

**Review: School of Rock**

**By Suzanne Cleave**

***School of Rock* at Theatre Royal Plymouth**

The much-loved film *School of Rock*, starring Jack Black, was destined for a stage adaptation. Almost twenty years after it hit the big screen, audiences, young and old, are flocking to the theatre to see the loveable story of Dewey Finn who impersonates a friend to take on a job as substitute teacher at a local school.

Dewey Finn, played tremendously by Jake Sharp, finds himself down on his luck – no job, no love interest and no money. He's just been let go by his band, No Vacancy, and was struggling to pay his rent.

But when he takes a phone call meant for his friend Ned Schneebly from Ms Mullins (Rebecca Lock), the principal of Horace Green Preparatory School, his life changes forever.

When he walks through the school doors, Dewey Finn pretends to be Ned, and fools his way through each day as the supply teacher. Although he has no qualifications or experience to teach the curriculum to the pupils, he soon discovers they share his love for music.

He introduces them to the joys of rock, swapping science for Sabbath and maths lessons for Led Zeppelin – encouraging them to embrace their musical talents to get to the finals of the Battle of the Bands.

*School of Rock* is uplifting and full of comedy moments. The true stars of the show are the young cast who perform with incredible energy and talent. Before the curtain rises at the beginning of the performance, an announcement tells us that people often ask whether the children play their own instruments – the answer is YES!

They danced, sang and acted their way through the show, and displayed some amazing talent on their instruments.

As well as the musical highlights, there were some touching moments too, like Dewey's relationship with Ms Mullins as he helps the uptight headmistress find her inner wild child.



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The songs, written by Andrew Lloyd Webber, are catchy and you'll be singing *Stick it to the Man* long after the show finishes. The ballad *If Only You Would Listen* also tugs at the heartstrings, as the children plead with their parents to let them be who they want to be.

*School of Rock* is fast, loud and funny and offers moments of pure joy - grab a ticket if you can!