



St Peter's School Music Department Scholarship Information Booklet

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MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Music awards are available at 13+ and 16+ entry levels and these will remain in place as we transition to an 11-18 school in 2025.

Scholarships are awarded to young instrumentalists and singers who can offer a broad range of skills to the Music School.

Beauty of sound, secure technique and strong sight-reading are the key skills we are looking for. The primary purpose of the awards is to provide leaders for our ensemble programme but many also become confident soloists as well. The ability to play an orchestral/band instrument is essential and singing is an advantage. A good background in music theory is also highly recommended.

Scholarship awards can carry a concession on fees of up to 30% of a day fee. The school also covers tuition on up to three instruments and instrumental/singing examination fees for the duration of the award. Please note that these awards can be supplemented by means-tested bursaries.

At audition, we expect a good Grade 5 on the first instrument for 13+ entry and Grade 7 for 16+. For full scholarship, we would expect to see a second instrument offered to a similar level.

Instrumental awards are available to applicants who offer a good Grade 5 level at 13+ or Grade 7 at 16+ on an instrument/voice with strong sight-reading skills and a good background in theory. These awards cover tuition and instrumental/singing examination fees on an instrument/voice.

What is expected of a music award holder?

Award holders will contribute to two ensemble sessions a week for each instrument/voice that is covered under their award. Their participation in additional sessions needs to be balanced against their overall co-curricular offering and academic commitments.

Clarinet and saxophone players and those who play both a string and wind instrument may alternate between ensembles to enable them to experience more repertoire. Award holders, especially in the Fifth and Sixth Forms, might wish to join select ensembles such as the Chamber Choir, Swing Band and Barbershops in addition to their core offering.

We have a strong academic record in Music, with 91% A*/A (9-7) at GCSE and 64% A*/A at A Level since 2010. Award holders are expected to study Music at GCSE, and many decide to take the subject at A Level. Seven pupils have gone on to study Music at Oxbridge since 2010, as well as a number to Durham and the London University colleges (KCL, RHUL) with some being awarded scholarships into these institutions. Four pupils have gone to the RNCM, and others to the RCM, RAM, RCS and Leeds Conservatoire.

External lessons

Award funds can only be used for lessons taken in the Music School. The exception to this would be a candidate learning an instrument that is not taught in school.

THE SENIOR SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

St Peter's School 13-18 has one of the largest and most diverse Music Departments in the North and music plays an important part in school life.

The Music School houses 13 teaching spaces, including our newly refurbished recording studio. Pupils can join one of our many ensembles and access music individually through one-to-one instrumental and singing lessons. We have a specialist team of 25 visiting teachers offering weekly lessons to match the pupils' requirements and goals.

We offer a broad ensemble programme from small, instrument-specific chamber groups such as our Clarinet Choir, Flute Group, Guitar Group or String Quartets to larger ensembles such as the Wind Band, String Orchestra and School Choir, which anyone is welcome to join.

Singing is central to what we do and in addition to the School Choir, we run a Chapel Choir, Chamber Choir and both Boys' and Girls' Barbershop groups.

The department is well equipped, with six Yamaha conservatoire series grand pianos, an Andrew Garlick harpsichord, a two manual pipe organ and a beautiful new Bösendorfer 214 VC concert grand piano.

Concerts and Trips

The department runs regular concerts in Chapel with small ensembles, giving pupils an opportunity to perform in a supportive and relaxed environment.

Each half-term we stage a major concert in school, featuring larger ensembles such as our String Orchestra, Wind Band and our Chapel and School Choirs. These concerts also offer a platform for senior pupils to perform solos, some taking on full concertos in their final year. Major concerts are also staged at York Minster and York Barbican on a biennial cycle.

Our Chapel Choir visits major national venues each year to sing services. We have sung six services at St Paul's Cathedral, London in the past ten years and visited Westminster Abbey, Lincoln Cathedral, Durham Cathedral and York Minster. The choir reached the final of the National Choral Competition in the Royal Festival Hall in 2019 and sang a live Sunday Worship service for BBC Radio 4 in 2020. We will sing at St George's Chapel, Windsor in 2024.

Our bands enter for festivals and perform at external venues. The Swing Band were awarded a platinum award at the National Festival of the NCBF in 2016 at the RNCM in Manchester, placing them in the top two senior school big bands in the country.

We also undertake a major international tour biennially. Recent tours have involved performances at Notre-Dame de Paris, La Sagrada Familia, St Mark's Basilica in Venice, Disneyland Paris and St Thomas Church New York. Touring is an essential part of our programme and offers fantastic opportunities for social connections as well as musical ones.

AUDITION PROCEDURE

Quick Study

Candidates are given a short piece of music (normally an unaccompanied study, band or orchestral part) to learn independently in 20 minutes on their first study instrument. This will be set at the same standard as their most recent grade.

First Study Pieces

The panel will hear two contrasting pieces on the first study instrument.

Sight-Reading on First Study Instrument

This time a shorter, unprepared piece of sight-reading with half a minute of preparation, similar to the sight-reading tests in normal grade examinations.

Second Study Piece

One piece on the second study instrument.

Sight-Reading on Second Study Instrument

Again a short, unprepared piece of sight-reading with half a minute of preparation, similar to the sight-reading tests in normal grade examinations.

Third Study Piece

If the candidate offers a third instrument, we will hear a single piece.

Aural Tests

The candidate will be asked to sing back some pitches, including picking out different notes within a chord, and a melody played twice.

Interview

The panel ask a few questions of the candidate to assess their suitability to be an award holder in the school. We are seeking enthusiastic and motivated ensemble players, who have a good grasp of theory and demonstrate a desire to contribute to the musical life of the school.

Candidates are encouraged to develop their range of listening and to engage in a wide range of musical activities as they prepare for the audition.