

## ARTS

If you have a story to tell, get in touch with Shaun Shackleton on 240210 or email [sshackleton@guernseypress.com](mailto:sshackleton@guernseypress.com)

Students at La Mare de Carteret High School are busy putting the finishing touches to their forthcoming musical *School of Rock*. **Shaun Shackleton** met them

# The power of rock



School of Rock: La Mare de Carteret High School's cast.

(19899159)

**L**A MARE de Carteret High School hall was rocking with excitement and anticipation last week, as the cast of *School of Rock* gathered for rehearsal.

La Mare's performing arts teacher Jason Dodd is the production's director and the producer is the head of performing arts, Daniel Furness.

'We're really pleased that Andrew Lloyd-Webber's Really Useful Company, who own the rights to the stage musical, has granted us permission to perform it – the first time in the Channel Islands,' said Daniel. 'Also a first is that we have a female Dewey. This is very much the stage play version rather than the film, and it is

more of a romance. The big songs include *Stick it to the Man*, *You're in the Band* and *Where Did the Rock Go?*'

Daniel said that the production has been driven by the performers.

'The band, dance, singing and acting is all student-led. The last 20 minutes are basically going to be a rock show with the finale a real spectacle. The PTA have arranged for glow sticks and inflatable guitars for the audience. This will be the first time that we've been at the Performing Arts Centre and there is special seating in the Rock Zone – health and safety approved.'

The show follows the journey of a group of students with their inspirational 'impostor' of a mu-

sic teacher, Dewey Finn, as they learn the power of rock and make it to the *Battle of the Bands*.

Orla Reid plays the part of Tomika.

I get to sing one of the big songs,' said the 12-year-old. 'I've seen the film. It's really good.'

She says she's not really like her character.

'Looks-wise we're quite different and I'm not that shy. In the first act I keep to myself.'

Orla is a veteran of La Mare musicals.

'I was Little Inez in *Hairspray*.

I'm a member of the school drama club and you make a lot of friends. I'm looking forward to performing, though the music is a bit different to my kind of music. I like 21 Pilots.'

Kansas Simms, 12, also plays someone who is initially shy.

'I play Chanelle, but I'm not shy. I go to Swats and I was also in *Hairspray*.'

Kansas said that acting is an escape.

'In real life, people can judge you, but when you're acting, no one can judge, you can be someone else. When you're on stage you can be cool.'

She's pretty cool off-stage too. 'I sing and play drums and elec-

tric guitar and I'm a fan of The Cranberries. I'm currently learning one of their songs, *Zombie*.'

Jessica Birch, 17, plays the now quite famous female Dewey.

'It's interesting to see how I can play Dewey different to others who have played Dewey.'

'I'm quite sarcastic in real life but Dan and Tim have helped me to put a spin on it. More light-hearted.'

Jessica brings lots of experience to her role, she's the singer of her own band, *Vice*, and she plays the guitar.

'It is a learning curve being in a musical but this is my kind of music. I was brought up on AC/DC, Led Zeppelin and Motorhead.'

Jessica will be going into the sixth form next year and is hoping to join *Gadoc*.

'We have 60 students taking part, two casts and as well as Jess, we'll also have Dan Hollingsworth playing Dewey on alternative nights,' explained Daniel. 'We've borrowed him from St Sampson's High. He studies drama at La Mare.'

'We have also invited students in the Guernsey junior schools from Years 5 and 6 to a performance on Thursday 7 December.'

Because of the success of previ-

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Producer Daniel Furness

ous productions, Daniel wished to issue a friendly warning. 'Our last musicals – *Our House*, *Grease* and *Hairspray* – all sold out pretty fast so I recommend you get your tickets now,' he said.

◆ **School of Rock by La Mare de Carteret High School is on at the Princess Royal Centre for the Performing Arts at 7pm on Wednesday 6, Friday 8 and Saturday 9 December, with a 2pm matinee on Saturday 9 December. Tickets are £5 and are available at [www.guernseytickets.gg](http://www.guernseytickets.gg) and at the box office on 749999.**

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Jessica Birch