girls have designed highly imaginative 'animal shoes' using, for example, flamingos, spiders, grey seals and wild cats as inspiration in Mr Laubscher's lessons. U4G with Mr Steele built snakes, an elephant, a hedgehog and many other exciting structures.

We have also enjoyed some outstanding individual artwork this year. Leila Shahin's Art examination related well to 'Beginning and/or End' - selecting film to communicate her personal experiences. Gigi Howard used a fox skeleton to construct her sculpture with mirrors to reflect and encompass this extraordinary response.

Charlotte Dykes's A Level coursework relates to anatomical studies and internal organs. She has created outstanding studies using wire, tights, paper, powertex, paint and oil bars. Rosie Kelly has explored beautiful textures through nature, rust and decay. Her drawings, collagraphs and mixed media work are stunning. The A Level work produced by the girls makes The Studio a delight to visit.

Special mention must also go to Ellie Harden in Year 1 who won the GDST Postcard Competition with her charming 'Blue Whale' entry. Additionally, Nandi Mhlongo gained third place in the Vice Chancellor's Prize for Fine Art in the University of Northampton's Schools Art Competition, with her extraordinary sculpture 'Deformed Horns'.

Mrs Beacroft, Subject Leader Art

Fashion and Textiles

There have been exciting new projects for all year groups this year. U3 girls learnt basic Adobe Photoshop skills to design and print their own image onto fabric using digital sublimation printing. L4 girls used technology to explore and design their own repeat patterns based on fruit and have all produced high quality, imaginatively finished products this year including Tutti Fruity Beauty Bags, Wild Cushions and Denim Shoppers.

L5 have explored sustainable design and created bags for the future focusing on eco fabrics, while U5 girls' extended creative projects have enabled them to immerse themselves in design themes of their own choice with such diverse topics as Japanese Street Style and Androgynous dressing.

Our GCSE and A Level groups visited the Clothes Show for inspiration and an insight into progression routes in Fashion and Textiles. A Level students have embraced creative pattern cutting

and developed their own patterns from blocks to create outstanding final garments, many of which were displayed in the "High School Atelier" during Arts Festival including a forest green heart shaped coat by Phoebe Abbott.

Two students, Zahra Al-Najjar and Phoebe Abbott have been shortlisted for the final of Young Fashion Designer UK 2017 which is a great achievement.

Miss Lycett, Subject Leader Fashion and Textiles



1960's Inspired Shift Dress



Paper dress workshop



Tutti Fruity Beauty Bags

Ballet

Ballet continues to thrive at Northampton High School with girls from Nursery to the Sixth Form enjoying a weekly lesson.

Exam sessions are held at least twice a year and the girls achieve a high standard, with three students currently working towards Grade 8.



Junior School Ballet

Performance opportunities are many, with the dancers leading the chorus in the school musical production of *We Will Rock You*. Junior girls danced in their Christmas production of *Baboushka*. Both Junior and Senior girls danced at the Arts Festival, demonstrating a variety work.

Alongside performance, students are encouraged to develop their own pieces. Madeline de Marchis won the 2016 RAD Dance Challenge with her performance of her own choreography, a classical solo entitled *Invocation*.

For her U4 open homework project, Lara Jameson choreographed and performed 'Dream' which was beautifully filmed by Ezri Mannion in U5.

Mrs Windsor, Ballet teacher



Francesca Cook and Alix Langford Grade 6 Ballet Exam

Music

Since joining the School in January it has been a pleasure working with the girls. I have introduced an instrumental curriculum in U3 incorporating a broad range of instruments including ukuleles and keyboards. L4 have been learning to play different genres of music, including reggae and blues. This has been part of a plan for music to become even more accessible to all, from total beginners to the most talented and accomplished musicians.

The extracurricular element of music has continued to thrive. We have staged *We will Rock You* involving many students singing and playing in the band.

The House singing was the highlight of the Spring Term, featuring every student in the School performing various medleys of popular music, whilst playing instruments. This inclusive approach is fundamental to the music department, helping students to realise they are all musical and that having fun is essential when making music.

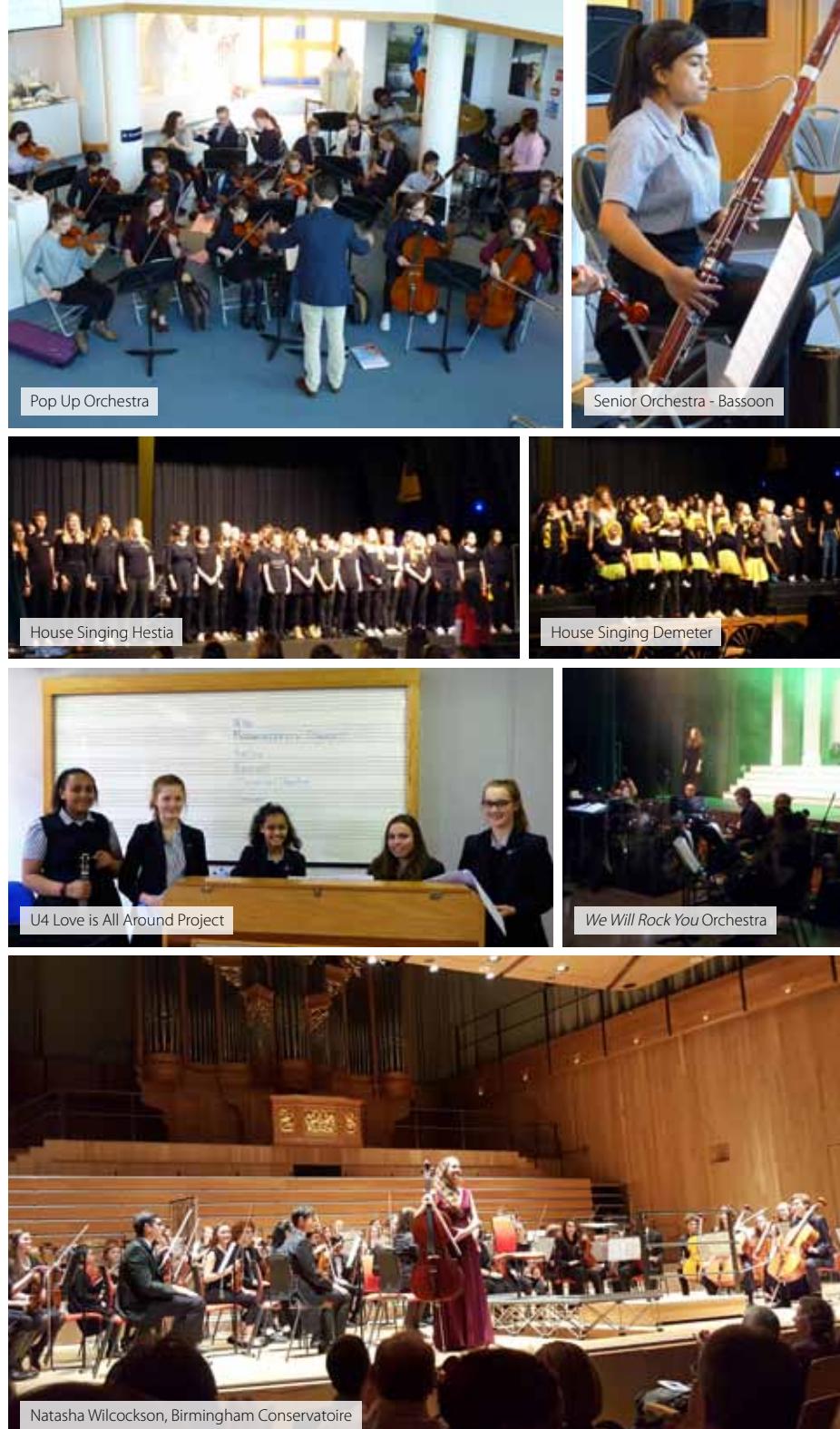
We are looking forward to an outreach project in June featuring African drumming, which will be attended by students from local primary schools, aimed at developing a sense of musical community. The preliminary rehearsal and taster-session for this project ran in May and was viewed with great delight by Andrea Leadsom during her visit to the school.

The academic aspect continues to thrive and exam classes are poised to achieve excellent results. Some of the most talented students have performed at prestigious venues. Natasha Wilcockson in U5 performed *The Swan* cello concerto at Birmingham Conservatoire which is a phenomenal achievement.

Rebecca Thomas has gained a place at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, where she will continue her cello studies. This is a great achievement and a well-deserved reward for all her years of hard work and dedication. A huge loss for the school orchestra, but an equally significant gain for music-making at the RNCM. It is wonderful that a student is pursuing her dream of becoming a professional musician and we hope to see Rebecca come and visit for a guest solo at one of our concerts very soon.

We are also proud of the many students who perform with County ensembles under the auspices of NMPAT (Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust).

Mr Nathan, Director of Music





Food and Nutrition

During this school year, new schemes of work have been introduced to all year groups. This includes an 'Around the World' project for L4 who make dishes such as chicken tikka masala and Danish pastries. In L5, the new GCSE specification has been put into place combining theory and practical knowledge and skills. The L5 girls have learnt new skills including how to portion a chicken, fillet a fish and make homemade butter.

The annual trip to the BBC Good Food Show went ahead in November with L5 and U5 girls. It was great to watch chef demonstrations, with Nadiya Hussain making a pavlova and seeing Paul Hollywood on the main stage making bread and providing useful tips.

The Rotary Chef Competition began towards the beginning of the school year. Three U3 girls entered the local round which was held here at

Northampton High School. Aneesa Sheikh won the first round and went onto the District finals in Peterborough. We look forward to entering the competition again next year.

During the Summer Term, the MasterChef competition will begin which involves one teacher and one student pairing up to make a two-course meal for the first round. This is the first year this competition has run and it's great fun for everyone involved. Teamwork is an important element so it is essential that the team's communication is strong.

Miss Knight, Subject Leader Food





Imaginarium Studios



Imaginarium Studios



Harry Potter Trip



THE WRITERS' SHOWCASE

Introducing 24 new voices in British Cinema

Film Studies

Film Studies launched in September as an academic subject. The department aims to enable greater understanding of the cinema and an appreciation of the craft and artistic vision required in the filmmaking process. Over the year we have created a working film studio with tracking equipment including a dolly, green screen and special effects editing software. Sixth Form students taking Film Studies as an AS subject and as academic enrichment have been able to develop their own film projects, using industry standard equipment.

Trips have been ambitious, developing knowledge and skills to enable young women to launch careers in the film industry. In October Film Studies students followed in the footsteps of Andy Serkis, Lupita Nyong'o and Benedict Cumberbatch, trying out motion capture suits at The Imaginarium Studios in London. We learned about the latest technology from the world-class production crew, after they had spent the morning filming Star Wars - *Rogue One* with Mark Hamill.

We also went to FX Home, the leading special effects software company, to find out about compositing, layering and green screen editing. In November we were joined by the Art and Business departments to visit Warner Bros Studios for a workshop on cinematography, in which we learned about camera shot choices in Harry Potter, tried on costumes from the films and heard first-hand about the filming of Fantastic Beasts on the nearby sets.

We launched the first Documentary Film competition in January with a challenge for students to make short films about 'Herstoric Women'. The winning entries were of a high professional standard. Kerryn Schilling's movie on the suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst made great use of original footage to explore the significance of her place in history. Amelia Simpson's Kathryn Bigelow documentary incorporated student interviews alongside Academy Award footage of the director's groundbreaking win. The National Council for Women will be showing these two films at their Annual Conference in October.



Extracurricular opportunities included One Day Film School for the U4 who learned how to create convincing fight sequences, experimented with in-camera editing, and made their own original short films. L4

Stop Motion Animation Club created Shaun the Sheep from plasticine. Sixth Form French students Lauren Crawford, Georgina Balderstone, Zahra al-Najjar, Sally Croker and Rebecca Edwards channelled the ideals of the French New Wave Cinema to inspire their adaptation of Samuel Beckett's *O Les Beaux Jours*.

Film Studies is a new subject at Northampton High School, but already students have been selected for the British Film Industry Screenwriting Course and the National Youth Film Academy. Isla Robertson, Lauren Jackson and Georgina Beeby will be studying Film at university next year.

Ms Heimfeld, Subject Leader Film Studies



Caroline Lawrence Author Visit



Cerys Cooksammy-Parnell, Runner-up GDST Chrystall Public Speaking Competition

English and Literature

The annual GDST Writing Competition invites students to write in any form and to interpret a given theme, this year 'courage', within a strict word limit of 1000 words. This is a popular competition here at Northampton High School, with numerous submissions made in several age categories. This year, we put forward and internally awarded the following students and their creations: Amelia Simpson, *The Hatchling* (6.1); Ezra Mannion, *Be Brave* (U5); Ruby Howard, *Devilish Courage* (U4). Ruby went on to win the overall competition, which is an impressive achievement.

The beginning of May marked the arrival of a further annual writing competition, the GDST Laurie Magnus Poetry Prize. Students were given total freedom in terms of topic and form, experimenting with language, setting and perspectives in order to deliver highly imaginative and often striking verse. Internal winners, and Northampton High School entries this year, were Isobelle Aphalé, *All the World Dreams* (U4) and Gigi Howard, *Why Even Try* (U5) - we eagerly await news of the final judgement.

The Carnegie Medal is a British literary award that annually recognises one outstanding new book for children or young adults. We have invited keen readers to participate in the Carnegie shadowing programme for many years. A shortlist of titles is published and our group reads these books to evaluate their merits and to try to second-guess the winner by following the assessment criteria of the national judges. The process involves lively discussion, frequent differences of opinion and occasionally agreement with the official judges' decision! Girls from many year groups meet weekly in May and June to discuss the strengths of recently published fiction books. So far this year, 'Wolf Hollow' by Lauren Wolk is the favourite... but this could of course change.

The art of public speaking is an incredibly valuable skill in many walks of life. The GDST Chrystall Prize is an annual competition whereby students put forward an oral argument on a topic of their choice, before responding to questions from a panel of judges. This year, our very own Cerys Cooksammy-Parnell, from the U5, was successful

in winning her semi-final before going on to finish as runner-up in the final in March: another fabulous achievement.Flushed with the thrill of victory, Cerys also reflected on how much confidence the experience had given her.

Mr Williams, Head of English Faculty



Cerys, Runner-up GDST Chrystall Public Speaking Competition

Junior School

Art

Over the past year the girls in the Junior School from Nursery to Year 6, have contributed artwork for our whole school focus on Faces. Various artists, including Picasso, Modigliani, Matisse, Klee and Van Gogh, have inspired much of the work in a range of different media in two and three dimensions. Projects have included:

Nursery and Reception - Felting and clay work

Year 1 - Clay alien faces, oil pastels inspired by Paul Klee

Year 2 - Clay Picasso faces, portraits inspired by Frida Kahlo, textile wall hangings

Year 3 - Prints inspired by Kimmy Cantrell, paintings inspired by James Rizzi, Folk Art Boxes

Year 4 - Paintings inspired by Matisse, 3D textile cylinders, Picasso sculptures

Year 5 - Paintings inspired by Picasso, Plaster Heads created in workshop with Mr Steele

Year 6 - Large 3D cardboard faces

Year 5 had fun and interesting sessions working with our artist in residence, Martyn Steele, creating large plaster heads modelled on their teachers.

The Arts Festival in June is an opportunity for the Junior School to display artwork by girls from Nursery to Year 6. Last year the theme Fishes and the Sea inspired a huge variety of amazing artwork incorporating a wide variety of media.

Year 4's beach scenes in watercolour, inspired from a photo of the Scottish coast, were a highlight while Year 6 worked very hard to create colourful ceramic fish, some of which grew to the size of whales!

Nursery created an eye-catching piece - a large fish made of individual tiles, like fish scales.

The girls in Key Stage 1 combined printing and textiles with Art specialist Jane Stock, to create beautiful 3D underwater scenes.

Mrs Davis, Art Coordinator

Music

It has been another busy year for Music in the Junior School. The school year started with the annual Harvest Festival assembly and the Autumn Term ended with three Christmas productions. Nursery and Reception performed *Whoops-a-Daisy Angel*, Years 1 and 2 performed *Christmas Counts* and Years 3 and 4 led the Key Stage 2 Christmas Concert with *Baboushka* supported by Carols from Year 5 and 6 girls.

Also in December, the Chamber Choir performed at the Masonic Ladies' Christmas lunch and then joined forces with the Northampton Bach choir for their Christmas concert in St Matthew's church. The girls performed two songs on their own and two larger pieces with the adult choir. The Year 5 and 6 choir performed at the Spring Fayre.

In April twenty girls took part in an Easter holiday workshop to learn eight songs and a short script within two days. They also produced a show for their parents, which was very well received.

The Summer Term started with a concert, *Spread a Little Happiness* featuring our nine Junior School extracurricular music groups. We run three choirs, an orchestra, string group, jazz band, flute choir, guitar ensemble and a piano club. All concert items were rehearsed in the girls' own time and Senior School girls have run two of the groups throughout the year.

The termly Teatime Concerts for girls taking music exams continue to be a popular event.

The Year 5 and 6 girls' hard work paid off and their production of *The Tempest* was a great success. The flute choir will be singing at a concert with six other local schools supported by the Northampton Rotary Club in July.

Mrs Miller, Music Teacher

Drama

This year, Year 5 and 6 worked as a team to tell a truly magical tale, *The Tempest*.

The Senior Hall echoed with strange noises and laughter and everyone left feeling that they had been transported into a magical world where dreams become reality.

Last Summer saw unseasonal weather due to the arrival of the hauntingly magical production of *The Snow Queen*.

It always astounds us just how resilient our girls can be when faced with a challenge and producing performances of good quality is a real test of this resilience.

Not only did the girls do themselves justice in terms of their ability to suspend the audience's disbelief in both performances, but they also learnt so much more, including the finer nuances of Stage Craft.

Mrs Fordham, Year 6 Class Teacher



Year 1 Clay Alien Faces



Snow Queen



Year 2 Clay Picasso Faces



Year 2 Frida Kahlo



Year 5 Fishes and the Sea



Years 5 and 6 Choir Summer 2017



Nursery Felting



Year 5 sculpture workshop with Martyn Steele



Early Years Performance - Whoops-a-Daisy Angel



String Group 1 Summer 2017



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