



# **Blackpool Symphony Orchestra**

## **Educational Outreach Project with**

### **Cardinal Allen R.C. High School, Fleetwood.**

## **String Workshop, May 2014**

Last September, Cardinal Allen offered their new Year Seven students the opportunity to learn the violin to increase the number of string players in their school. Demand was high for the group lessons and there was plenty of excitement about learning the violin.

The Strings Project initiated by Amelia Ronson, Curriculum Leader for Music, has been a resounding success. Besides their weekly group violin lesson with violin teacher Helen Harrison, the students attend a string ensemble with Amelia Ronson as part of their commitment to the project.

“Playing in a group with other musicians is the best part about playing instrument and really helps to encourage students to practise when they are at home. Providing an ensemble experience alongside the weekly lessons has been key to the success of the project” commented Amelia Ronson.

“I was delighted when Blackpool Symphony Orchestra offered to host a string workshop for our young players; such a unique and valuable opportunity to play alongside more experienced players at this point in their musical development. I can’t thank the orchestra enough for providing Cardinal Allen with this opportunity.”

Students and their families attended the workshop hosted by Blackpool Symphony Orchestra at Blackpool Sixth Form. Besides the players who have been learning since September the senior string ensemble from Cardinal Allen also took part in the workshop.

The workshop was directed by the Music Director and Conductor of Blackpool Symphony Orchestra, Helen Harrison who happily is also the violin teacher at Cardinal Allen. Students gained knowledge of how to work as part of a larger ensemble, learn how to follow the conductor and leader and advance their string playing technique.

After working on the favourites from the Cardinal Allen string group, Popcorn Pizza, Russian Rumpus and Glenorchy Grizzle the workshop concluded with an informal performance for watching families.

Helen Harrison added, “All the string players played extremely well together; they made a great sound especially considering some of the players from Cardinal Allen have been playing for just six months. We had a great audience and a lot of fun was had by all!”

Players from both Blackpool Symphony Orchestra and the Cardinal Allen string group, young and older both commented on what success the evening was and look forward to the next event.