

Cranbrook Colourstrings School Newsletter

Autumn 2011

Hallo Everyone!

Welcome back to another year of music-making and another exciting beginning for our young students. A very special welcome to our new recruits. Hopefully you will feel well settled in by now!

Last year was a big success for our young instrumentalists, with an excellent level of achievement, both individual and group.

Summer term concert

We rounded off the year with a hugely enjoyable concert on 26th June in which everyone played and sang magnificently. A huge variety of music was performed and on this occasion we split our ensemble in two and the cellists performed 'Rigadoon' beautifully followed by the violin group in which the children first sang and then performed 'Kumbaya' It proved to be a unique performance, because Jacob added his own verses for good measure! It was a treat to hear some lovely piano playing too by Henry. All the parents agreed that their children had made terrific progress over the year. Well done to everyone!

This year there will be three concerts for the instrumentalists. Do come along and listen, even if your child is still in kindergarten. Experiencing live music-making can make a great

impression on children and help them decide what instrument they might like to play one day.

New Teacher!

We welcome **Rebecca Aimi** to Cranbrook Colourstrings School. Rebecca has had a lot of experience in teaching children and has a particular interest in teaching Kodaly technique, which is the inspiration for Colourstrings. She is a violinist and violist so will teach Evie, our first year violinist, as well as taking the first year and senior musicianship groups.

Sunday 27th November 10.45 – 12.00
Autumn Term Concert

Venue: St Ronan's School

We are very excited about performing in the lovely chapel at St Ronan's School in Hawkhurst on this occasion. We thought the children should have the opportunity to perform in a different venue and feel sure that they will enjoy the lovely resonant acoustics that the chapel will offer!

One of the most important aspects of studying music is being able to share it with others and this term a **junior ensemble** will perform as well as the senior ensemble. The children have had enormous fun rehearsing together every week and they have made great strides in their playing as a result. Wait 'til you hear them.....!

Absolutely everyone is welcome to this concert There will be singing as well as playing and the concert will be very informal, so our youngest

children in the Kindergarten are especially welcome. The concert will last for about an hour and will be followed by some well-deserved refreshments!

Music to listen to...

Each week the children listen to a piece of classical music for a short period.

This term's listening music:

Vivaldi

Cello concerto No 4 in A minor
3rd mvt: Allegro

Schubert

Octet in F major
4th mvt: Andante with Variations

Elgar

Serenade for Strings in E minor Op 20
1st mvt: Allegro piacevole

LISTEN UP!

Classical music is a real pleasure and also really good for you!

It is a well-documented fact that classical music is good for the brain. Regular listening is one of the quickest ways to increase your child's ability and understanding in the long term. It is both emotionally and intellectually rewarding and not a mystery at all once you've got going.

If you are not a classical music buff and do not already have copies of the music we use, you may like to invest £5 or so in one of the Naxos CDs. This is a cheap but usually

good quality recording series that covers a broad range of musical styles and eras. You'll find them in most music shops. Do ask Ingrid for our **Listening List** if you would like guidance.

Listening to the whole work can be exhilarating, especially when you find that, if you listen long enough, you get the same tune again!

Getting to know a new piece of music is rather like a car journey to an unfamiliar destination: the first time, it seems long and sometimes confusing; the second time, you begin to notice landmarks; and the third and subsequent times, you usually feel you know more or less where you are going.

Music at bedtime, or while children are playing, is a wonderful idea. So much of what is heard is absorbed unconsciously by children. It gives such pleasure for a lifetime that it's well worth spending a little time each day listening to Radio 3 or Classic FM. Radio 3 tends to play whole pieces rather than just the tuneful bits, so is better in the long run.

CDs for sale!!

Listening to music can be such a pleasurable experience and you have a opportunity to buy some wonderful CDs by **The Helsinki Strings**. This orchestra is made up of 8-18 year olds, all of whom have been brought up with Colourstrings in Finland. It has an international reputation every bit as good, if not better than, a lot of professional chamber orchestras.

There are three CDs to choose from offering a wide variety of wonderful string music.

Price: £13.50

Ask Ingrid for more details.

Music Kindergarten Repertoire

The 'Singing Rascal' series of books and CDs are EXCLUSIVE to Colourstrings and make up the core repertoire of our music kindergarten and instrumental programmes. I **strongly** encourage you to buy the set of books and CDs. They are exceptionally well presented, musically, and will give hours of pleasure to child and parent alike. Children get to know the songs really thoroughly, which benefits them in the class and parents are able to sing along and enjoy the songs with them too.

As the children progress through the classes, we revisit all the songs, and our activities get increasingly sophisticated as the children develop their listening, pitching, reading and fine and gross motor skills, so you will find that these materials will last right through the music kindergarten years and into the instrumental years too. As such they I think you will agree that they represent incredible value. For those of you who already possess 2 CDs, you will be interested to know that a third CD has recently come out. Do ask Ingrid for more details.

Books: £7 CDs: £16

All books and other materials are available from Ingrid.

More Colourstrings classes on offer!

Many of you will have met my colleague **Ali Rycroft**, who has been helping out in some of my classes. Ali has recently set up 'Phoenix Music Kindergarten' classes in Tunbridge Wells, so if you have friends who live near there do tell them the good news and encourage them to get in touch with Ali. Her contact details are:

Alison.rycroft@btinternet.com or she can be contacted on 01892 617491

And finally....

Do you know of anyone who would be interested in teaching piano the Colourstrings way? (We call it '**Colourkeys**'). This method has proved to be a wonderfully successful way to teach young children, so is very rewarding for teacher and pupil alike. If you know of an experienced piano teacher who would be interested in learning about new ideas on how to teach young children I would be very interested to hear from them.

Term Dates

Autumn: 12th Sep – 9th Dec

Spring: 16th Jan – 30th March
(Half term: 13th – 19th Feb)

Have an enjoyable remainder of term!

Ingrid Sellschop

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