

MEREFIELD SCHOOL

OPEN ORCHESTRA NEWSLETTER 2022/2023

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December 2022 End of term update

- First steps with Open Orchestra resources
- Our new drum kit!
- First mentoring session



This half term

We've had a fantastic half term here at Merefild School! Pupils have been developing their musical and ensemble skills. We have started to explore the repertoire resources from the Open Orchestra website and have had some small group sessions.

Pupils have been playing the various patterns from Pachelbel's canon, and we have been working on playing at different tempi, inviting new colours into the music and taking turns to lead the group as the conductor.

We have had lots of fun and it has been great to get to know the pupils and their musical identities even more.

We have widened the selection of instruments. Vinny (Orchestra Leader) has been kindly bringing in his microphone, amp and effects pedals.

This has been a huge hit and we've been incorporating this into our line up with some pupils opting to use the mic, play the guitar, keyboard, chimes and our new drum kit.

This has supported huge development in the pupils' communication skills. We have found the microphone and effects pedals particularly successful in this regard. Huge thanks to Vinny for his generosity and brilliant ideas!

Our new drum kit!

Thanks to the help of deputy head Jo and headteacher Peter, who responded to our call out for a drum kit, the school has just purchased their very own electric kit!

It's now set up in the room where our sessions take place and the pupils are really enjoying exploring the sounds and learning about the different parts of the drumkit.

We have been working on keeping a beat and some pupils have begun to play a drum pattern. It has proven to be very popular and a great addition to our band!

Quotes from the team:

Vinny McPoland, Orchestra Leader

"It is so enjoyable to see our young people try new things out of their comfort zone, discovering their singing voices; aiding communication with each other and having fun working as a team together"

Question to pupils: "What do you think about our Orchestra sessions on Wednesdays?"

"I feel the beat in my body"

"#loveit!"

"[Using the microphone] makes me feel like a popstar"

"Makes me feel happy!"

"I love the beats, they're pretty cool"

