

# Westminster Cathedral Choir School



**Your Questions Answered** Choristers – 2018/19

#### WHEN CAN I HEAR THE CHORISTERS OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR SING?

The choristers of Westminster Cathedral Choir sing live in Westminster Cathedral at the following times during term-time.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday (Mass) 5.30 pm

Saturday (Mass) 10.30 am

Sunday (Mass) 10.30 am (Solemn Vespers and Benediction) 3.30 pm

#### HOW MANY YEAR GROUPS ARE THERE AT WCCS?

There are currently eight year groups at WCCS:

Reception (age 4-5)

Year 1 (age 5-6)

Year 3 (age 7-8)

Year 4 (age 8-9)

Year 5 (age 9-10)

Year 6 (age 10-11)

Year 7 (age 11-12)

Year 8 (age 12-13)

#### AT WHAT AGE ARE CHORISTERS ADMITTED TO WCCS?

Choristers are admitted into **Year 4** in the September following their eighth birthday. For their first year at WCCS, choristers are known as 'probs', or probationers.

#### DOES MY SON HAVE TO BOARD TO BE A CHORISTER?

Yes. All choristers at the School are boarders.

#### HOW MANY BOARDING CHORISTERS ARE THERE AT WCCS?

There are between 20 and 25 boarding choristers at the School, spread over five year groups.

#### HOW MANY DAY BOYS ARE THERE?

There are about 200 day boys at the School.

### DOES MY SON HAVE TO BE ROMAN CATHOLIC TO BE A CHORISTER?

Yes. All boarding choristers at WCCS must be practising Roman Catholics.

### WHAT ARE THE FEES?

Fees, payable termly and in advance, for the academic year 2018/19 are £3,362.

Boys who have been offered a chorister place, but need additional financial support to take up their place at the School, should contact Mrs Joanna Stephens, the School Bursar.

Tel 020 7798 9394 Email [finance@choirschool.com](mailto:finance@choirschool.com)

### HOW MANY BOARDING CHORISTER PLACES ARE AVAILABLE EACH YEAR?

There are up to five places available in Year 4 each year.

### IS THERE MUCH COMPETITION FOR BOARDING CHORISTER PLACES AT WCCS?

There are about three serious applicants for every place.

### HOW DOES A BOY GAIN ADMISSION TO WCCS AS A BOARDING CHORISTER?

Admission follows informal and formal voice trials with the Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, Mr Martin Baker, and academic assessments in the School.

Potential choristers will also be invited to spend two nights at the School before admission, to make sure that they are suited to life as a boarder.

To apply for an informal voice trial with the Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, Mr Martin Baker, please contact Miss Lucy Auger, the Head's PA & Director of Admissions.

Tel 020 7798 9081 Email [lauger@choirschool.com](mailto:lauger@choirschool.com)

### DOES WCCS PREPARE BOYS FOR COMMON ENTRANCE AT 13+?

Yes.

Many of the boys will also sit 13+ music scholarships for leading public schools.

### HOW IS THE ACADEMIC CURRICULUM ORGANISED AT WCCS?

In Years 4 and 5 boys are taught the following subjects.

Art  
Civics  
Classics  
English  
French (from Year 4)  
Geography  
History  
ICT / verbal & non-verbal reasoning  
Maths  
Music  
Religious Studies  
Science

Boys are examined in all subjects twice a year: once during the Michaelmas term and once during the Trinity term.

#### Years 6, 7 and 8

Subject-specialist teaching in all subjects is introduced from Year 6.

Art  
Civics  
Classics  
English  
French  
Geography  
History  
ICT / verbal & non-verbal reasoning (Year 6 only)  
Maths  
Music  
Religious Studies  
Science

Boys in Years 6 and 7 are examined in all subjects twice a year: once during the Michaelmas term and once during the Trinity term.

Boys in Year 8 sit mock Common Entrance examinations, set by the Independent Schools' Examination Board (ISEB), in November and March. Final Common Entrance examinations are sat in the first week of June, and marked by boys' senior schools.

### HOW MUCH PREP (HOMEWORK) DO THE BOARDING CHORISTERS RECEIVE?

Choristers have one half-hour prep every night from Monday to Thursday, and two half-hour preps to complete over the weekend.

### CAN THE CHORISTERS JOIN AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS?

Yes, on Wednesdays: their non-singing day. After-School clubs that involve external coaches are charged to parents as extras.

### WHAT ABOUT MUSIC TUITION?

Every chorister receives the following formal musical tuition, every week, during term time.

Piano*	(1 lesson)
Singing*	(1 lesson)
Orchestral instrument	(1 lesson)

\*Piano and singing lessons are funded by the School; orchestral instrument lessons are charged to parents at £45.25 per hour.

### WHAT SPORTS ARE ON OFFER?

<b>Michaelmas Term</b>	Football
<b>Lent Term</b>	Rugby
<b>Trinity Term</b>	Cricket

Boys also go swimming at the Queen Mother Sports Centre, Pimlico, play tennis, and do cross-country running, judo, athletics and fencing.

### WHAT KIND OF REPORTS DO PARENTS RECEIVE ABOUT THEIR SON'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS?

#### Years 4-7

##### Michaelmas Term

Half-termly reports containing effort and achievement grades  
Full end-of-term reports on examination results in every subject

##### Lent Term

Half-termly reports containing effort and achievement grades  
Full end-of-term reports in every subject

##### Trinity Term

Half-termly reports containing effort and achievement grades  
Full end-of-term report on examination results in every subject

#### Year 8

##### Michaelmas Term

Half-termly reports containing effort and achievement grades  
Full end-of-term reports on mock Common Entrance examination results in every subject

##### Lent Term

Half-termly reports containing effort and achievement grades  
Full end-of-term reports on mock Common Entrance examination results in every subject

##### Trinity Term

Half-termly examination targets

### HOW OFTEN DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE PARENTS' MEETINGS?

Parents of choristers meet academic staff once during the Lent term, but may contact all staff direct by email and meet at mutually convenient times.

### HOW ELSE DOES THE SCHOOL MONITOR BOYS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE?

The School takes boys' academic work seriously, and has systems in place to ensure that every boy is working to his full potential.

- Form Tutors also check boys' prep diaries daily, to ensure a complete record of the work set.
- Form Tutors inform parents immediately there is any cause for concern in a boy's academic performance.
- If a boy persistently under-performs academically, he will be referred to the Director of Studies for immediate action, in consultation with his parents.
- Academic staff meet regularly to discuss boys' academic progress.

## WHAT ABOUT EXAMINATIONS AT WCCS?

### Years 4, 5, 6 and 7

Boys in Years 4, 5, 6 and 7 sit examinations in all major subjects in the Michaelmas and Trinity terms.

### Year 8

Boys in Year 8 sit mock Common Entrance examinations, set by the **Independent Schools' Examination Board (ISEB)**, in November and March. Final Common Entrance examinations are sat in the first week of June, and marked by boys' senior schools.

Boys entered for 13+ academic scholarships sit examinations as required by their chosen destination senior schools throughout the academic year. Boys who have sat Scholarship examinations are not normally required to sit Common Entrance in addition.

## WHAT ARE THE OFFICIAL VISITING TIMES FOR PARENTS?

### Probationers' parents' visiting times

Saturday	11.00 am – 8.00 pm
	<i>and</i>
Sunday	4.30 pm – 8.00 pm
Wednesdays	5.00 pm – 6.15 pm

### Choristers' parents' visiting times

Saturday	2.30 pm – 8.00 pm
	<i>and</i>
Sunday	4.30 pm – 8.00 pm
Wednesday	5.00 pm – 6.15 pm

Boarders not going out with their parents on Saturday afternoons will normally enjoy an organised activity.

A House Master is available every Saturday, at the beginning and end of visiting time, to provide informal feedback to parents and discuss any matters with them.

## HOW MANY HOLIDAYS DO THE CHORISTERS GET?

### Michaelmas

Two weeks' half-term holiday  
Two weeks' Christmas holiday

### Lent

One week's half-term holiday  
Two weeks' Easter holiday

### Trinity (Summer)

One week's half-term holiday  
Eight weeks' summer holiday

Choristers must be in residence from the end of the academic term until 4.30 pm on Christmas Day, and 4.30 pm on Easter Sunday.

Probationers follow the day boy holiday schedule.

## IS THE COMMITMENT WORTH IT?

Absolutely! Choristers at Westminster Cathedral Choir School not only sing all over the world, and go on to receive music scholarships at Britain's leading independent schools, they learn invaluable lessons for life. Choristers learn about team work, commitment, discipline and responsibility.

What's more, they have lots of fun in the process.

## WHAT SORT OF BOY FLOURISHES AS A CHORISTER?

Fun-loving, robust, self-starting, musical, generous and talented boys flourish as choristers.

## WHAT SORT OF FAMILY FITS IN AT WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR SCHOOL?

Families of choristers come from all walks of life, and from many different backgrounds.

The families that fit in best at WCCS are those that work with the School – with common sense, flexibility and generosity.

## WHERE DO WCCS BOYS GO ON TO AT 13+?

WCCS boys go to top London schools, top boarding schools and top Catholic schools.

### 13+ Leavers' Destinations 2018

Ampleforth College (Basil Hume Scholarship)  
Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School  
City of London School x 3  
Dubai College  
Dulwich College (Music Scholarship)  
Emanuel School  
Eton College x 3 (1 x Music Exhibition)  
Harrow School x 2 (1 x Music Scholarship)  
Ibstock Place School (Music Scholarship)  
London Oratory School  
Radley College  
Rugby School (Music Scholarship)  
St Paul's School x 2  
University College School  
Westminster School x 4  
Wetherby School  
Winchester College x 4 (1 x Music Exhibition)  
Worth School (Music Scholarship)

### 13+ Leavers' Destinations 2017

Bradfield College (Music Scholarship)  
Charterhouse  
City of London School  
Downside School (Music Scholarship)  
Dulwich College x 4 (2 x Music Scholarships)  
Eton College x 3 (1 Music Exhibition)  
Harrow School  
King's College School, Wimbledon x 3  
King's School, Canterbury  
Marlborough College  
St John's School, Leatherhead  
St Paul's School  
The Harrodian School  
Tonbridge School x 2  
Whitgift School  
Winchester College x 3 (1 Music Scholarship)

### 13+ Leavers' Destinations 2016

Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School  
Charterhouse  
City of London School for Boys  
Downside School (1 x Music Scholarship)  
Dulwich College x 3  
Eton College  
Harrow School x 3 (1 x Music exhibition)  
King's School, Canterbury  
London Oratory School  
Radley College  
St Edward's School, Oxford  
St Paul's School  
Tonbridge School  
University College School x3  
Wetherby School x 2  
Whitgift School  
Winchester College x 4 (2 x Music Scholarship)

### 13+ Leavers' Destinations 2015

Ampleforth College (1 x Music Scholarship)  
City of London School  
Dulwich College x 3  
Eton College x 3 (3 x Music Scholarships)  
King's Canterbury x 2  
Marlborough College x 2  
Radley College  
Reeds School  
Sherborne School  
Tonbridge School  
Westminster School x 3 (1 x Music Scholarship)  
Wetherby School x 4  
Winchester College x 3 (1 x Music Scholarship)

### 13+ Leavers' Destinations 2014

Ampleforth College (Academic Scholar)  
Bradfield School  
Caterham School  
Charterhouse School x 4  
Dulwich College x 2  
Eton College  
Harrow School x 2 (inc 1 Music Scholarship)  
Latymer Upper School  
London Oratory School  
St Benedict's School, Ealing  
St Paul's School x 3  
Stonyhurst College (Music Scholar)  
Uppingham School (Music Scholar)  
Winchester College (Music Scholar)

### 13+ Leavers' Destinations 2013

Ampleforth College (2 x Music Scholarship)  
Bancrofts School  
City of London School x 2  
Dulwich College x 2  
Emanuel School  
Harrow School x 2  
King Edward VI School, Stratford-upon-Avon  
Kings College School, Wimbledon x 2  
Latymer Upper School x 2  
Marlborough College x 2  
Oratory School, London  
St Paul's School x 2  
Tonbridge School  
Westminster School x 3  
Winchester College

## WHOM DO WE CONTACT NOW?

To apply for an informal voice trial with the Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, Mr Martin Baker, please contact Miss Lucy Auger, the Head's PA & Director of Admissions.

Tel 020 7798 9081 Email [lauger@choirschool.com](mailto:lauger@choirschool.com)

APPENDIX 1 –  
INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR PARENTS UNDER THE  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL STANDARDS REGULATIONS, PART 6

**WHO IS THE HEAD MASTER OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR SCHOOL?**

Mr Neil McLaughlan

**WHAT IS THE SCHOOL'S ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER?**

Westminster Cathedral Choir School, Ambrosden Avenue, London SW1P 1QH

Tel 020 7798 9081

**WHO IS THE PROPRIETOR OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR SCHOOL?**

The Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee

Vaughan House

46 Francis Street

London

SW1P 1QN

Authority is delegated from the Trustees, through an Instrument of Government, to a Body of Governors, appointed by the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster.

**WHO IS THE CHAIR OF THE GOVERNING BODY AND HOW DO I CONTACT HIM?**

The Chair is Mr David Heminway, who can be contacted at the School's address.

The following information is available on the School's website: [www.choirschool.com](http://www.choirschool.com)

- A statement of the School's ethos (including its religious ethos) and aims
- Particulars of the School's policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions
- Particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with statements and pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Particulars of the School's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations
- Details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year
- The number of staff at the School, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications

If you would prefer hard copy, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Tel 020 7798 9081 Email [lauger@choirschool.com](mailto:lauger@choirschool.com)



Westminster Cathedral Choir School Ambrosden Avenue London SW1P 1QH

**General Enquiries** 020 7798 9081

**Email** [office@choirschool.com](mailto:office@choirschool.com)

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