

# **MADE IN DAGENHAM**

## **THE MUSICAL**

**CLEVEDON SCHOOL**

**TUESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2025**

### **Arrival & Welcome**

From the moment we walked into the building, it was clear that this production of *Made in Dagenham* was going to be something special. Cast members were already in character in the foyer, chatting and interacting with the audience as if we were really entering the Ford factory. This was great fun and made everyone smile. The headmaster and staff were also very welcoming, with the front of house team led by Kate adding to the warm atmosphere of the evening. We had a lovely conversation about how much work everyone had put into the production and what commitment everyone involved had made.

### **Pre-Set Atmosphere**

Before the show even started, the set was already alive with actors wandering around, working, and setting the scene like a real factory floor. The “factory-style” announcements were a brilliant touch and helped create the perfect mood. The way that the stage had been covered with a mesh with the orchestra behind was a very clever touch with the Ford Logo on. Having been to see previous shows with the tiered seating & bit screen walls I really liked the thrust layout. It made the performance space look and feel so much bigger!

### **Direction – Debbie Morgan & Oliver Davis assisted by Amy Reed, Millie Tudor, Ellie Parsons & Ruby Ruffle**

Of course this comes as no surprise! The direction of this performance was outstanding! I run my own theatre school and lots of my year 11-13 students are now ‘teen team members’ who assist with direction, choreography & production and I think the students of this age have so much talent and lots to contribute to the shows we are putting on and I love the fact that the students have been given this opportunity. They are very lucky to have Debbie as their ‘mentor’ to learn from.

Right from the start this production showed wonderful staging of each scene and song. There were so many times that the action had to jump from one group of performers to another and the use of the new set layout was worked perfectly for this. The way that the groups could all be lined up and swap almost instantly from side to centre stage was truly impressive. This has taken so much planning and I imaging rehearsing!

Both my husband and I both said the same thing about the show. We were genuinely watching the characters perform not children on stage being characters. This is so rare with a full cast! We didn’t see anyone come out of character wherever they were on set. Everyone had clearly learned all about their character and developed them with not only their accents (they were BRILLIANT) but their body movements their ‘type’ of personality and every single one was truly believable. How lucky to work with such a talented group but also one that has taken the great direction and ideas and made them all come to life.

I take my hat of to you – the whole show was just superb.

## **Musical Direction & Vocal Direction – Polly Cleave & Katy Read**

What a great job you did. I can imagine just how much hard work has gone into the production of this show. The large group numbers had so many different parts and harmonies the rehearsing must have been really busy!! You clearly have some very talented students to work with who have superb voices. These songs however, are neither simple or easy to sing with so many different emotions and of course ranges of voice to include.

I was so impressed with the level of all the performers and their slick and near faultless vocals were a joy to listen to. All the students were so confident with their microphone work too which is no easy task when so many of them need to have this opportunity to rehearse and get used to microphones.

Hats off to a brilliant job! So impressed! The whole thing was outstanding. You are lucky to have so much talent to work with but the students are lucky to have you to guide them all so brilliantly!

## **All Strong and Well Performed with EXCELLENT staging**

Every song in the show was delivered with great singing, clear characterisation, and strong choreography. Highlights included:

- **“Made in Dagenham”** – confident and full of energy. A wonderful feel good start to the show which got the audience buzzing. The sound of all your voices together was fantastic and filled the theatre.
- **“The Letter”** – Beautifully performed
- **“This Is America”** – big, bold, and very entertaining. The way it was staged was just great with all the different introductions of groups of characters - I loved this number
- **“Connie’s Song”** – emotional and beautifully sung – really moved everyone in the audience. And did so well as on that night she had a sore throat!!
- **“Storm Clouds”** – atmospheric and powerful. The way you used all the rain coats and the positioning was so good. I loved the simple choreography for the couples that as a group came together to something really special.
- **“Ideal World”** – lovely harmonies from the ensemble. And super vocals
- **“Stand Up”** – an incredible finale that left the audience cheering and wanting more !!
- **“Pay Day”** – The choreography was so effective for this number & The costumes were great. The dancers hand and face expressions were perfect for the Era.
- **Everybody out** – I loved the ‘tableaux’ and the management in a line were particularly funny. Enjoyed Hubble in this son& the use of the steps!

The singing standard was excellent—great pitch, timing, and expression throughout. Just about every note was perfect and once the balance of the orchestra and microphones was there the sound was just brilliant throughout the show.

## **Choreography & Dance Lydia Gordon, Kellie Mockford, Liv Doig & Student Dance Captains Louis, Rosalie and Maisie**

The choreography was impressive and suited the ages of the performers perfectly. Every dancer knew exactly what they were doing, and the routines were clean, exciting, and full of life. The steps were so well planned. I loved the way you used choreography for the main cast that in many songs was simple but really effective. All the cast were so well rehearsed and performed every dance/movement sequence so well. I could see the amount of work that had gone into all this! I enjoyed the choreography of every single number but have to say that This is America was particularly brilliant the way each group came on and did their part and then before we knew it the next group had appeared with another style of dance – Well done ! Busy Woman was such a great start to the show and I loved the movement in this. Made in Dagenham was superb with great use of all the characters and levels on the stage. The Everybody out choreography was so well planned and really worked so effectively. Of course Cortina has to be mentioned with the wonderful dance team. Every time they appeared on stage with their more complicated dance movements they really lifted the numbers that they were in with their wonderful smiles and excellent dancing ! As a dancer myself I just wanted to be in the show as it must have been so much fun to perform all those numbers. Well done to you all – the hard work together with the super talented cast really paid off !!

## **Lighting – Debrah Morgan assisted by Oliver Woodman**

The lighting, designed by Debrah and operated with the assistants of students, was excellent. Each scene had the right mood, and the cues were precise. It looked very professional. The different effects that were used really took us from one scene to the next. The choice of settings for each song with the colours used the style of lighting worked perfectly with each of the numbers being performed. The helicopter effect was excellent. Every time I come and see a show here at Clevedon I am blown away by the talent of the technical teams. To have the students operating the lighting during the performances is just great. They were truly professional standard and you did a brilliant job.

## **SET & PROPS Olivia Handley & BTEC Production Arts Students in particular Arthur Handley Annabelle Pine**

This was one of the most impressive parts of the show. What a wonderful job you have done! The scenery and props were cleverly made and looked fantastic on stage. Everything felt thoughtful, detailed, and high quality.

The sewing machines have been the subject of my conversations all week – ‘how did they get them all done’ and ‘what a great design’ truly inspired. Every prop was of the era and so well designed. You must have spent hours and hours on this all!

It was so clever the way that it all turned around or slotted into a space or behind something . I think Ikea designers would have been impressed with the great storage of each part of the scenery!!! The way the main blocks moved around to completely change the place and scene worked so well.

Every set was relevant to the era. I am of that time and recognised wall paper and sheet patterns from houses I visited as a child. You were spot on ! The way you made the double bed was great. The kitchen, the Bar, the cut out laser pieces for the factory, the desk coming in and out! The brick work on the side of the factory, the signs everyone carried, The

restaurant tables .. you even had super plates of food !! So many things to think about that were impressive.

I loved the way you used the set of steps and the telephones.

I think one of the best set designs and props I have seen !

Well done to all the other prop makers too – George, Evelyn & Lucy – I hope I have mentioned you all !

### **Stage Management – Aaron Fillery & Betty Coggins**

The stage management for this production was excellent and made a big contribution to the success of the show. The show was called smoothly and accurately throughout. Aaron, who took on the roles of Stage Manager, Production Manager, and Health & Safety lead, should be highly commended. Betty too ! The calling of the show was faultless and showed strong organisation and leadership.

The backstage crew also deserve great praise. Scene changes were quick, smooth, and very well rehearsed. Having the crew appear onstage in costume between scenes was a strong creative choice- truly inspired! Their costumes matched the set and characters, and they stayed in character while moving the scenery, which kept the performance flowing. It set the scene

Every scene change was slick and well coordinated, helping the show move along confidently and professionally. Well done to you all your acting when changing scene was great too ! I enjoyed watching you all.

These scene changes were so well done that they were enjoyable to watch in their own right.

Brilliant job to all the CREW !! The student crew truly supported their student cast in such a professional way. **George, Leah, Kalli, Bear, Caelan, Frederick, Alexander.**

### **Orchestra – conducted by Polly Cleave with Staff members Pip, Thom & Matthew**

### **Student musicians Sam, Hector, Joie, Jamie, Louisa, Seb, Esme, Jeremy, Toy & Rian**

It is so wonderful to have a live orchestra at a production! It is quite a rare thing nowadays and I just can't believe how many talented musicians you have in one place!

The orchestra, made up entirely of students, played brilliantly. Every note was clear and accurate, and the balance between the band and the singers was perfect. They supported the cast beautifully.

I was so impressed with the sheer amount of music you had to all learn and the brilliant atmosphere you made with your music.

The whole performance was so professional and I honestly didn't think you missed a note or a beat. Well done – you were brilliant!

### **Sound Thom Dalby-Anning assisted by Isaac Waller**

The sound design and operation throughout was of a very high standard. Sound effects were well chosen and used effectively to support the action on stage without becoming distracting.

A good balance between the orchestra and the microphones was maintained throughout the performance, allowing both the music and vocals to be heard clearly.

Microphones were well managed, with smooth changes and no noticeable technical problems. The overall sound mix showed a strong understanding of what is needed for musical theatre.

Special mention must go to **Isaac**, the Lead Sound Engineer, whose work was particularly impressive, especially considering he is only 15 years old. He showed excellent focus, skill, and professionalism. Praise should also be given to **Rian** for creating effective and atmospheric sound effects that added to the production.

### **Costumes – Debrah Morgan & Jane Barkclay (design) & Costume Assistants**

The costumes just kept coming !!! I do the costumes for my shows (similar cast numbers) so I know how many hours and hours it takes to design, source, make, try on, add all the accessories etc.. This show must have taken so long and so much work. They were fantastic. The ford workwear and Tabards were super. I loved the period costumes throughout. Every costume was of the era and each individual character had been so well thought out. I can imagine that as soon as the cast put on their costumes it really helped them develop their performance characteristics as they matched their personalities. The children's clothes were perfect for the era. As the story progressed there were literally more and more costumes. The America scene was just full of colour and fun. The cortina girls and boys looked fantastic. The FBI, The soldiers, the cheerleaders .. the list goes on and on I can't mention every single costume but I would like to say that I noticed every single costume and I loved every single costume. AMAZING Job!

Well done to the costume assistants who had a very busy job I am sure organising them all ready for each performance with all the changes to do throughout .. you did a brilliant job! What a team!

### **Make up & Hair – Esme Carey**

I thought the hair styles that were used were such a integral part of the overall look of the show. They were perfect for the Era! The beehives and the use of the hair bands and accessories were so well thought out. You had clearly really looked into the period in time and design was perfect. I am not a big fan of wigs but yours were absolutely brilliant and well fitted for all the characters that wore them. I loved Clare and Beryls hair do's they were great and I am sure made the girls enjoy their parts more!

The make up was also excellent. Everyone had the right amount of make up and in the right style for their character.

A VERY professional job. Congratulations to you and to the assistants who must have worked incredibly hard. **Michaela, Erin, Evie, Oliva**

### **Characters & Performances**

Our moderator, Dendy Harris, was lucky enough to watch the show twice, so she saw both your casts and said both casts were fantastic, bringing their own interpretations to the characters, yet both still putting on an amazing show that kept your audiences engaged fully from beginning to end.

A huge well done to every single one of you that was involved in this show, whether on or off stage.

### **Rita O'Grady – Millie Tudor/Amy Reed**

What powerhouses you both were, giving strong, confident performances with brilliant singing throughout. You both showed Rita's emotions clearly—from doubt to bravery—and carried the show beautifully. Dendy, our moderator, who saw both casts perform, and I, thought you were both outstanding. Your singing was beautiful throughout and your tone suited each of the different songs you sang. Your sense of timing was superb and the relationship between yourself and Eddie was just brilliant you worked together so well. I also loved the way your showed your friendships! I enjoyed every single song but you were really beautiful in 'We nearly had it all' It was like watching a wonderful sit com from the 1960's. Both yourself and Jude showed such a beautifully balanced relationship with each other and the emotions in 'the letter' were really strong. Well done both Millie and Amy, superb performance as Rita. I hope you will keep up with your performing in the future.

### **Eddie O'Grady – Jude Scott/Giovanni Bianchi**

Every single one of Jude's scenes were full of warmth and honesty. Both your portrayals of Eddie were spot on! Your gentle humour and touching singing and you both had such beautiful voices, made your character very believable! Your solo moments were delivered with warmth and tenderness, offering touching balance to the story whilst your comedy projection was great. You showed great awareness of character, sincerity, and comic timing. You really had us laughing on so many occasions. As I said above the portrayal of your relationship as a husband to Rita and a loving father to the children was excellent. You really WERE Eddie! It was interesting to see your different interpretations of your role, which Dendy noticed particularly in 'The Letter'. Jude moved his audience to tears with the total pathos and sadness of the song, whereas Giovannia showed his upset through his anger at what was going on, also so moving to watch in the audience. Both your performances were outstanding – Fantastic! You both delivered and portrayed 'I'm Sorry I love you' so beautifully.

Well done! Please keep performing when you leave school!

### **Beryl – Lucy Pimble/Charlotte Green**

You were both absolutely hilarious and had your portrayals of Beryl off to a T!

Every joke landed, and you showed her bold personality, lighting up every scene you appeared in. Right from the outset your use of the slightly 'fruity' language was delivered with maturity. There wasn't a moment when we felt we were watching a young performer attempt to play Beryl— you both WERE Beryl! Everytime you came on stage you had us laughing just at your physicality and the wig was just perfect. You both looked like you had a ball performing this character and did it well. Your singing was strong and well projected. You were outstanding! Well done Lucy and Charlotte!

### **Clare – Ellie Parsons/Xanthe Larner**

Again you were both brilliantly funny comedic performers. Your portrayals of your innocent, quirky naivety added lovely moments to the show. Both of you were just so much fun to watch, so sweet and just so funny, and we looked forward to each scene you were in. 'Wossname' was great and your vocals were stunning. Your movements, facial expressions and voices were great! Your comedic innocence contrasted beautifully with the grittier factory scenes. Fantastic Job to both of you Clare and Xanthe !

### **Sandra – Esther Knott/Emily Chambers**

You were both stylish, confident, and full of personality, with such glamorous portrayals of this character. Also both of you had excellent vocals which were polished and so much fun to watch. The way you worked with the other girls showed a lovely relationship. You showed your funny and serious side with Sandra's story and your 'Cortina Girl' performances were great too. A really excellent performance throughout and again comedy was just a perfect balance! Well done Esther and Emily!

### **Cass – Esther Nash/Lizzie Peters**

Esther and Lizzie both played a lovely Cass. Maybe the slightly more level headed friend to Rita and the girls with her flying ambition. You really did look like wonderful life long friends on stage and you showed the relationship with your fellow 'girls' so well. You both had super projection and your singing great – well done Esther and Lizzie, your comic timing was super and we really enjoyed your performances.

### **Mr. Tooley – Sam Field/Jackson Barclay**

Big, loud, and very funny, both your American characters were full of energy, especially in the large American-themed dance number it must have been so much fun to do and you both really went for it performance wise! Your portrayals of Mr Tooley were both so enjoyable although Sam's accent was maintained throughout, whereas Jacksons did slip at times.

You both looked like you were having a great time on stage and this came over so well for the audience. Your singing was really strong. Well done Sam and Jackson/Zee Major – super!

### **Connie – Ruby Ruffle/Zee Major**

What moving performances you both gave. I thought you portrayed Connie so well, a woman so wedded to the Labour cause and movement. There was a great contrast to the other factory workers whilst still showing a close relationship with them. Dendy and I thought you both gave a really mature performance – showing all sides of Connie's personality and life. Connie's strength and seriousness were played so well but still allowed for the comedy to come through where appropriate. Your solo moments were beautiful. We loved your performance!

### **Monty – Oliver Davis**

You gave an excellent performance, showing your relationship with the factory workers as their senior elected shop steward in a kind and understanding way, helping the audience see how important the workers were to you, whilst also showing the then male domination in the Trade Unions! You showed your frustration we also! Your scenes with Connie were natural and caring, The hospital scene was especially emotional the sadness and worry were really well acted. It was clear how much Connie meant to you. Your performance was so confident, and so moving, and funny too at times – well done !

### **Harold Wilson – Max Mogg (as Max Larner was unwell, he was seen by Dendy on Thursday)**

What a perfect portrayal of this Character Max! From the moment you came onto the stage you had the audience laughing at your actions. You put your own mark on this very strong

character. Your voice, physicality and singing vocals were so much fun to watch. I thought you were superb. You did remind me very much of a young David Walliams in your portrayal!! Wilson's silly moments and Castle's powerful presence balanced each other wonderfully and you and your side kicks were a joy to watch. Well done Max!

Also Dendy said well done to Max Larner, who also carried his audience along with him, with everyone laughing at his antics. You have a lovely singing voice and great comic timing, with you balancing well with Barbara Castle as mentioned by above for the other Max's portrayal.

Well done both of you, look forward to seeing more of you both.

### **Babara Castle - Alex Cole Carter/Evie Gregory**

What a great portrayal of this strong but understanding character. (special note for your smooth moving on and off of the giant desk – so slick with you and your helpers) Your accent was excellent and you really came over as a stressed but confident lady who made her name by sticking up for herself in parliament! Your humour in performance really reminded me of Victoria Wood – with your timing and facial expressions. Your vocals in your songs were really strong and so well projected. You both interacted well with the other characters around you.

Super job both Alex and Evie, great characters from both of you, keep on performing.

### **Lisa Hopkins – Mia Fillery**

The first time Lisa appeared in the story I thought she looked a little young for the part she was playing but this was soon blown away as Mia gave a beautiful and mature performance as Lisa. Your accent was perfect and they way your developed your relationship with Rita and the girls was so well done. Your singing was beautiful with a really lovely tone. I really loved your performance Mia !

### **Sharon & Graham O'Grady – Eva Wigram & Kiam Austin/Bella Finney & Ben Flaherty**

You all gave really believable and sweet performances. You really did look like a brother and sister who adored their Dad and of course Mum! You didn't come out of character at any time and again had great timing on stage and a good presence! Well done to all of you and lovely singing also! Excellent

### **Mr Hopkins – Eddie Knott**

I thought your way of playing Mr Hopkins was great. You really reminded me of lots of characters in the early TV comedy series. In particular Jeffery Fairbrother in Hi de Hi ! Your accent and demeaner were so well portrayed. Well done Eddie you were so good and your portrayal of a stereotypical 60's husband was excellent and so funny to watch! Well done to you.

### **Gregory Hubble – Flynn Mansour-Moffatt**

Well done Flynn – you really did a great job with your characterisation of Hubble. You had great projection and had some super lines to deliver and your comic timing was perfect for this! I enjoyed your performance very much.

### **Bill (Isaac Nash), Sid ( Ned Redford) Barry (Ben Pearce)**

I loved your performance of Eddie's mates and fellow factory workers. Your dance moves were fantastic and the way you came over was so believable. You all have great comedy timing, superb and confident singing vocals and great acting skills ! I also enjoyed everyone of your different characters as you appeared during the show! You really lit up the stage every time you were on stage and I thought you were all great! Keep up the good work! You all worked so well together what a team. Ned did well too as the other factory worker!

### **Mr Buckton – Baxter Egerton**

An excellent characterisation for this mean old head master. You scared me! They way you 'held' your classroom was good with a super accent and physical performance. Well done!

### **Ron Macer – Jimi Wren**

I thought you played this part really well Jimi. You had to be someone who was a bit bitter and certainly didn't have great views of the machinists actions and you did this really well! Again, your relationships were well portrayed with all the other characters and your comedy timing made it a fun performance to watch even with the non PC lines and opinion your character had to have! Well done .. mature and funny performance!

### **Cortina Man – Toby Capon/Louis Collins**

What a fun cameo role this was for you both and you both had great fun with your interpretation of the smooth talking salesman role, selling this great new car, alongside the very serious issues around equal pay for women. Not that you had any interest in that! Great cameos from both of you, very well done, great singing and smooth moves.

### **Supporting Cast & Ensemble**

#### **Machinists – Elodie, Leira, Phoebe, Kayla, Isla, Alice, Merry, Sienna & Ayda**

You were all great. The way you worked as a team and reacted to everything going on with the main characters was excellent. You maintained your characters throughout with great reactions and superb vocals. Your energy in the songs came over so strongly and you really did look and sound like a group of friends and ladies together!

Ned was great as a factory worker too !! I enjoyed his performance!

#### **Dancers – Captains Rosalie & Macey with Brooke, Xanthe, Flo, Ayla, Indy, Bella & Elodie (also Toby)**

Every dance number was so well choreographed so well done to the dance captains and Choreographers. You all danced with such poise and the steps were beautifully executed. The use of the stage was lovely to see and your faces were so smiley and sparkly you really lit up the stage every time you were on stage. I enjoyed every one of your dances. What a talented group of dancers you all are. Well done! It brought a whole other level to the performance.

#### **Ensemble Florence, Alana, Hope, Wren, Harriet, Rufus, Natalie, Sophie, Orla, Nuala, Frankie, Ivor, Annie, Ria, Pearl, Ursula, Isabella & Jessica!**

The ensemble was outstanding. They transformed smoothly between factory workers, schoolchildren, FBI agents, politicians, cheerleaders, machinists, USA Army members and so much more !! Their energy never dipped. The big American dance routine was a huge

highlight—well-timed, exciting, and full of fantastic choreography, energy and fun! I was sat next to an area where lots of 'side' acting was taking place and really enjoyed all of the small 'mini' scenes within scenes that the ensemble and support added. The way the audience were made part of the 'set' on many occasions and we became the audience at the big conference etc.. really worked well. I had such a great view of the whole theatre/performance area (thank you!) that I could see the full picture at all times and I thought the ensemble and supporters were just great! To see the younger year groups making appearances as the children and then with the family units was so well set and performed. Your singing was superb and then energy you all gave to your performance was wonderful to watch.

I was particularly impressed by the waiters at the restaurant! Perfect characters!

The team that did the Cortina Girl was a great one and the number was brilliant. I loved the fun of the FBI Scene – I think I would have enjoyed that part! Which ever character the ensemble were playing at the time really enhanced the scenes they were in and gave the show such tremendous depth. Well done to you all !!

There were a couple of outstanding performances in the songs and dances of the ensemble and I think you have a superb team of younger students coming through the 'ranks' who I very much look forward to seeing as they progress through the school to take on larger roles in the future!

**Every performer, no matter the size of the role, added something special. There were no weak parts at all.**

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### **All the other helpers and Crew**

You are so lucky to have such a wonderful team to support you in your performances. Shows like this are so much more than the people performing on stage. Debrah as always did a brilliant job but I am sure she agrees that she has a super support team around her from the costumes to the raffle tickets and catering, that enables her to give the students such a wonderful opportunity to perform in such a great show year after year!

### **A Wonderful Evening**

This production of *Made in Dagenham* was truly impressive. Students from Year 7 all the way to Year 13 worked together to create a show full of heart, humour, energy, and professionalism. I would have been happy to watch it again and again. The story was brought to life with such enthusiasm and talent it was a joy to watch.

An excellent night out and a performance the school should be extremely proud of.

**Absolutely fantastic.**

**Penelope Lambert**