

## Born in the Witchwood School of Rock

# David V Goliath at Witney Corn Exchange

How exciting to be present at one of the first performances of a rock musical that deserves to become a classic of junior theatre.

Lee Wyatt-Buchan and the Chalmers Brothers have

taken the story of David and Goliath and transformed it into a vibrant pulsating production which completely captivated the enthusiastic audience for two hours.

### Dazzling!

The Director, Robin Martin-Oliver, has succeeded in mounting a professional production but without dampening the undoubted enthusiasm of youthful exuberance. The guitar plays a pivotal point in this effectively contemporary take on the old story, so it is appropriate that the music, composed and played by the brothers Chalmers, Sandy and Aldie, and Sandy's son, Easy, is so impressive and drives the narrative forward with such relentless fervour. There are no longueurs and the choreographer, Jasmine Kinch (only 15 years old!) ably mobilises the energy of all the young performers. One of the older actors, Rob Gorton, brings all his scene-stealing abilities to the role of King Saul and lights up the stage with a brilliance that is on a par with the dazzling lighting effects. The title roles were played most convincingly by Edd Birchmore (David) and Fraser Logue



(Goliath) and special praise is due to Lucy Wallis as Black Sheep who sang with a maturity rare for a 16 year old.

### Teamwork

It is probably unfair to pick out individual members of the cast as the

whole ensemble deserve credit for this first staging of a musical which has its genesis in the Witchwood (note spelling!) School of Rock. This school meets regularly at The New Beaconsfield Hall, Shipton where Lee and the Chalmers encourage youngsters to both play and write music in the rock style. Their comprehensive website [www.witchwoodrock.com](http://www.witchwoodrock.com) has many interesting examples of the range of activities and includes fascinating clips of rehearsals for this show.

### Let's Have More

Lee has cleverly used the story of David V Goliath to promulgate the theme of 'anti-bullying' and for this message alone this rock musical merits a place in the cultural output of the education establishment.

Add the 13 tuneful and rocking music tracks to the enlightening mission statement and, on the evidence of this production, this eloquent mix should become a permanent fixture in the competitive world of musical theatre.

**John Drew**