**Group: Starburst**

**Show: High School Musical**

**Venue: The Harlington, Fleet**

**Date: 11 July 2019**

**Director: Daryl Quick**

**Musical Director: Zoe Hardy**

**Choreographer: Liz Woodford**

**HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL on Stage!** This is the stage version of the successful Disney film of the same name. It tells the story of star-crossed lovers (Troy and Gabriella) who meet on holiday and against the wishes of their respective cliques want to audition for the musical which is based on the Romeo and Juliet story. Its full of romance, intrigue, sport, lessons and of course is bursting full of energetic dance routines and frothy songs.

**THE PROGRAMME** was 20 pages, A4 colour glossy, with Director’s message, background to the show, list of songs, information about the cast (with some biogs and photos) and crew, ads for other local events, information about the forthcoming production and also the launch of the Starburst Theatre Academy. There was information about the charity itself with lovely photos of those helped by Starburst as well as a whole page devoted to NODA.

**SCENERY/SET/PROPERTIES:**  The stage design was well conceived and of high-quality enabling scene changes to be made indicating various locations (roof garden) with the addition of flowers, the theatre (curtain), net for the basketball scene. Different levels were used occasionally although this, sometimes proved difficult to light. Either side of the stage were effectively used as classrooms.

**COSTUMES:** The costumes were impressive and in keeping with the story – good attention to detail. Many quick changes were done, efficiently and the results were breath taking. There was lots of sparkle and vibrant colours.

**LIGHTING AND SOUND:** The lighting was generally good. The sound was good but but there was a technical hitch the night I attended. This was dealt with swiftly and did not spoil anyone’s enjoyment. The cast carried on with professionalism not missing a beat. Due to the American accents and speed of delivery, in some instances it was difficult to understand the dialogue of some scenes and parts of songs.

**THE PRODUCTION:** The feel of an American High School was beautifully recreated throughout the evening. There were some lovely performances from the 32 strong exceptional cast.. There was good use of the stage and when the cast used the auditorium for part of the action, this added to the audience feeling included in the show. The energetic dance numbers were choreographed with flair by Liz Woodford and these were exciting to watch. My favourite song was “I can’t take my eyes off you” by Curtis Varns and Soophie Trowsdale as Troy and Gabriella and their voices blended beautifully with the talented band, under the Musical Direction of Zoe Hardy. This was a slick production and it was genuinely uplifting to see so many people enjoying themselves on the stage and in the audience. Overall, another great production for Starburst and success for first time director, Daryl Quick.

**Chris Horton,**

**District 14 Regional Representative.**