



MUSIC AWARDS
PROSPECTUS
2026

TIM JOHNSON

PRECENTOR AND DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

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www.etoncollege.com

Registered charity 1139086

MUSIC AT ETON

Eton is the largest all boys' boarding school in the UK. With a history dating back to 1440 it has a long list of distinguished former pupils. Eton is home to 1300 boys, around 10% of whom hold a Music Award, and is renowned for academic excellence, first class facilities, and rich cultural environment.

The Music Department at Eton College is the largest department in the School with a team of six full time Music Masters under the direction of the Precentor and Director of Music. 75 visiting teachers, all of whom balance teaching with successful performing careers in the music industry, teach over 1300 individual instrument lessons a week within the department. Boys achieve outstanding results in their academic music studies, and have a plethora of options for music-making outside the classroom.

The Music Schools at Eton house a modern concert hall, orchestral rehearsal hall, recording studio, rock studio, numerous teaching and practice rooms, and a music library. The School is home to no fewer than 8 pipe organs, and all the performance halls in the School have Steinway pianos. There are two chapel choirs, a concert choir, a choral society, three orchestras, two concert bands, two big bands and a large number of smaller ensembles. Senior boys regularly put on their own concerts – a tradition initiated by Hubert Parry during his time as a boy at Eton.

Beyond Eton, boys with music career ambitions often secure the most prestigious of choral and organ scholarships at Oxford and Cambridge, and increasingly Eton musicians win scholarships to music conservatoires in the UK and overseas.

If you have any queries about the Music Award process please contact Angela Pearce, PA to the Precentor and Director of Music on 01753 370458 or a.pearce@etoncollege.org.uk.

The standard generally expected of candidates will be Grade VI to VIII on their principal instrument. Although high marks in music examinations are often good indications of musicianship, we shall also be looking for a thorough grounding in technique and for musical potential, and above all a sense of genuine passion, curiosity and enjoyment. If music examinations have been taken we shall look more for high marks than high grades.

The Precentor and Director of Music is always available to offer advice should parents or schools wish to get in touch. An informal preliminary visit can be very helpful, and can help establish whether a boy is of a sufficient standard to compete for an award. In the case of overseas candidates, they are welcome to email a video instead, sending it to a.pearce@etoncollege.org.uk.

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS: Usually eight Music Scholarships are awarded each year. An application for a Music Scholarship can be made whether or not the candidate already has a conditional place at Eton. Each scholarship entitles the holder to free tuition on up to 135 minutes of music lessons per week. The Music Scholarship is the only award that can be supplemented up to 100% of the full School fee in cases of financial need. Where fee assistance is required, an online Bursary Application Form will need to be submitted to the Fees and Bursaries Team, **by the deadline of 31 October 2025**, for consideration as part of the Bursary awards process (which involves a home visit assessment). Further information may be found below.

HONORARY MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS & MUSIC EXHIBITIONS: In addition, usually up to 16 Honorary Music Scholarships/Music Exhibitions may be awarded. For families already in receipt of financial assistance on school fees, these come with free tuition on up to 120 minutes of music lessons per week. These awards are made to candidates who already have conditional places in the School with the exception of one, which may be awarded to a boy who does not already have a conditional place in the School.

CHORAL EXHIBITION: A choral exhibition is made to an advanced singer who is not sufficiently advanced instrumentally to win a Music Scholarship or Music Exhibition. This award comes with 30 minutes of singing lessons per week.

The table below provides information on the music tuition and non-financial benefits applicable for each level of Music Awards. These do not attract automatic fee remission.

Award	Music Scholarship	Honorary Music Scholarship	Music Exhibition	Choral Exhibition
Number available	8	up to 16		1
Available to boys without a conditional place in the School	8 places available if needed	1 place available if needed		✗
Means tested financial assistance may be awarded as part of the award	✓	✗	✗	✗
Minutes of free instrumental lessons per week	135	120 for families already in receipt of financial assistance on school fees		30 (voice)
Eligible for free Alexander technique lessons	✓	✓	✗	✗
Letters after name	MS	MS	ME	✗
Practice sessions built-in to timetable	✓	✓	✓	✗
Music Tutor	✓	✓	✓	✓
Music Mentor	✓	✓	✓	✓

Please note that boys with a conditional place already at the School may apply for any level of Music Award.

MEANS-TESTED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: Applications for means-tested financial assistance in respect of Eton School fees can be made by completing and returning an online Bursary Application Form by the deadline of **31 October 2025**. The College will adhere strictly to this closing date. Parents will be informed in November whether they are likely to be awarded a bursary in the event of their son being awarded a Music Scholarship before the deadline for submission of the Music Awards Application Form. This enables parents to make an informed decision about their application and their choice of school in order of preference.

Details on the criteria for applying for a bursary can be found in the Bursary Information Sheet (available from [Music Awards \(13+\) - Eton College](#)).

To request a link to our online Bursary Application Form, please return the [Means-Tested Financial Aid Request Form \(MS\)](#) as soon as possible to Admissions@etoncollege.org.uk and Bursaries@etoncollege.org.uk.

If candidates already have a conditional offer of a place at the School with a bursary offer, parents will be asked to resubmit a Bursary Application Form for the purposes of the annual financial reassessment.

TIMETABLE:

As soon as possible	Parents submit the means-tested Financial Aid Request Form (MS) if financial assistance is needed. (Only for boys without a conditional place at Eton)
By 31 October 2025	Parents submit the Bursary Application Form (if applicable)
By 24 November 2025	Parents or current school submit the completed Music Awards Application
	Eton reserves the right to request a recording of a candidate by way of a first stage in the audition process if there is a high number of applicants
By 19 December 2025	Eton will confirm which candidates are to be auditioned in person in January 2026
26 – 29 January 2026	Auditions (Overseas candidates who have been seen in person by the Eton Admissions Department or had a pre-audition in the Eton Music Department may request a virtual audition – email a.pearce@etoncollege.org.uk)

It is most helpful to be informed in advance of any days or times when a boy will not be available for audition. Letters confirming the date and time of the audition will be sent to parents before 19 December 2025.

THE AUDITION: Each candidate will be auditioned and awards are offered on merit alone. The audition will take between 30-40 minutes and no more than 15 minutes of music should be offered (no more than 8 minutes on one instrument). Candidates will be required to play two contrasting pieces on their principal instrument and one piece on their second instrument (if applicable) and to sing one piece if singing is offered; to read at sight; and to do ear tests as appropriate to their technical standard. Accompanists will be provided by Eton College, and a 30-minute rehearsal will be offered. Candidates may bring their own accompanist but the Precentor and Director of Music must be informed soon after the audition times are sent out. It is strongly recommended that Eton accompanists are used. As well as being first-rate accompanists, their knowledge of the process allows them to steer the candidate calmly through the audition.

CONDITIONAL PLACES: Candidates who are successfully awarded a full Music Scholarship or the one Music Exhibition with a place are entitled to a conditional offer of a place in the School. Candidates **must** still pass the Common Entrance Examination for Public Schools (or do at least reasonably well in our King's Scholarship examination) before any Music Award can be confirmed. Boys at a state school do not take Common Entrance but must pass the Eton Entrance Exam based on the National Curriculum. If a boy should win a place at Eton College through the Music Award process, a boarding house will be allocated to him after discussion between the Director of Admissions and the Director of Music.

In the case of boys who did not gain a Conditional or Waiting List place in the Eton Assessment, a computerised test and interview will be offered on the same day as the music auditions take place.

Boys normally come to Eton in the September after their 13th birthday. There is some flexibility for boys with an August birthday to come to Eton when they have just turned 14.

CONDITIONS: As a condition of their awards, Music Scholars and Exhibitioners agree that:

- in order to ensure their ongoing musical development, they will participate fully in appropriate musical activities selected for them by the Department throughout their time as a Music Award holder;
- the progress of Music Award holders is monitored informally and formally during a pupil's time in the School;
- they will take Music GCSE or IGCSE. They usually opt out of a subject to make extra time available for practice. Such arrangements will be made at the discretion of the Precentor and Director of Music and the House Master, after discussion with parents;
- they will have all instrumental and singing lessons from Eton teachers only;
- they will have instrumental lessons on the instruments offered at audition during their time at Eton unless prior permission has been given by the Precentor and Director of Music.
- instrument lesson lengths needed each week by Music Award Holders are determined by the Heads of Section each term; where fewer than 135 or 120 minutes per week are used, the remainder are not accumulated or carried forward;
- Eton pupils are expected not to commit to performances or competitions outside of School during term times without the permission of the relevant Head of Section. The same permission is required if you wish to apply for a vacation instrumental course involving one-to-one tuition.

The acceptance by parents or guardians of any award offered after the auditions constitutes their agreement to these conditions. Failure to meet these conditions could lead to an award being withdrawn.

Charging for Music Lessons for Music Scholars and Exhibitioners

Should any boy miss a lesson for unknown or unsatisfactory reasons his House Master is informed. In cases where lessons are paid for by the School, if the House Master and Precentor and Director of Music decide this is the boy's fault, the missed lesson will be charged to the parents/guardian. This includes Music Scholars and Music Exhibitioners. Where Heads of Section advise Music Award Holders that more than 120/135 minutes tuition per week is required, and the Award Holder's parents agree, the additional cost will be charged to parents.