

# Loughborough Children's Choir Membership Guide

Welcome to Loughborough Children's Choir. We are very pleased to have your child(ren) in the choir! Through membership of the choir they will receive a fantastic musical experience, professional vocal training from Emma Trounson (Choral Director at Leicester Cathedral) and friendly support from a team of volunteers led by Malcolm Pullan. Your child(ren) will have plenty of performance opportunities with the choir in a range of exciting concerts, services and events at various venues. Loughborough Children's Choir (LCC) is based at All Saints with Holy Trinity Parish Church. In addition to providing a safe environment for your child(ren) within which to practice high quality music-making, it also promotes a Christian ethos. This ethos operates through Christian music and participation in services within the church, in addition to promoting relationships based on Christian love and respect.

This guide contains all the information you need to know about the choir. Please read it through carefully, taking note of times and telephone numbers where necessary.

## Rehearsal time and venue

Rehearsals take place at All Saint's with Holy Trinity Church, Loughborough on **Wednesdays 4:45pm–6:15pm** during term-time. Rehearsals will always start and end on time, so please make every effort to ensure your child arrives in good time for the beginning of the rehearsal at 4:45pm and they are collected at 6:15pm. All dates for rehearsals and performances are provided on the calendar page of the choir website, [loughchoir.co.uk/calendar](http://loughchoir.co.uk/calendar). Please do check the calendar on a regular basis as it is updated quite frequently.

## Membership of the choir

By filling out a registration form you are enrolling your child as a member of LCC. If you feel you would like to terminate this membership at any point, please let us know rather than simply not turning up anymore. This will enable us to keep an accurate record of who is in the choir (thus potentially freeing up a space for another child).

## Attendance

To ensure the quality of rehearsals and performances, it is important that your child attends as many of the dates provided on the website as they can.

Rehearsals: Please could you e-mail, text or phone Emma to let her know if your child cannot attend a rehearsal. (Please do not tell her verbally!) In the case of very low attendance or too many unexplained absences in a term, a member of the LCC team will contact you about this. If attendance remains low, it may not be possible for your child to remain in the choir.

Performances (concerts, services and other events): The choir participates in Sunday morning services at All Saints with Holy Trinity Church once every half-term. In addition to this, the choir is also performing at an increasing number of services and concerts at a variety of venues (including All Saints with Holy Trinity Church). If the venue is different from All Saints with Holy Trinity Church we will ask you to fill out a permission slip for this event. If the venue is All Saints with Holy Trinity Church, no slip will be given out. However we would ask that you inform Emma by text, phone or e-mail if your child *cannot* attend this event, otherwise we will assume that they will be there.

If there is a problem with transport to an event, please let us know as there might be some other parent who could provide a lift. Please note that we are unable to arrange lifts on a formal basis—this must be a private agreement between you and the other parent. If you find on the day of the concert or service that your child is no longer able to attend, please text Emma so she will know not to expect your child at the performance.

## Funding and Support

Running the choir takes considerable time and money. The choir has a professional choral director (Emma) and a dedicated team of unpaid volunteers. The choir also spends money on various other things, such as music, and squash and biscuits for snacks during rehearsals. The choir costs are primarily met by charitable donations through the Church. We ask that parents also make a very small contribution to these costs by paying a **subscription of 50p per child per rehearsal** (subject to a maximum of £1 per family per rehearsal). At the beginning of each term an e-mail will be sent out to parents by Malcolm requesting payment of subscriptions for the whole term. Please hand the payment to Malcolm in cash in an envelope with your child(ren)'s name on it as soon as possible after the request for payment has been made.

## **Procedure for Rehearsals and Performances**

Rehearsals: Please arrive in plenty of time so your child is in their seat in time for the start at 4:45pm precisely. Your child will be signed in on a register each week by one of the LCC team (normally Emma). Please let the person with the register know if someone other than the person(s) listed on the registration form will be collecting your child, for example a grandparent, so we know we're not sending them off with a stranger. Whoever collects your child at 6:15pm will need to collect them from the back of the church before signing them out as they leave the church building. We would appreciate if you could assist the person signing out the children by not re-entering the church unnecessarily after your child has been signed out, or remaining in the church long after the rehearsal has finished. This is because the church is locked after choir rehearsals and we want to be absolutely sure that no child gets locked in the church!

You are welcome to stay in the church during rehearsals, although responsibility for a child passes to the choir leaders once that child has been signed in. Responsibility passes back to the parent after the rehearsal once a child is with the parent in the church, although choir leaders may still take disciplinary measures before a child leaves the church. Please note that parents are responsible at all times for their own children who do not form part of the choir. We also wish to point out that, because it is a small area, parents and children are not allowed in the kitchen area of the church (although older children from the choir may be allowed to go in with permission). If you need anything from the kitchen, please ask one of the helpers.

During rehearsals you may park in the church grounds by driving through the large iron gates on Steeple Row (the entrance nearest to the church building). If you do park in the church grounds, you are asked to mind the gravestones and not drive on the grass when it is very wet and muddy.

Performances (concerts, services and other events): In order to get the choir ready for a performance, your child will need to be at the performance venue well ahead of the scheduled performance time. The amount of time beforehand will vary depending on the performance and you will be given this information by e-mail (it will also appear on the calendar page of the choir website). Please make sure your child is at the performance venue ready to start at the time you are given. As with rehearsals, your child will be signed in on a register and signed out again at the end. It is very important that you make sure your child is signed out before you take your child from a performance. Also, unless otherwise stated, when a child is signed in for a performance, responsibility for the child passes to the choir leaders. Generally speaking, we ask that parents leave their child with us and do not remain with the choir, especially if we are in a small rehearsal room beforehand. (Parents may, of course, remain to watch the performance as a member of the audience.) The main exception to these rules is for events that take place in All Saint's Church. In this case, as with rehearsals, responsibility for a child passes back to the parents once the parent and child are reunited in church after the event.

## **Conduct**

In order for the choir to run safely and smoothly, we need to have good behaviour at all times. We have therefore put together a few rules for what constitutes good behaviour. This list of rules follows at the end of this membership guide. Please could you share this list with your child(ren). We will have this list on display during choir rehearsals to remind children. In addition to requiring good behaviour, smooth running of the choir also requires that children are punctual at rehearsals and performances and there is a commitment to virtually full attendance.

In order to encourage this good behaviour, punctuality and attendance, each child will receive a small reward at the end of the term. This reward will take the form of a payment of 20p for each rehearsal and performance the child attended in the term where the child was both punctual and well-behaved. In the case of rehearsals, the 20p will be still be paid if a child did not attend or was not punctual provided the parent sent an e-mail or text to Emma in advance with a reasonable excuse (or as soon as possible afterwards in extreme circumstances). This allowance will not apply to performances—the 20p will only be paid for a performance if a child actually attended.

Malcolm will arrange the payment to children at the end of the term based on the term's attendance and behaviour record.

## **Child protection**

Emma Trounson is the designated child protection representative for Loughborough Children's Choir, so if you have any concerns about any of the children please direct them to her, or alternatively the church's child protection coordinator, Anne Meredith. All leaders and assistants in the choir have gone through a strict recruitment procedure, which includes a DBS check (or are in the process of going through this procedure) and can be identified by neck badges with purple lanyards during choir rehearsals and events. On occasions there may be some extra people helping out as well, especially when the choir is at an event that is not an ordinary rehearsal. These people will not have gone through the same recruitment procedure and will not be left in charge of children on their own. These additional helpers can be identified by neck badges with white lanyards.

## **Bringing friends**

If you would like to bring your child's friends along to try the choir, please ask Emma in advance by e-mail or text so she can let you know if there are spaces in the choir at the moment or if it is an appropriate rehearsal for them to sample. Generally speaking, it will only be appropriate to have new members during the first few weeks of term; otherwise they will have missed too much to join in properly and might be put off continuing with the choir for this reason. New children trying out the choir will not be charged for the first rehearsal.

## **Uniform**

The choir wears a uniform whenever it performs. The uniform is black trousers or skirt and a white long-sleeved shirt or blouse with a collar. There is also a bow tie for boys or a ribbon tied in a bow for girls, although we will provide these. The uniform is not required for rehearsals.

## **Use of Photographs**

We understand that parents may wish to take photographs or video of their child participating in choir events and this is fine (although some performance venues may have their own restrictions). However, we ask that you avoid using a flash, as this can be distracting for all concerned. Generally speaking we also ask that you do not post photographs or video of children (other than your own child(ren)) on the internet, including social networking sites such as Facebook. The only exceptions to this rule are for photographs (not video) taken of groups of children while the choir is performing in public or posed photographs of the choir at public events, with the proviso that you do not mention any children's names other than your own.

If you visit the choir website you will see that it contains many photographs and videos of the choir (technically, the videos are hosted on the choir's YouTube account and a link created to these on the choir website). We wish to continue adding photographs and video in the future as the choir takes part in more events. If, however, you do not wish your child's image to appear on the website, please let us know on the registration form. Any photographs or video that appear on the choir website will be of groups of children only, and no child will be named. We will also not put photographs and video on any other public website than the choir's website and YouTube account (although the leaders may put photographs on their own social networking sites in accordance with the rules for parents above). Photographs may also be used in printed form for purposes deemed by the choir leaders to be beneficial to the choir and to the children concerned, e.g. in publicity material for the choir, All Saint's with Holy Trinity Church, or Leicester Cathedral's *DioSing!* project (of which the choir forms a part). Again, you may opt out of this, although we cannot prevent other organisations using photographs of the choir taken at public events.

## **Communication to Parents and Use of Personal Information**

The registration form for the choir asks for your personal details, including e-mail address. E-mail is the primary way that we will contact you with information about dates, events and payment of subscriptions, rather than paper letters (the main exception being where permission slips are required for an event). The registration form also asks for permission to store personal details electronically. There is quite a bit of administration involved in running the choir and being able to store personal details electronically will help this become more efficient. The personal details will only be stored by the choir director (Emma Trounson) and the choir coordinator (Malcolm Pullan) in such a way that the information is password protected, and will only be used for legitimate choir business. From time to time we may also send your child's names to third parties for inclusion in concert programmes. Again, we ask for permission to do this on the registration form. Of course, if you do not give permission for this, or for anything else, we will respect your decision. If your child leaves the choir we will delete any information we hold on your child either in paper or electronic form.

## **LCC Contacts**

Website: [loughchoir.co.uk](http://loughchoir.co.uk)

## **Rules for Loughborough Children's Choir**

In order to have lots of fun and make wonderful music at Loughborough Children's Choir we need good behaviour at all rehearsals and concerts. This is how we can do it:

1. We can work together, and always be polite to one another.
2. We can listen carefully to adults' instructions and follow them quickly and sensibly.
3. We can save our voices for singing and only speak when we need to, putting our hands up first.
4. We can line up ready to share the squash and biscuits during the break and come back immediately when we are asked to.
5. We can be aware of other children and treat them with respect.
6. We can wait until a break before going to the toilet.
7. We can be ready to start on time and wait patiently at the back of church to be collected at the end of the rehearsal if our parents are not there already.
8. We can look at the interesting things around the church, but leave them where they belong.