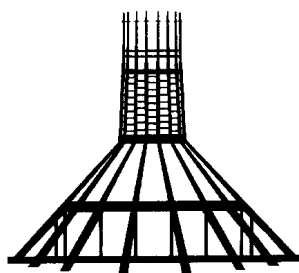


# LIVERPOOL METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL CHOIR

*Joining the choir*



**Metropolitan Cathedral**  
of Christ the King Liverpool

*A message from the  
Archbishop of Liverpool*



Each Sunday at Mass we sing the song of the Angels ('Glory to God in the highest') and the song of the heavenly chorus (Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hosts.) Singing is an important part of our Catholic tradition: indeed St Augustine once said, 'To sing is to pray twice.'

We are very fortunate at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral to have choirs leading music in the liturgy on a daily basis. It is through their ministry of music that many people who enter the Cathedral come to know the beauty of God.

Being a chorister is a unique opportunity for a young child in our Archdiocese. It is an opportunity to engage with music, learn more about our Catholic faith and bring joy and hope to many.

The high musical standards that the choirs achieve on a daily basis do not happen without sacrifice: many hours are spent in rehearsal and liturgies take place each day. But for those who are fortunate enough to have the experience of being a chorister, it is indeed a life-forming experience.

I commend to you the opportunity for your child to consider a choristership at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral.

Yours in Christ,

+ Malcolm McMahon OP  
**Archbishop of Liverpool**

## Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral Choir

The choir of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral offer boys and girls the very best musical education along with unique opportunities to take part in numerous liturgies, concerts, tours and broadcasts on radio and TV.

Being a chorister provides a unique musical education, and opens up a world of new experiences.

We are looking for boys and girls who:

- have a passion for singing
- enjoy working together as a team with others
- want to excel on a daily basis
- will be ambassadors for both the cathedral and the city
- want to experience other places and cultures on tours
- enjoy a musical challenge that will set them up for life!

### How does the choir work?

Boys are normally accepted into the Cathedral Choir between the ages of 7 and 9. The 25 boys receive places at the cathedral's junior and senior choir schools in Sandfield Park: up to the age of 11 at Runnymede St Edward's School, and thereafter by automatic entry to St Edward's College under the aptitude for music criteria.

Girls receive places at St Edward's College for the duration of their school career. They begin in the choir as probationers in year 6 (during which time they remain at their primary school) before beginning at St Edward's College in year 7, admitted under the aptitude for music criteria.

Both boys and girls start as probationers, gradually increasing their commitment and contribution to the choir. Duties increase as they gain experience until they become full choristers following the complete routine of the choir.

### Would my child have to change schools?

**BOYS:** Yes - all boy choristers are educated at the two cathedral choir schools. This is necessary as the choir rehearse most mornings directly before school lessons begin, and travel by coach from the choir schools to the cathedral for services.

Fees are payable at Runnymede, but not at St Edward's College. This means boys in years 3-6 do have to pay school fees. However once they enter St Edward's College in year 7, no school fees are payable. Limited financial assistance is available to assist parents of boys in years 3-6 with school fees at Runnymede.

**GIRLS:** Girl choristers remain in their primary school until year 7, at which point they are admitted to St Edward's College.





### **What are the benefits of being a cathedral chorister?**

Choristers become used to working to the highest standards in all that they do on a daily basis. Skills that they learn in choir activities are very much transferable such as:

- Self-discipline, organisation and responsibility
- Time management and team work
- Ability to concentrate for prolonged periods
- Reading and singing in a variety of languages
- Striving for excellence on a daily basis

Musically, all choristers receive theory and vocal tuition, providing them with skills that will be of great benefit beyond their time in the choir.

### **Where do the choristers sing?**

Boy and girl choristers have the daily privilege of singing in Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, a truly unique building with breathtaking architecture and a wonderful acoustic! In addition to this, the choir goes on tour, both nationally and internationally, as well as performing at concerts and services in churches and concert halls in the locality.

Recent foreign tours have included Rome, Germany, USA, Canada and France. Local trips have included the Isle of Man, London, Birmingham, Dublin, Yorkshire and Worcester.

The choristers regularly broadcast on radio and television and record critically acclaimed CDs. In 2013, Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral treble Jack Topping became the youngest ever artist to sign a professional recording contract with DECCA records, releasing his debut CD 'Wonderful World' to a worldwide audience.

Additionally the choristers on occasion perform with other notable musical groups such as the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the City of London Sinfonia and frequently collaborate with our sister Cathedral at the other end of Hope Street.

### **What costs are involved?**

Aside from school fees for boy choristers in years 3-6, there are NO costs payable to the Cathedral for this tremendous musical training. The boys and girls receive daily musical tuition and direction from the cathedral music staff and individual voice lessons are provided free to all choristers.



## **Does my child need to play a musical instrument?**

Playing a musical instrument is of huge benefit to choristers. It enables them to expand their musicianship, develop their musical reading skills and allows them to continue with music making beyond their days as a chorister.

Many children who attend for audition as choristers already play a musical instrument. Once accepted as a probationer, your child would be expected to have regular lessons on one or more instruments for (at least) the duration of their choristership. Bursaries from the Cathedral are available towards the cost of such lessons, and all year 7 choristers at St Edward's College are currently provided with a free weekly instrumental lesson.

## **The Cathedral's Choir Schools**

### ***Runnymede St Edward's School***

Runnymede St Edward's School, is a co-educational, Catholic independent school administered by the Congregation of Christian Brothers and is the junior choir school to the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, Liverpool. Runnymede educates and cares for children between the ages of three and eleven years, and has a proven track record of academic and musical excellence, a fantastic range of extra-curricular activities and an atmosphere of openness.



The recent Independent Schools' Inspectorate report noted that at Runnymede St Edward's "The pupils' success in academic work, sport and music is due largely to their very positive attitudes to learning, the opportunities provided by the curriculum and the good quality of teaching they receive. Their behaviour is excellent and they enjoy high-quality relationships among themselves and with their teachers and other staff."

### ***St Edward's College***



St Edward's College is a successful 11-18 Catholic co-educational school located in West Derby in Liverpool. It has been the Senior Choir School to the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King since the 1970s. It has approximately 1100 pupils and 130 staff and is highly successful; being graded 'Outstanding' in its last three Ofsted and Archdiocesan inspections. The College is heavily oversubscribed, with several applications for every Year 7 place. Pupil attainment is very high with most pupils leaving the College bound for University.

The College has an enviable reputation for its academic achievement, its sporting success in many disciplines and the quality of its music education. The priorities of serving the community, demonstrating commitment, caring for others and striving for success, which underpin the education provided to all pupils, are based firmly on the values promoted by Blessed Edmund Rice, the founder of the Congregation of Christian Brothers and Father James Nugent who, in 1853, established the Catholic Institute in Liverpool, which later became St Edward's College.







### **What do choristers go on to do in life?**

Many cathedral choristers go on to excel in life, reaching the highest rungs of their chosen profession, often due to the transferable skills learned during their days as a chorister.

Former choristers of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral have gone on to be international vocal soloists, Olympic swimmers, barristers, headteachers, doctors and many other professions.

### **Is a chorister's life all work?**

No, not at all! The choristers have games rooms at the cathedral with table tennis, computer games etc. Each year the choristers compete against other cathedral choirs at football and rounders in addition to an active social calendar organised by the Choir Association.

### **How will I know that my child's welfare will be taken seriously?**

The choir schools and the cathedral work very closely each week, liaising over all matters concerning the choristers.

The cathedral safeguarding officer oversees all activities that take place at the cathedral involving young people, ensuring that a safe and welcoming environment is created and maintained. All adults involved in any way with the choir are required to obtain an enhanced DBS clearance, and regular training is provided.

### **How can I get involved as a parent?**

There is a very active choir association which brings together parents and friends of the choir to help raise money to support choir activities. These largely take the form of social events to which all parents and choristers are invited. Recent such events have included:

- 'Race Night'
- 'Songs from the Shows'
- 'Wine and Wisdom'
- Sponsored walks and bike rides

Many parents also volunteer to assist with supervision of choristers, both during the week and on Sundays.



### **When do the choirs sing?**

Both boy and girl choristers follow a weekly routine which, on occasion, is adapted due to special events such as broadcasts, feast days, concerts and tours. Calendars are issued on a termly basis, in advance.

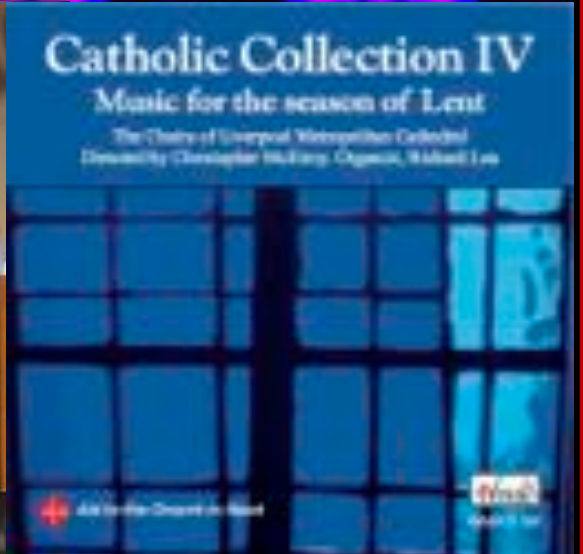
#### ***Boys' usual weekly routine***

Monday:		No rehearsals
Tuesday:	07.55-08.55 12.30-13.00 16.00-18.00	Rehearsal (Runnymede) Junior choristers' rehearsal (Runnymede) Rehearsal and Mass (Cathedral)
Wednesday:	07.55-08.55	Rehearsal (Runnymede) No after-school commitment
Thursday:	07.55-08.55 16.00-18.30	Rehearsal (Runnymede) Rehearsal and choral evening prayer (Cathedral)
Friday:	07.55-08.55 16.00-19.10	Rehearsal (Runnymede) Rehearsal and choral evening prayer (Cathedral)
Sunday:	09.30-15.45	Rehearsals, Mass and choral evening prayer (Cathedral)

#### ***Girls' usual weekly routine***

Monday:	07.55-08.55 16.00-18.00	Rehearsal (St Edward's College) Rehearsal and Mass (Cathedral)
Tuesday:	07.55-08.55	Rehearsal (St Edward's College)
Wednesday:	07.55-08.55 16.00-18.30	Rehearsal (St Edward's College) Rehearsal and choral evening prayer (Cathedral)
Thursday:	07.55-08.55	Rehearsal (St Edward's College)
Friday:		No rehearsals
Sunday:		No fixed commitment, but girls generally sing 2-3 Sundays each term.





### **What choristers and their parents say:**

'Being in the choir has been a fabulous opportunity for me. In my time in the choir so far I have sung on TV and radio, travelled to Germany, Ireland and Italy, sung for the Pope and recorded three CDs. But most of all, I am privileged to sing in our beautiful Cathedral several times a week.'

*Girl Chorister, aged 15*

'My son has learnt much from his time in the choir. Despite the long hours and hard work he is happy, and in fact better organised and equipped to manage his daily workload. The welcome we received from the choir family when he joined was wonderful and really helped us to feel at home in the Cathedral.'

*Boy chorister parent*

'Looking back, my years in the choir taught me so much. I had my first exposure to multiple languages, I learnt to multi task, and tried my very hardest every day, even from a young age. My time as a chorister is a cherished memory, and something that has formed me today as an adult.'

*Former chorister*

'I love being in choir. We get to sing together every day, play football and table tennis and go away on trips!'

*Boy chorister, aged 10*

## **BOYS key information and dates for recruitment into the choir in September 2016**

Boys currently in years 2-4 *only* may attend the 'Chorister for a Day' event and apply for a Voice Trial.

A maximum of six boys currently in year 2 will be offered places to begin in September 2016 in year 3. Places for boys currently in years 3 and 4 will be offered where space currently exists in the choir.

### **'Boys Make Noise': Tuesdays, 12<sup>th</sup> January – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016: 18.00-18.40**

*A perfect way for boys currently in years 2-4 to try out singing together with other boys of a similar age at the Cathedral. Sessions will include learning vocal and aural skills, practicing new songs and meeting new friends. Places available on a first come first served basis and limited to no more than 20 boys. Cost of each session £2.*

### **Chorister for a day: Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

*An opportunity for boys currently in years 2-4 to come and meet the Cathedral choristers and find out what they get up to on a typical Sunday. Included in the day is a 'mock voice trial' so that boys and their parents can see what is expected in the forthcoming voice trials.*

### **Voice trials: Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

*The auditions for entrance into the Cathedral Choir for boys in years 2-4. Come prepared to sing a piece of your choice (a hymn, song or even 'Happy Birthday'), play an instrument (if you play one) and do some vocal and aural tests.*

*Choristers are selected on the basis of their musical aptitude as displayed during the voice trial. Voice trials are assessed by members of the Cathedral Music Department, and the process is moderated by an external assessor.*

*Since boy choristers are required to change Primary school at an untypical point in their schooling, boys who successfully complete a voice trial are invited to spend a day at Runnymede. As part of that day an academic assessment will be made, since it is very important to ensure that on transfer to Runnymede appropriate provision is made for the child, which is the sole purpose of the academic assessment.*

The Director of Music is happy to meet and hear a boy currently in years 2-4 sing at any stage during the year to offer advice as to their suitability for a choristership.

**To register for any of these events, contact the Music Department Administrator Sarah O'Keeffe (contact details on back cover of this booklet).**

**All places must be booked in advance and spaces are available on a first come, first served basis.**



## **GIRLS key information and dates for recruitment into the choir in September 2016**

Girls currently in year 5 *only* may attend the Chorister for a day event and apply for a Voice Trial.

A maximum of 6 girls will be offered places to start in September 2016 in year 6. Girls remain in their primary school as a probationary chorister before taking up a place at St Edward's College in September 2017 when they move into year 7.

### **Chorister for a day: Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

*Girls currently in year 5 are invited to come and meet the Cathedral choristers and find out what they get up to on a typical Sunday. Included in the day is a 'mock voice trial' so that girls and their parents can see what is expected in the forthcoming voicetrials.*

### **Voice trials:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Round: Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Round: Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

*The auditions for entrance into the Cathedral Choir for girls currently in year 5. Come prepared to sing a piece of your choice (a hymn, song or even 'Happy Birthday'), play an instrument (if you play one) and do some vocal and aural tests.*

*A maximum of 12 girls will be called back after the first round of auditions to take part in the second round.*

*Choristers are selected on the basis of their musical aptitude as displayed during the voice trial. Voice trials are assessed by members of the Cathedral Music Department, and the process is moderated by an external assessor.*

**To register for either of these events, contact the Music Department Administrator Sarah O'Keeffe (contact details on back cover of this booklet).**



**All places must be booked in advance and spaces are available on a first come, first served basis.**

**For further information, or to register for any of the events described above, please contact:**

**Sarah O’Keeffe**  
Music Administrator  
Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral  
Mount Pleasant  
Liverpool L3 5TQ

music@metcathedral.org.uk  
0151 708 7283  
www.liverpoolmetrocathedral.org.uk



 [www.facebook.com/LpoolMetMusic](http://www.facebook.com/LpoolMetMusic)  
 [@LpoolMetMusic](https://twitter.com/LpoolMetMusic)