WCCS

Catholic prep school for boys aged 4 – 13

Your Questions Answered Choristers – 2026/27

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 days and times during the term.

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays (Mass), 5.30 pm

Sundays (Mass) 12.00 pm, (Solemn Vespers and Benediction) 4.00 pm

HOW MANY YEAR GROUPS ARE THERE AT WCCS?

There are currently nine year groups at WCCS:
Reception (age 4-5)
Year 1 (age 5-6)
Year 2 (age 6-7)
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?

All choristers and probationers board between Sunday and Thursday evenings only.

Boys return home to their families after School on Fridays, until 9.45 am on Sunday mornings.

HOW MANY BOARDING CHORISTERS ARE THERE AT WCCS?

There are around 20 boarding choristers at the School, spread over five year groups.

HOW MANY DAY BOYS ARE THERE?

There are around 230 day boys at the School.

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

No. Applications from baptised Christians who respect the beliefs and traditions of Westminster Cathedral are welcomed.

WHAT ARE THE FEES?

Fees, payable termly and in advance, for the academic year 2026/27 are £4,622 a term (inclusive of VAT)

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

Tel 020 7798 9394 Email finance@choirschool.com

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, Simon Johnson, 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, please contact Lucy Freeman, the Director of Admissions..

Tel 020 7798 9081 Email lfreeman@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 (PSHCE)
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 (PSHCE)
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).

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.

WHAT SPORTS ARE ON OFFER?

Michaelmas Term	Football
Lent Term	Rugby
Trinity Term	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)**.

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.

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 depart for the holidays after Mass at 12.00pm on Christmas Day and Easter Sunday.
Probationers follow the day boys' holiday schedule.

WHAT ARE THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR COLLECTION & DROP-OFF FOR PARENTS?

Boys in Years 4 & 5 are collected at 3.40 pm on Fridays; boys in Years 6, 7 & 8 at 6.30 pm on Fridays, after Mass.

All boys are dropped off at WCCS on Sunday mornings, at 9.45 am.

In the Trinity Term, boys in Year 5 begin to follow the full chorister routine.

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.

WHERE DO WCCS BOYS GO ON TO AT 13+?

13+ Leavers' Destinations 2026
Brighton College (1 x Art Scholarship)
Dulwich College x 6 (1 x Academic Scholarship)
Eton College x 10
Gordonstoun (1 x Music Scholarship)
Hampton School (1 x Sports Scholarship)
Harrow School x 3 (1 x Music Award)
King's College School, Wimbledon
St Edward's School, Oxford (1 x Sports Award)
St Paul's School x 2
Tonbridge School
Westminster School x 3

13+ Leavers' Destinations 2025
Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School
City of London School
Dulwich College x 5 (1 x Academic Scholarship)
Eton College x 9 (1 x King's Scholarship, 1 x Music Exhibition)
Harrow School x 3 (1 x Music Scholarship)
King's College School, Wimbledon (1 x Academic Scholarship)
Marlborough College
Radley College x 3 (1 x Music Scholarship)
St Edward's School, Oxford
St Paul's School x 4
Tonbridge School x 2
Westminster School x 2
Wetherby School
Worth School

13+ Leavers' Destinations 2024
City of London School
Ampleforth College (Music Scholarship)
Berkhamsted School
City of London School x 2
Dulwich College x 4 (1 Academic & Music Scholarship)
Eton College x 3
Harrow School x 2
King's College School, Wimbledon
King's School, Canterbury x 2 (2 Music Scholarship)
Radley College (Music & Sports Scholarship)
Sherborne School
Tonbridge School
Westminster School x 4
Wetherby School x 2
Whitgift School
Worth School (Music Scholarship)

13+ Leavers' Destinations 2023
City of London School x 5
Dulwich College x 5 (2 Academic Scholarships)
Eton College x 6 (1 Music Exhibition)
Harrow School x 5
King's College School, Wimbledon
Radley College x 3 (1 Music Exhibition)
London Oratory School
St Paul's School x 2
Westminster School x 3
Winchester College

13+ Leavers' Destinations 2022
Canford School
Dulwich College
Eton College x 2
Harrow School x 2
Latymer Upper School
King's College School, Wimbledon x 2
King's School, Canterbury (Music Scholarship)
Radley College x 2 (1 Music Scholarship)
St James's School for Boys
St Paul's School x 3
Tonbridge School
Wellington College
Westminster School
Wetherby School
Winchester College x 2
Worth School x 2

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

WHO IS THE HEAD MASTER OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR SCHOOL?

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

- 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 rbonnet@choirschool.com

www.choirschool.com

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