



## Chorister Audition Day 2019

Audition Day will take place on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019. Applications are invited from the parents of boys and girls who are currently in Year 2 & Year 3 of school with a view to them joining the Minster Choir in September 2019.

The day will give opportunities for us to get to know the children and to take stock of their musical capabilities and talents, along with their current academic progress, in order that we can assess whether or not they have the *potential* to become a chorister. We also hope that it will give the children an opportunity to get to know us, have some fun at school and gain some understanding of what it means to be a cathedral chorister.

Children should come dressed in home clothes in which they feel comfortable. They will be split into groups and will then undertake a variety of musical and school-based activities:

1. Group singing with one of the Minster's voice coaches.
2. Individual singing audition with the Minster's Director of Music
3. Basic reading & writing tasks with a Year 3 teacher from the school
4. Some fun art activities with a member of staff from the school's Art department

During the individual singing audition, children are expected to sing a song, hymn, carol or other suitable piece of music of their choosing. It is helpful if a copy of the words and music (in the preferred key) can be provided for the accompanist, especially if the song is not 'standard repertoire'. This part of the day will also include some simple tests of general musicianship: for example, the ability to clap-back a simple rhythm; sing-back a simple melody; differentiate between the higher and lower of a pair of notes played on the piano; simple tests of the flexibility and range of the voice through the singing of scales and other musical patterns. The emphasis in all of this is that we are looking for **potential** – a voice that can be trained and developed, and a child that has that unquantifiable 'vital spark' and lively musical interest which seems to characterise a chorister.

The reading and writing tasks are no more rigorous than would be the case in any school at Year 2 or Year 3; we are not seeking to cherry-pick geniuses. We simply want to be sure that the busy life of a chorister would not be too much for a child who may be struggling in some respect academically as it would be an unfair burden to place upon them at such an age.

Parents should bring their children to the Minster School at 09:00 – 09.15 (No earlier please or you will become snarled-up with our normal pupil drop-off). Those who have to come by car are welcome to drive into the playground on Deangate but, once you have handed over your child to our care, we would ask that you remove your car, even if you intend to remain in central York for the day.

During Audition Day, the children will be given snacks, lunch and tea. If your child has any form of allergy or food intolerance we would be grateful if you would indicate this at the time of application to allow us to cater for their needs on the day.

The day itself will end with tea for children and parents. If parents return to the school office at 3.45pm, they will be guided to the right location.

There then follows an open rehearsal and evensong. Candidates are welcome to attend either or both of these events, though it should be stressed that attendance is not part of the process and will not affect the outcome – it is entirely possible that, after a full and busy day, your child may simply need to go home for a well-earned rest. We leave this for parents to decide upon on the day.

Unfortunately, the end of the day can be extremely busy and potentially congested time at school, so we ask that motorists park elsewhere and walk to the Minster to collect. The two nearest places are Sainsbury's and the St. John Street car park, just off Lord Mayor's Walk.

### **Process**

In order to apply, parents should complete the Chorister Application Form that accompanies this leaflet and return it to Mrs Sheila Rennison in the office at The Minster School. Please mark your envelope, "Chorister Application".

In order to become a chorister, a child also becomes a pupil of The Minster School. Parents are advised that, at the time of application, they should also try to arrange a visit to see the school and meet The Head Master. Preferably, this should be prior to audition day in order that an informed decision can be made, should an offer be made.

Candidates will hear within a few days of the auditions whether or not they have been successful. Inevitably, some children will be disappointed as there are only a few places available and a large number of applicants applying. However, we hope that the day itself will be as enjoyable as possible and that all candidates will feel inspired to continue singing and making music.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to telephone or email the school office.



### APPLICATION FOR A CHORISTER PLACE

**The benefits are many.** Children learn a large repertoire of choral music; they work together as a team; they learn to work professionally at an early age; they have opportunities for foreign travel. But most importantly – the work is fun!

**The drawbacks.** A child should want to be a chorister. Parents must realise that a choristership is a large commitment for them as well as for their child. Initially it is all rather strange and confusing but the Director of Music and the Headteacher are always willing to talk to parents, to help and advise.

**Is it all worth it?** We certainly think so. Experience has shown that choristers do well academically; their singing duties do not harm their school work; they do the same amount of lessons and sport as the other children in the Minster School.

**What is the work load?** Boy and girl choristers begin each day (Tuesday to Friday) with a practice or with individual voice tuition. After this, they follow a normal schedule at The Minster School. At the close of the school day, after a tea break, the choristers return to the Minster for another rehearsal, and then one group will sing Evensong at 5.00pm and the other group will go home.

**What about the holidays?** Choir terms are based on normal school terms, but are adjusted to include the major festivals of Easter and Christmas.

PUPIL'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

PARENTS' NAMES Father \_\_\_\_\_

Mother \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Present school \_\_\_\_\_

Which musical instrument (if any) is your child learning? \_\_\_\_\_

Choristers are required to stay at The Minster School until the July after their thirteenth birthday.

I/We, the undersigned, being the parents/guardians of the above pupil, acknowledge receipt of a copy of the school prospectus and undertake to abide by the terms and conditions upon which our child will be accepted as a pupil of The Minster School.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_