



**Wakefield
Cathedral**

Christ. Culture. Community.

Cathedral Youth Choir

Prospectus



From the Canon Precentor

Thank you for your interest in Wakefield Cathedral Choir.

Being a member of the Youth Choir is an extraordinary experience, and our young singers have the joy and privilege of being at the very heart of the worshipping life of Wakefield Cathedral, sustaining a pattern of worship that spans many centuries and enabling those who attend our services to encounter God through their singing.

Throughout their time with us, members of the Youth Choir are supported and nurtured so that they flourish and grow as individuals, as members of a talented and gifted team, as members of our cathedral community, and as musicians. The unique musical education and experience gained by being a member of the choir provides a firm foundation for developing teamwork skills, confidence, discipline, and motivation – qualities that will stand them in good stead for the rest of their life.

The experience of being in the Youth Choir is unique and can lead to a music-associated career. If, having read through this prospectus, you think your child would be interested in joining, please do get in touch with us. You should find all the information you need within this prospectus.

Once again, we thank you for your interest.

The Revd Canon Dr Kathryn Goldsmith
Canon Precentor



What does being in the youth choir involve?

Singers join the youth choir in **year 10**. Some may have been choristers, but anyone can join the youth choir following an informal voice test.

Youth choir members receive **regular free singing lessons** provided by the choir singing tutor, and we encourage them to have further singing lessons or learn an instrument. They are also encouraged to work towards exams offered by the **Royal School of Church Music**, for which they receive medals to wear with their choir robes.

During their time in the choir your child will not be expected to reach any absolute level of achievement but, by hard work and enthusiasm, they are expected to make the very best of their training and talents. The secret to their success lies in children discovering that **they can achieve more than they imagine possible**.

What are the commitments?

The Youth Choir sings **every Monday and every other Tuesday** during term-time. They also sing on a Sunday around twice a term.

These commitments are generally only during school term-time, but the Youth Choir are expected for services and concerts up to and including **Christmas Eve and Easter Day**. There are also occasional extra duties and special events.

In order to maintain the high standard of the cathedral choir, Youth Choir members are expected to attend all rehearsals and services on time. Whilst we understand that occasional absences may be unavoidable, choristers may sometimes have to prioritise the cathedral choir and miss other activities. Permission to be absent may be requested for educational trips, major family events, and one-off sports matches or similar.

We get to sing a different style of music, which I really enjoy!

Alys, aged 14

Youth Choir members are expected to continue in the cathedral choir until **the end of Year 11**. The majority of their termly scholarship payment is put into a fund to be paid out when they leave the choir, as long as they stay for the full term of service. This final payment can be well over **£400**. From **Year 12 onwards**, singers are encouraged to remain in the choir, at which point the full **£100 scholarship will be paid to them each term**, in recognition of their seniority.

We sing cool music and develop our vocal skills by singing regularly for services.

Marlon, aged 17

Special events

Youth choir members sing at special services and concerts in the cathedral, including our annual **Carols by Candlelight** concerts, Wakefield's most popular Christmas concert. These events are an exciting chance to sing music outside of the usual repertoire, often to a larger congregation or audience.



Choir Tours

The choir aims to undertake a tour every other year either within the UK or abroad. In Autumn 2024 the choir toured **Norwich**, and has previously visited **Poland, Sweden and the USA**. Tours are a brilliant way for our choir to experience singing in other places, to form even stronger bonds as a choir and simply to have fun!



Social life

Being in the youth choir is not all hard work! As a 'thankyou' for all that they do throughout the year, the cathedral provides certain social activities, including **the annual choir summer barbecue**.



What does it cost?

Nothing! There's no cost associated with joining any of our choirs. Tours and trips can sometimes cost money, but they're often heavily subsidised through fundraising, and we have hardship funds to try and make sure nobody misses out!

Choristers and youth choir members are also paid **a small scholarship payment** each term in recognition of their hard work.

Is it right for my child?

We are looking for teenagers who enjoy singing and have some knowledge of musical notation. Membership of the choirs is open to people of **all faiths and none** – whilst some choristers do choose to be baptised and confirmed, that's their own choice, and choristers are encouraged to think about their own faith and spirituality.

There is no doubt the [chorister] experience made me the cricketer I became

Sir Alastair Cook

*Former England Cricket Captain,
Former Chorister at St Paul's Cathedral*



Pastoral care and safeguarding

The cathedral is committed to the safeguarding, flourishing and wellbeing of all those in our care, providing a **positive, nurturing environment** that promotes their wellbeing and enables them to flourish as whole people .

We are a close knit group and have great fun!

Benedict, aged 15

When your child is in our care, we take full responsibility for their safety and wellbeing. The Director of Music and Choir Chaperone are always on hand to talk with and listen to parents, and the Canon Precentor has overall pastoral care of the choir and chorister families. Every term we invite parents to meet with the Precentor and music staff at a **Music Forum** to discuss any ongoing issues or queries for open discussion. This is a chance for all involved to work together to improve the choristers' experience in the choir.

After leaving the choir

Becoming a chorister impacts life beyond your child's time in the choir. Most of our choristers continue singing after they leave the choir, and a number have gone on to make a career in music. Many choristers go on to take **choral scholarships at prestigious universities**, including the Royal Northern College of Music, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, and the Universities of Bristol and Durham.

What do I need to do next?

Get in touch with our Assistant Director of Music to arrange an **informal voice test** – this is nothing scary or intimidating, just a chance for us to hear your child sing and get to know them a bit! Get in touch via email

ADoM@wakefield-cathedral.org.uk or phone +44 (0)1924 373923



Who's who in the Cathedral Music Department?



The Revd Canon Dr Kathryn Goldsmith

Canon Precentor

Kathryn is primarily responsible for worship and liturgy in the cathedral. She also has the over-arching responsibility for the cathedral choir and the musicians.

Precentor@wakefield-cathedral.org.uk

James Bowstead

Director of Music

James is responsible for the training, direction, and management of the cathedral's music. He will be the main point of contact for probationers and choristers.

DoM@wakefield-cathedral.org.uk



Alana Brook

Assistant Director of Music

Alana accompanies and assists in the training of the cathedral choir, and directs Byrd Song (ages 6-9), and the cathedral youth choir (ages 14-18).

ADoM@wakefield-cathedral.org.uk



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