

Singing Opportunities at Newcastle Cathedral

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 those 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.

The Covid pandemic halted our singing 'in person' for a number of months, and this led to on-line rehearsals. Since September we have been able to return to rehearsals at the Cathedral. 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.

We are now ready to begin to look for our next generation of chorister recruits. For a child to become a Newcastle Cathedral Chorister they need to be in Year 3 or above. There is a short, informal audition so that we can assess a child's pitching and rhythmic skills. Precautions will be in place so that auditions can be undertaken safely. No previous experience is required. We are simply looking for children with good listening skills and a flair for, and enjoyment of using their voices for singing.

Renowned for the quality of their music making, the choristers of Newcastle Cathedral have toured internationally, and undertaken CD recordings and radio broadcasts. Each chorister also receives individual tuition in singing and music theory. As well as being a completely free musical education, choristers receive a small bursary or 'pocket money' from the Cathedral in appreciation of their hard work or dedication.

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. For more information about becoming a chorister, or for information on any aspect of our music programme, please contact us on music@newcastlecathedral.org.uk.

With all good wishes,



Ian Roberts.
(Cathedral Director of Music)