



BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL

# Director of Music

*For September 2025 or January 2026*



**INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

# Welcome from the Headmaster

**Dear Candidate,**

Barnard Castle School is seeking an outstanding Director of Music for our thriving day and boarding school, which has remained at the forefront of girls' and boys' education for over 130 years. Whilst the school retains a strong academic record, its focus continues to be on developing life skills and nurturing each character. This is something that we as a school take great care and pride in, and music plays a significant role in this. Our commitment to music is evident in our timetable, which includes dedicated congregational singing practice. Each week, every student sings together in their year group in the Chapel, in addition to singing in assemblies.

We welcome applications from all experience levels. The post is a perfect start for a budding Director of Music, or a fantastic place for someone with vast experience.

Barney is an exciting and hugely rewarding place to be, and I look forward to receiving your application.

**Yours faithfully,**



**David Cresswell**  
HEADMASTER



# The History of Barnard Castle School

Barnard Castle School has a rich and enduring history, deeply rooted in a tradition of learning and community. The school traces its origins back to the nearby Hospital of St John, an educational and religious community established by John de Balliol in 1229. John de Balliol also founded Balliol College, Oxford, and his passion for education and opportunity remains central to our philosophy today.

In 1883, with a generous gift from Benjamin Flounders, a Victorian philanthropist, and the proceeds of St John's Hospital, the present main school building was constructed. Since then, the school has grown and evolved, blending its historical foundations with a forward-thinking approach to education.

In 2024, David Cresswell was appointed as Barney's 11th Headmaster, continuing the school's tradition of combining timeless values with future-focused ambition. Today, Barnard Castle School remains a place where the lessons of the past inspire the innovations of tomorrow, as we prepare our pupils to shape a changing world with courage, kindness, and integrity.

## Barnard Castle School: Shaping Tomorrow, One Step at a Time

*"Parvis imbutus tentabis grandia tutus"*  
*When you are steeped in little things, you shall safely attempt great things.*

At Barnard Castle School – or 'Barney' as it is affectionately known – we believe that small steps lead to big strides. Our vision is to inspire a generation of young people with the courage and kindness to dare greatly and shape a changing world. We want them to shape the future while proudly standing on the shoulders of those who came before them.

**Ambition** – Daring to achieve, with the courage to innovate and the curiosity to explore.

**Character** – Forged in challenge, strengthened by kindness, and rooted in integrity.

**Community** – Honouring the past, strengthening our school and town, and building global connections that last a lifetime.

These principles guide everything we do – from our academic programmes to our vibrant co-curricular offering. Our down-to-earth and inclusive community provides a safe environment for pupils to embrace challenges, pursue passions, and develop a sense of purpose that will stay with them long after they leave Barney.

We are a school that blends tradition with forward-thinking ambition. Our origins trace back to the Hospital of St John, founded in 1229 by John de Balliol, who also established Balliol College, Oxford. That same love of learning and commitment to opportunity remains central to our philosophy today. As we look ahead to the 2030s, we continue to invest in modern facilities and innovative teaching approaches to meet the evolving needs of our pupils and the wider world.

Barney is a place where connections are made and memories are formed. It is not unusual to see Year 11 pupils sharing lunch and conversation with younger peers or Sixth Formers mentoring new starters. Our pupils develop confidence, resilience, and humility as they grow – always encouraged to support and celebrate each other's successes.

Staff at Barney play a crucial role in this journey. We seek teachers who share our purpose and are proactive in immersing themselves in the life of the school. Through our extensive 'Mind, Body, and Soul' programme, which runs from 4pm to 5pm, staff have the opportunity to lead activities they are passionate about, fostering authentic relationships beyond the classroom.

We are also committed to helping teachers be the best versions of themselves. Our comprehensive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme offers opportunities to hone their craft, supported by regular teach meets, peer collaboration, and other innovative initiatives. We want teachers who are ambitious about their own development and passionate about lifelong learning, recognising that their growth directly benefits our pupils.

Our location, on the edge of the historic market town of Barnard Castle – recently recognised as one of the safest in England – offers a unique combination of heritage, community spirit, and access to outstanding natural beauty. We also benefit from partnerships with world-class universities in Durham, Newcastle, and York, enhancing our pupils' educational experience and broadening their horizons.

At Barney, we believe that ambition, character, and community are not abstract ideals but lived experiences. Together, we take small steps every day – steps that build towards remarkable achievements and a future as bright as the generations of Barnardians who came before.

### **Our Vision**

- To be viewed as the leading independent co-educational day and boarding school in the North of England.

### **Our Purpose**

- Our purpose as a school is to inspire minds and build character, within a down-to-earth, inclusive community where everyone belongs, and hard work and good humour thrive.

### **Our aim**

- Our aim is to create a safe environment where pupils love their school, embrace small steps toward great achievements, and are willing to dare greatly to shape a changing world.



# Our Key Features

## **A Seamless Educational Journey**

We are proud to offer a supportive environment where students can complete their entire educational journey. At every stage, we nurture their growth, ensuring smooth transitions and a deep understanding of each student's unique needs, all within a close-knit, inclusive community that helps them flourish and prepares them for life beyond Barney.

## **Fully co-educational Boarding and Day School**

We fully embrace co-education, ensuring equal opportunities for all students, regardless of gender. Our strong boarding community enriches the school, enhancing cultural literacy through our international students. The extended school day and week provide ample time to deliver a broad and varied educational experience.

## **Resilient Characters & Brave Minds**

We have always offered an education that goes beyond exams, which is more crucial now than ever in a rapidly changing world shaped by globalism, AI, and evolving careers. Our students need strong character, adaptable soft skills, and a values-driven foundation to thrive in this uncertain future. With resilience and a supportive community, they are empowered to dare greatly and achieve beyond what they thought was possible.

## **A Broad Entry**

Life is about engaging with people of diverse abilities and talents, celebrating personal growth rather than just top grades. As long as we can support individuals in accessing our education and they demonstrate the core character traits we value, we are committed to supporting them on their journey.

## **Traditional yet Innovative**

Barney's rich history and cherished traditions have shaped generations of strong, humble individuals. While we honour these beloved 'Barneyisms,' we remain focused on staying relevant and forward-thinking as we move further into the 21st century.

# Role Summary

Barnard Castle School is seeking to appoint an inspirational, dynamic and innovative Whole School Director of Music to lead the department from September 2025 or January 2026. This is a rare and exciting opportunity for a passionate and experienced musician to continue to develop and elevate the school's musical culture and provision across both our Prep and Senior Schools (ages 4-18).

At the heart of our Music Department is the belief that every child is a musician. Our vision is to foster a love of music for all pupils, ensuring that music-making is a vibrant and integral part of school life. Every pupil participates in weekly singing sessions, and a high proportion learn an instrument. Music is taught from Reception through to A Level, with a wide range of instrumental and choral ensembles, regular concerts, performances, and musical productions.

The Director of Music will provide strategic leadership for music across the school, ensuring a cohesive and inspiring musical experience for all pupils. They will teach a reduced academic timetable all age groups, including the youngest pupils in Reception to Year 2, embedding a love of music from the earliest years. They will oversee the academic curriculum, ensuring high standards of teaching and learning at all levels, including GCSE and A Level. In addition, they will lead and develop the co-curricular music programme, which includes a diverse range of ensembles such as choirs, orchestras, chamber groups, and bands. The successful candidate will play a key role in organising and directing school concerts, musical productions, and major performances, ensuring that music remains a central part of school life.

As the head of a talented team of full-time and visiting music teachers, the Director of Music will provide strong leadership and support, fostering a culture of joy, high expectations and excellence. They will also play a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing community engagement, developing links within the local area and beyond to further enrich the school's musical life. The Director of Music conducts the school's Community Choirs, which are made up of the Choral Society and Youth Choir.

We are looking for a highly skilled musician and educator who can inspire and motivate pupils of all abilities. The ideal candidate will have strong leadership and teaching experience and demonstrate a passion for engaging and inclusive music education. They should have high expectations of themselves and their students, alongside excellent classroom management and pastoral skills. A willingness to teach across all age groups, including our youngest pupils, is essential.



# Job Description

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**Job Title:** Director of Music

**Reporting to:** Second Master (Co-Curriculum) and Deputy Head (Academic)

**Role Type:** Head of Department

**Responsible for:** Music Department and the team of Visiting Music Teachers

**Start date:** September 2025 or January 2026

## School and Department values and ethos

- The Director of Music plays a key leadership role within Barnard Castle School, overseeing the entire 4-18 music provision across both the Prep and Senior Schools.
- To take full responsibility for the development and strategic direction of Music throughout the school, in consultation with the Headmaster.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues across the school to further enhance the role of music within the curriculum and wider school life, supporting the school's ethos, educational aims, and priorities.

## Leadership and Management

- Develop and articulate a clear vision for music at Barnard Castle School, ensuring that music is central to school life and accessible to all pupils.
- Lead and manage the Music Department team, including full-time music staff and a team of visiting music teachers, ensuring the highest standards of teaching and learning.
- Organise and chair regular, well-managed department meetings to enable all staff to contribute to planning and policy making.
- Oversee the strategic development of the music curriculum across Prep and Senior School, ensuring it is broad, engaging, and inspiring for all pupils.
- Ensure a fair teaching load across the department in liaison with the Deputy Head (Academic).
- Manage the departmental budget, ensuring the effective use of resources and planning for future development, including investment in instruments, equipment and facilities.
- Lead on the department's Health and Safety standards.
- Complete risk assessments where necessary and report and health and safety concerns in a timely manner.
- Take a leading role in recruiting, mentoring, and developing music staff, fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation, and professional growth.
- Work closely with the Director of Drama and other departments to support musical theatre productions and interdisciplinary creative projects.
- Act as an ambassador for the school's musical reputation, forging links with external music organisations, local ensembles, and national competitions.
- Oversee the scheduling and provision of instrumental and vocal tuition, ensuring a thriving programme of instrumental learning.
- Direct the Barnard Castle School Community Choirs, which comprises of the Choral Society (rehearsing on Thursday evenings during term time, 7pm – 8.45pm) and the Youth Choir (Saturday mornings, 9.30am - 10.30am).

## Curriculum

- Deliver an exciting, diverse, and high-quality music curriculum to pupils across both Prep and Senior Schools, fostering a love of music from Reception through to A Level.
- Ensure that GCSE and A Level Music provision is rigorous, engaging, and academically strong, supporting pupils to achieve excellent outcomes.
- Monitor pupil progress, providing regular and constructive feedback to support musical and academic development.
- Communicate effectively with parents through written reports, parents' evenings, and informal discussions, ensuring they are well-informed about their child's progress in music.
- Lead the development of schemes of work, teaching materials, and assessment methods, ensuring that music teaching remains innovative, inclusive, and forward-thinking.
- Promote the sharing of best practice within the department.
- Promote diversity in musical repertoire and teaching, ensuring that pupils engage with a range of musical styles and traditions.

## Extra-Curricular

- Lead and develop the school's extensive co-curricular music programme, ensuring there are opportunities for pupils of all abilities to participate in ensembles, choirs, bands, and orchestras.
- Direct and oversee major school concerts, recitals, and productions, ensuring high-quality performances that showcase and celebrate pupil achievement.
- Play a leading role in chapel music, ensuring music enhances the spiritual life of the school (if an organist, this would include playing for services and assemblies).
- Take weekly massed singing rehearsals ('congers') with Prep School, Years 7 and 8 and Years 9-13.
- Conduct, rehearse, and coach a range of ensembles, including chamber music, large ensembles, and choral groups, ensuring that pupils experience a breadth of musical opportunities.
- Support pupils in preparation for ABRSM, MTB and other external music examinations, ensuring they receive expert guidance and encouragement.
- Organise and support music tours, masterclasses, workshops, and community outreach programmes, raising the school's musical profile both locally and nationally.

## Other Responsibilities

- Play a key role in the day-to-day running of the Music Department, supporting staff, pupils, and external music tutors.
- Ensure the proper use and maintenance of teaching spaces, instruments, and other resources, adhering to health and safety regulations.
- Actively engage in professional development and school-wide leadership training, ensuring that the department remains at the forefront of music education best practice.
- Undertake supervisory duties, exam invigilation, and provide cover for absent colleagues where necessary.
- Attend weekly staff meetings, departmental meetings, and strategic planning discussions, contributing to the broader development of the school.
- Undertake any other reasonable tasks as requested by the Headmaster or Senior Leadership Team.



# Role Criteria

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The ideal candidate will demonstrate a passion for student success and personal development, with the ability to inspire and lead by example. They will have a proven record of strategic leadership, a commitment to academic and pastoral excellence, and a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities in post-16 education.

## Essential Criteria

- A good honours degree in Music or an equivalent qualification.
- A commitment to safeguarding and the welfare of all pupils.
- A track record of outstanding teaching and pupil outcomes, across a range of age groups and abilities.
- Significant experience in directing and conducting ensembles, including choirs and orchestras.
- Exceptional musicianship, with proficiency in at least one instrument (piano or organ skills desirable).
- Strong leadership, organisational, and communication skills, with the ability to inspire pupils and colleagues alike.
- A deep passion for music education, with the ability to engage and motivate pupils of all abilities.
- An ability and willingness to make a significant contribution to the musical life of the School beyond the academic curriculum
- A professional, approachable, and collaborative attitude, with the ability to work well within a team.
- Reliable and trustworthy.
- Excellent IT literacy and experience using technology in music education.

## Desirable Criteria

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or a recognised teaching qualification.
- Other musical qualifications, including relevant diplomas.
- Experience in leading a music department or a significant area of music provision.
- Experience in directing choral music
- Ability to play the organ and accompany services.
- Experience in music technology, composition, or studio recording.
- Willingness to contribute to the boarding community.
- An understanding of the Christian values of the school and an appreciation of the boarding school environment.

# Recruitment Process

The Headmaster is offering an attractive and competitive salary to secure the best candidate. The School offers a pension package with Royal London Group Pension Scheme. Other benefits include fee remission for children in the School, use of our gym, sports facilities and swimming pool, free meals during term time, free parking and access to various social activities throughout the year.

## Applications

If you feel that you can meet the above requirements, then please submit a letter of application along with the Barnard Castle School application form to the Headmaster. Only applications containing the requested information will be considered.

### Applications should be sent to:

Mr D J Cresswell  
Barnard Castle School  
Barnard Castle  
County Durham  
DL12 8UN

Telephone: 01833 696098

Email: [hr@barneyschool.org.uk](mailto:hr@barneyschool.org.uk)

### Information about Interviews:

**Deadline for applications:** Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April at 5.00pm

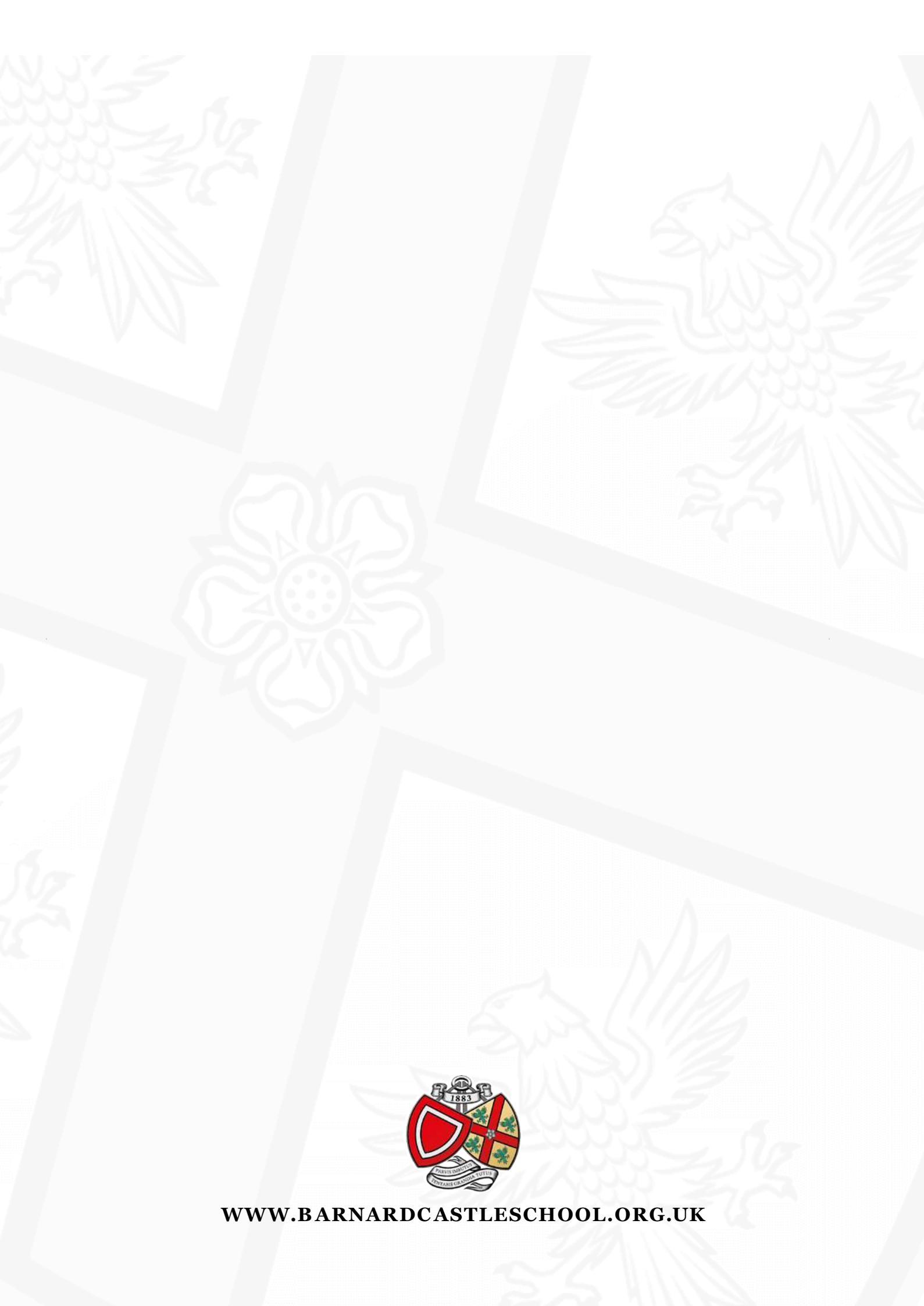
**Longlist Interviews (Online):** Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April

**Shortlist Interviews at School:** Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April

*Applicants should read carefully the application procedure – guidance for applicants, Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders and the Disclosure policy and the Safer Recruitment policy.*

*Barnard Castle School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and all applicants will undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and an enhanced DBS and Barred list check with Disclosure and Barring Service.*

*Barnard Castle School is an equal opportunities employer.*



[WWW.BARNARDCASTLESCHOOL.ORG.UK](http://WWW.BARNARDCASTLESCHOOL.ORG.UK)