



WCCS

Westminster Cathedral Choir School



Head of Music

For September 2025

Information for applicants

Westminster Cathedral Choir School (WCCS)

Westminster Cathedral Choir School (WCCS) is an academically-selective, Catholic prep school for about 280 boys age 4 – 13, and a choir school for the boarding choristers of Westminster Cathedral. It is one of London's most successful independent prep schools.

WCCS was founded in 1902 to provide boarding choristers to sing the daily liturgy in the new cathedral. In 1976 day boys were introduced, and in 2017 WCCS opened a Pre-Prep for boys from Reception to Year 3, which is now full and flourishing.

The School's twenty-three boarding choristers receive major assistance with fees and almost all achieve 13+ music scholarships to their destination senior schools. Many of the School's day boys are also instrumentally and vocally accomplished, and expectations of the standards to which they can perform a classical repertoire are high.

Westminster Cathedral Choir School prepares boys for leading independent senior schools at 13+, including City of London, Dulwich, Eton, Harrow, King's Wimbledon, St Paul's, Tonbridge, Westminster and Winchester.



The Position

The School seeks to appoint a Head of Music to succeed Mr Rory Simons, who is leaving WCCS this summer after four years' excellent service.

Teaching

- To plan and teach a classical music curriculum, including music theory, to an exemplary standard, from Reception to 13+ music scholarship level
- To conduct or oversee the School's two day-boy choirs – The Junior Choir and The Gallery Choir – and School orchestras, to an exemplary standard
- To organise an annual programme of onsite concerts, during School hours, in consultation with the Head, with programmes produced in house style
- To organise and develop chamber music, working with visiting music teachers
- To oversee personally, and to timetable, chorister instrumental practice
- To organise appropriate music, within the classical Catholic tradition, for weekly School Masses and assemblies in both the Pre-Prep (Reception to Year 3) and the Prep (Years 4 to 8)
- To provide musical support for the Pre-Prep Nativity (which is directed by the Head of Pre-Prep)
- To build and maintain excellent relationships with other academic departments and the Music Department of Westminster Cathedral
- To supervise personally the progression of music theory for all choristers
- To maintain order, discipline and calm in class to ensure effective teaching and learning
- To develop appropriate schemes of work, available for inspection by the Head of Pre-Prep, Deputy Head Master (Academic) and/or Director of Studies, which set out challenging and appropriately differentiated work for all pupils
- To integrate ICT into teaching and learning where appropriate, available for inspection by the Head of Pre-Prep, Deputy Head Master (Academic) and/or Director of Studies
- To develop cross-curricular links with other academic subjects as well as Civics (PSHCE)
- To organise and/or attend curricular-enriching trips
- To mark pupils' class work and prep, in line with School policy
- To prepare thoroughly for ISI inspections

Administration

- To keep records of effort and achievement, in line with School policy
- To write reports as required, following stated protocols
- To supply detailed, weekly instrumental and choral schedules for the Head's weekly newsletter
- To liaise closely with Head of Pre-Prep and the SMT as required
- To attend staff meetings as required, adhering to the procedures and protocols published in the staff handbook
- To schedule visiting music teachers, instrumental tuition and ABRSM examinations with the administrative support of the the Music Department Assistant
- To provide the Bursar with details of all termly re-charges

Pastoral care

- To set and maintain clear expectations of behaviour in all classes and cover lessons
- To follow and support the School's stated policies on rewards and sanctions, anti-bullying and safeguarding
- To treat all pupils with equanimity
- To report all pastoral concerns to the Head or Pre-Prep Head and/or Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Health & Safety

- To complete risk assessments as required
- To prepare for and respond to inspections of health and safety, internal and external

Personal conduct

- To welcome prospective parents and visitors into lessons (with the Head Master or a member of staff designated by him) at any reasonable time
- To maintain professional dress and appearance at all times during the working day
- To maintain mannerly and professional spoken and written relationships with all colleagues, parents and pupils
- To be publicly supportive of the School's mission, aims and aspirations and its Catholic musical tradition

Other

- To assist in the production of an annual School musical or play
- To participate in appraisal meetings
- To participate in lesson evaluation by peers and the SMT, following the set protocols
- To attend INSET training as required
- To undergo any other training as reasonably required
- To cover staff duties as required
- To attend weekly whole-School Mass
- To follow all policies, protocols, procedures and regulations as stated in the staff handbook

Flexibility

This job description reflects the main responsibilities of the post. However, the post holder should be willing to undertake any other reasonable duties as required by the Head.





The Person

The successful candidate will be a classically-trained musician, intimately familiar with, and sympathetic to, the Catholic choral tradition of plainsong, who can conduct the School's two day-boy choirs (The Junior Choir and The Gallery Choir) to an exemplary standard for public performance. He or she will also be a capable orchestral and chamber music conductor, within the classical tradition, and a skilled and diplomatic manager of the School's visiting music teachers, for which he/she will receive administrative support from the Music Department Assistant. He or she will have a deep understanding of the history of music and of its theoretical bases, and wish to teach these comprehensively to the boys.

WCCS is a high-profile school, both musically and academically: the successful candidate will enjoy the challenge of working in a setting where professional and parental expectations are exceptionally high.

Safeguarding & Child Protection

WCCS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers, referees and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Terms

This post is full-time, permanent, subject to a twelve-month probationary period. The Head of Music and the Music Department Assistant cover between them chorister instrumental practice from 7.30 am – 8.00 am Monday to Friday, and between 4.00 pm and 5.00 pm Monday to Thursday; Junior Choir rehearsals on Wednesdays at 8.15 am and Gallery Choir rehearsals on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings at 8.15 am.

The Benefits

The successful candidate can expect:

- An excellent salary
- Full membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme
- Full funding for a PGCE through Buckingham University, where appropriate
- A cohesive, united and friendly teaching body in a stable and flourishing school
- A free, delicious lunch, plus refreshments, every working day
- Generous holidays
- Free parking
- Motivated, bright and musical boys to teach



How to apply

Candidates should complete the application form and email it with a brief (**one page only**) letter of application addressed to the Head, Mr Neil McLaughlan. Candidates should include in the letter details of personal qualities and experiences relevant to the post, and explain how they meet the person specification.

Email lfreeman@choirschool.com

An additional CV or supporting statement is not required.

The closing date for applications is **Wednesday 26th February**. Applications will be assessed upon receipt and the School reserves the right to interview and appoint before the closing date.



Candidates who would like an informal discussion about the position before applying are welcome to contact the School's, Deputy Head (Academic), Mr Robert O'Brien.

Email robrien@choirschool.com



WCCS



Credit: Steve Gregson



Teachers'
Pensions

www.choirschool.com