

Year 2 Newcastle Cathedral ChoriStarters

Dear Parents and Guardians,

My name is Ian Roberts, and I am in charge of the innovative and exciting music programme at Newcastle Cathedral. We offer children across the North East the opportunity to gain a valuable and unique musical education completely free of charge. For children that enjoy singing and making music, Newcastle Cathedral offers children the chance to play an important role in the diocese, city, and region. We welcome applications from families of all social, economic and religious backgrounds.

A new initiative at the start of last year was **ChoriStarters**, offering fun singing and musical games to Year 2 children. Since September our older children (The Choristers, Year 3+) have been able to return to rehearsals. Thoroughly risk assessed, we have worked hard to create a safe space where musical learning and enjoyment can continue. Singers remain constantly 2 metres apart at all sides and ends, and masks are worn by all children (even the youngest) at all other times. Special systems for dealing with arrival, departure, the handling of sheet music, and various other procedures are in place. But we delayed the start of **ChoriStarters** to allow us to take the time to ensure that we could make the experience for our youngest children safe and enjoyable.

We are now ready to begin, and will be hosting the first session on **Tuesday 3rd November, from 4 until 5pm** at Newcastle Cathedral. Sessions will then continue on a weekly basis. There is no audition for **ChoriStarters** and no prior experience is required.

The emphasis is on fun songs and musical games, and the session will be led by Gill Blazey. Gill has many years of experience as a school music teacher and is particularly good with the youngest children. We would like to encourage any parent of a Year 2 child that likes singing and enjoys making music to contact Emily Stolting on **music@newcastlecathedral.org.uk** to find out more information and to register. Even if your child is not able to attend the first session it is still worth getting in touch as it will be possible to begin after Half Term, or when circumstances allow.

Singing has so very many physical and mental health benefits. Good for self-esteem, it encourages skills of concentration, and the combined reading of words and music is a strong aid to literacy and numeracy. The Newcastle Cathedral Music Programme is committed to ensuring that as many children of the region as possible can enjoy the huge benefits of singing. To reiterate, for more information about **Year 2 ChoriStarters** or any aspect of our music programme, please contact us on **music@newcastlecathedral.org.uk**.

With all good wishes,



Ian Roberts.
(Cathedral Director of Music)