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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Bradford Cathedral Chorister Voice Trials Go Virtual!



Members of the choir. (Photo: Lorne Campbell)

The music department at Bradford Cathedral are looking to recruit boys and girls from the age of 7 to become cathedral choristers.

The cathedral will be holding special voice trials online where interested children from school years 2, 3 and 4 will take part in a twenty-minute session where they will sing the first verse of

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classic Christmas carol *Away in a Manger* alongside some scales and a few musical exercises, as well as reading a short passage out loud.

There will also be a short and informal conversation between the music department and the child's parents or carers about what is involved with being part of the Bradford Cathedral Choir.

Bradford Cathedral Choir

As a member of Bradford Cathedral Choir children receive a first-class education in music, regular free singing and theory tuition, the opportunity to meet their other peers who love music, and get the opportunity to sing at home and abroad.

This new recruitment drive comes after a very successful *Cathedral Sing!* event, which saw the music department visiting over twenty primary schools in the district and inviting the children to a singing day at the cathedral.

Alex Berry, Director of Music at Bradford Cathedral:

“We know there are lots of children across Bradford who might be interested in singing and are particularly talented, and because we can't visit every school in the district every year, these voice trials are an excellent opportunity for more to audition to become part of our Cathedral Choir.

“The auditions are quite informal but they give us the opportunity to listen to each child and their voices.

“Anyone in years 2, 3 and 4 can apply, regardless of which school they come from. All they need to do is meet the full commitment expectations of the choir.”

Successful applicants will be offered a place in the Bradford Cathedral Choir, when Bradford Cathedral re-opens. New choir members will be invited along on Mondays (girls) or Tuesdays (boys) and Thursdays every week for after-school activities and to sing at Evensong, alongside alternate Saturdays where they'll receive theory and singing tuition, as well as information about the Christian faith.

“Being a cathedral chorister is an amazing opportunity. The choristers will work at a level that you can’t work at in many other disciplines as a child. We offer free lessons and pay for children to take the ABRSM exams. Choristers also have the opportunity to sing in collaboration with other choirs across Yorkshire.”

As well as singing with other cathedral choirs, there are six visits each year to sing at a range of churches across the Diocesan area, which covers much of West and North Yorkshire, from south of Darlington to Holmfirth, and across from Ingleton to the edge of York. The pastoral side of the choir is also filled with activity, from socials such as bowling and laser tag to biennial tours in the UK. In 2020 this includes Cambridge, Norwich and Ely, and will see the choristers engaged in a mix of fun and educational activities.

“Every alternate year we go abroad. In 2019 we went to Germany and next year we plan to go to Romania. The number of opportunities we offer to choristers is staggering. New choristers will also get the chance to make new friends from schools across the city.”

Choir membership continues until school year eight, when they will have enough experience to become young professional singers with potentially grade fives in singing and music theory.

“This could be the first stage for a professional career. I was a cathedral chorister and became the youngest Director of Music in the country.”

Many famous people were choristers in their youth including comedian and presenter Alexander Armstrong, who has released three classical-inspired albums; Halifax-born singer Ed Sheeran; politician David Lammy; and cricketer Alastair Cook, amongst many others.

“Being a member of a choir has helped many people get into really high-flying careers, and they look back on the choristership as the thing that really inspired them, and gave them the aspiration to aim for something so amazing. Some of our own choristers have gone on to join the Opera North Youth Chorus, and others have gone onto University music degrees and organ scholarships.”

You can find out more about the Chorister Voice Trials, download a document detailing more information about the choir commitments, and see some frequently asked questions by visiting our website at [bradfordcathedral.org/music/chorister-voice-trials](https://www.bradfordcathedral.org/music/chorister-voice-trials).

Voice trials will take place online on Zoom and all you need is a webcam and a microphone. Full details can be found at <https://www.bradfordcathedral.org/music/chorister-voice-trials/>

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Notes for Editors

About Bradford Cathedral

Bradford Cathedral has been a place of worship in Bradford since the first millennium. It is the oldest building in the city and, alongside being a place of worship, hosts events, arts projects and much more.

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