Voice Trials Application Form

*Details of Admission and Conditions of Choristership for Voice Trials in 2025*

**The Choristers of Salisbury Cathedral**

The choristers of Salisbury Cathedral have been supporting worship here for over 900 years; first at the former cathedral at Old Sarum, and since around 1258 in the current building. In 1991 girl choristers became part of this choral foundation when Salisbury was the first cathedral in England to offer complete parity of opportunity for boys and girls. Today, the boys’ and girls’ choirs operate largely independently with duties shared equally between the two, each singing four or five of the nine weekly services, usually with the lay vicars (the adult members of the choir). There are 16 choristers and four probationers (learner choristers) in both the boys’ and girls’ choirs meaning there are usually 40 choristers in total.

All of the choristers are educated at Salisbury Cathedral School and are expected to remain in the choir until the end of Year 8 and transition to senior school at 13+. The school is academically non-selective although prospective choristers are assessed in mathematics and English to establish their suitability for the chorister lifestyle, and to identify any specific learning needs. Whilst it is not necessary for choristers to board, there are full and flexi boarding options available, if necessary.

The school and the Cathedral will give every assistance to prospective parents to find out about the life of a chorister, including informal pre-auditions and a link to the film about the day-to-day life of the choristers of Salisbury Cathedral. Parents entering their child for a voice trial should visit the school and talk to the Head Teacher in order to gain a full understanding of the commitment involved and the impact it will have on family life.

All voice trial enquiries should be directed to Hester Greatrix, Music Officer h.greatrix@salcath.co.uk

## Voice Trials

Voice Trials are the singing auditions held annually by the Cathedral Director of Music and his colleagues at Salisbury Cathedral to recruit choristers. They take place on a Saturday in late January. A child coming to audition should be in school Years 2, 3 or 4. Candidates should have good aural skills and show promise of a good voice. They will sing a prepared piece of their own choice - a hymn, carol, anthem or song - and be asked to sing scales and given ear tests based on those used by the Associated Board. They will also be asked to read aloud a short passage from a book. Should they play an instrument, they will have the opportunity to play a piece to the Cathedral School’s Director of Music. If they play more than one instrument, they will have the opportunity to play a piece on each.

During the voice trial day, parents will also meet the Head Teacher and other key members of staff. Parents may attend Evensong at 5.30pm (finishing c 6.15pm) with their child.

**Probationers**

If your child is offered a place in the choir, they will become a probationer, usually beginning at the start of the Michaelmas term in September. Probationers are usually admitted as full choristers after one year’s training.

## Conditions

Parents are contracted to keep their child in the choir and school until the conclusion of the academic year in which they reach their thirteenth birthday (end of Year 8). The Cathedral Chapter will retain them as a chorister during that time subject to the recommendation of the Director of Music at the Cathedral and the Head Teacher.

## Duties

The choristers sing regularly each week and other special services as required. They rehearse every weekday except Wednesday. They give concerts in the diocese, broadcast on television and radio, record CDs and may go on choir tours. The choristers (but not probationers) remain at school after term ends to sing services up to Christmas Day, Easter Day and the final Sunday of the annual Southern Cathedrals Festival in July.

**Chorister Scholarships**

The Cathedral Chapter awards scholarships to all probationers and choristers. For all new probationers and choristers entering the school, the value of the chorister scholarship will be equal to 30% of the prevailing Salisbury Cathedral School prep day fee.

**Bursaries**

Probationers and choristers may also apply to various external trust funds, if additional financial assistance with school fees is required. In addition, they can apply for assistance from the school’s restricted funds or the Choral Foundation towards these fees. All bursaries are awarded on a means-tested basis. Families who anticipate that they may require bursarial support will be contacted by the school’s finance manager on application. All bursaries are subject to annual review. It is expected that chorister parents will make a financial contribution to the cost of choir tours.

For further information about chorister life, please contact the Cathedral’s Director of Music, David Halls or the school Registrar, Mrs Jojo Orange:

Cathedral Director of Music, David Halls: litmus@salcath.co.uk

 01722 555125

School Registrar, Jojo Orange: admissions@salisburycathedralschool.com

 01722 555315

**Application Form**

**Voice Trials: Saturday 18 January 2025 (Girls); Saturday 25 January 2025 (Boys)**

Please write in BLOCK CAPITALS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full name: |  |
| Date of birth: |  |
| Gender: |  |
| Current school year: |  |
| Parents’ names:Address: |  |
| Home telephone number: |  |
| Mobile numbers: |  |
| Email addresses: |  |
| Father’s occupation: |  |
| Mother’s occupation: |  |
| Present school name Address: |  |
| Name of Head:(A report will be requested) |  |
| School telephone number: |  |
| School email address: |  |
| Musical instruments: |  |
| Recent music exams passed and marks: |  |
| Has your child had any experience of choral singing? |  |
| Has your child had any ear problems (grommets/glue ear) |  |
| Has your child any history of speech problems and/or ever received specialist speech therapy? |  |
| Other medical conditions? |  |
| Will you require financial assistance in addition to the chorister scholarship? |  |

If awarded a choristership, I agree that my child will join Salisbury Cathedral School and remain as a chorister until the completion of Year 8 (the academic year in which they have their thirteenth birthday).

Signature of parent/s: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/s: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with two passport photographs of your child to or post to: Hester Greatrix, Music Officer h.greatrix@salcath.co.uk

Hester Greatrix
Music Officer
Salisbury Cathedral, Wyndham House
Salisbury
SP1 2EJ

Head:  Sally Moulton, BA (Hons), PGCE Salisbury Cathedral School, 1 The Close, Salisbury, SP12EQ

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