

Visit from International Conductor Chloe Rooke

We were delighted to welcome Chloe Rooke, an internationally acclaimed conductor, to school today for a truly inspiring enrichment experience. Chloe is currently the Assistant Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, and her work has taken her to some of the most prestigious opera houses and concert halls in Europe.

Her impressive career includes:

- Conducting the Residentie Orkest for the Dutch National Opera Academy in Mozart's *La finta giardiniera*
- Conducting and assisting engagements with Opera North (*Così fan tutte*)
- Conducting at the BBC Proms 2024
- Assistant conducting at Garsington Opera for Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
- Glyndebourne Festival (*Don Pasquale*), Nancy Opera (*The Magic Flute*) and Opera Rouen (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*)

Her visit offered pupils an exceptional opportunity to learn from a young, successful artist at the forefront of the classical music world.

EYFS & KSI Workshop – Rhythm, Rhyme and Keeping Time

Chloe began the morning working with our youngest pupils, leading a joyful and interactive session on rhythm and rhyme. Children learned:

- how to clap simple rhythmic patterns
- how beats are organised within a bar
- how to keep time together as a group
- how musicians listen, respond and perform as one

Chloe used movement, call-and-response, and clapping games to teach these fundamental musical skills. Our EYFS and KSI pupils were mesmerised, showing remarkable concentration and a growing awareness of musical structure.

KS2 Workshop – Becoming a Human Orchestra

The KS2 session took music learning to a whole new level. Chloe transformed the hall into a “human orchestra”, helping pupils understand:

- the different sections of an orchestra
- how each instrument group contributes its own unique sound
- how individual parts fit together to create a unified performance
- how a conductor communicates tempo, dynamics and emotion

Children explored how an orchestra works both separately and together, developing a deeper understanding of ensemble performance and musical collaboration.

The highlight of the session was when pupils took turns to conduct the group using Chloe's own baton. They discovered just how challenging - and empowering - it is to lead musicians, maintain control and shape the sound.

Inspiring Cultural Capital and Artistic Ambition

Chloe's visit exemplified the high-quality enrichment we provide to broaden pupils' cultural experiences and ignite their aspirations. It offered:

- exposure to professional classical music at the highest level
- insight into careers in the arts
- confidence-building through performance and participation
- inspiration to appreciate music as an expressive and collaborative art form

As Chloe believes: *“Music is spiritual, inspiring and healing. Music fulfils unmet emotional and physical needs in all generations. Music accompanies, shapes and curates the narrative of life, with a resonance that exceeds understanding.”*

This message aligns beautifully with our school ethos of **Growing Together** - nurturing creativity, wellbeing and a sense of belonging through shared experiences.

