



The National Children's Orchestra
of Great Britain

AUDITIONS
for **2012**

OPEN NOW

www.nco.org.uk 01934 418855

**NATIONAL
CHILDREN'S
ORCHESTRA**

Special
Reduced
Audition Fee
ONLY £10

ALL ABOUT US

“What the National Children’s Orchestra of Great Britain offers our musical youth is unrivalled in the UK. Whether working with a seven-year-old, new to the excitement of ensemble playing, or with a 13-year-old, desperate for new musical challenges – the NCO provides a unique orchestral experience. Not only do children gain access to the very best level of tuition and performance opportunities, they also find themselves in the company of other children who share the same passions as them. The perfect mix of fun, friendship and phenomenal playing!”

Sir Simon Rattle CBE

The NCO offers talented young musicians aged 7-13, from all over the UK, unbeatable orchestral training and performance opportunities – this is your chance to be a part of it!

We have five age-banded orchestras:
Main Orchestra
Under 13 Orchestra
Under 12 Orchestra
Under 11 Orchestra
Training Orchestra (strings only)

Our residential courses combine exceptional musical tuition with a great deal of fun. Each course culminates in a concert where you can show off what you’ve learnt. Members of the younger three Orchestras perform for family and friends, while members of the older two Orchestras perform at major concert venues like Symphony Hall, Birmingham and Queen Elizabeth Hall, London.

It’s amazing what you can learn on an NCO course – the tutors who guide you through are the very best in the country, coming from conservatoires, specialist music schools and leading national orchestras such as the Philharmonia Orchestra and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

There will be plenty of social staff with you every step of the way to ensure your NCO journey is filled with fun, and a medically qualified nurse to look after you too.

We also offer Regional Orchestras for members of the NCO. Held monthly in four regions across the country, these meetings are a brilliant chance for members of all ages to meet up with other young musicians from their area before the residential courses.

To become a member of the NCO you must apply to audition. All children aged 7-13 on **31 December 2011** are eligible to apply for a place in one of our 2012 Orchestras. You don’t need to choose which, if you’re successful we’ll place you in the most appropriate Orchestra.

EVENTS IN 2012

Here are the exciting events you will be involved in if you become a member of the NCO. Please make sure you’re free for the dates which apply to your age group (refers to age on 31 December 2011) – in most cases this is the Orchestra you’ll be placed in if you’re successful at audition.

Main Orchestra

Spring residential course: 6-14 April Spring Concerts: 13 April 7pm Cadogan Hall, London 14 April 7pm Town Hall, Birmingham	Summer residential course: 17-25 August Summer Concert: 25 August 7pm Colston Hall, Bristol	Winter non-residential course: 8-9 December Winter Concert: 9 December 7.30pm Queen Elizabeth Hall, London
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Under 13 Orchestra

Spring residential course: 7-15 April Spring Concert: 15 April 3pm The Anvil, Basingstoke	Summer residential course: 10-18 August Summer Concert: 18 August 7pm Leeds Town Hall	Winter non-residential course: 8-9 December Winter Concert: 9 December 2.30pm Queen Elizabeth Hall, London
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Under 12 Orchestra

Summer residential course:
25 August - 1 September

Under 11 Orchestra

Summer residential course:
17-24 August

Training Orchestra

Summer residential course:
10-17 August

The three younger Orchestras will perform a concert for family and friends at the course venue, on the last day of their course.

In the unlikely event that there are insufficient numbers the NCO reserves the right to cancel any course.



THE AUDITIONS

Most people get nervous about auditions, but there's no need to worry. Remember, everyone else is in the same boat – everybody has to audition for a place each year, even if they have been a member of the NCO before. A big part of the NCO experience is about enjoyment, and we want that to happen right from the start, at the audition.

How much does it cost to audition?

This year we have a special rate of just £10, thanks to support from Youth Music.

What do I have to prepare?

Two pieces of music, up to five minutes each, which contrast in speed and style.

What else will I have to play?

There are two short pieces of sight reading.

What, no scales?

No. No scales, no singing and no aural tests.

How long will my audition last?

Usually up to 15 minutes. Harpists and percussionists are given extra time for setting up, so their auditions last up to 30 minutes.

Do I audition for a specific Orchestra?

No. Our Director of Music decides who is given a place in which Orchestra, based on your ability and where you would best fit in.

Can I audition on piano?

No, only on an orchestral instrument. Please [visit our website](#) if you're unsure which these are.

Can I audition on more than one instrument?

Yes, but please submit an application form for each. If the auditions are on the same date and at the same venue the charge is £5 per additional instrument.

How good do I have to be?

It depends on how old you are. You don't have to have taken any grades, but here are some examples of music each Orchestra played recently which you can watch to give you an idea of the standard.

Main Orchestra:
[Bernstein, West Side Story](#)

Under 13 Orchestra:
[Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5](#)

Under 12 Orchestra:
[Arnold, Peterloo](#)

Under 11 Orchestra:
[Bizet, Farandole](#)

Training Orchestra:
[Strauss, Pizzicato Polka](#)

To check out standards of each Orchestra by instrument take a look at the [grades list](#) on our website.

Trombone and tuba players should be able to read bass clef; percussionists should be able to play tuned percussion, timpani and snare drum.

We offer a number of venues around the country to make auditioning for the NCO as easy as possible. Please [visit our website](#) to find out more about each venue – address, directions, parking, etc.

Abingdon	5 October	Llandoverly	3 November
Birmingham	3-4 October	London	12-14 October
Blandford	15 October	Manchester	8-9 October
Bushey*	16-18 October	Milton Keynes	19 October
Canterbury	18-19 October	Newcastle*	27 October
Cardiff	2 & 9 October	Nottingham	25 October
Cheltenham*	28 October	Oakham*	15 October
Crowthorne	24-26 October	Petersfield	27-28 October
Dulwich	19-21 October	Plymouth*	14 October
Edinburgh	17 October	Radyr	8 October
Felsted	24-25 October	Shrewsbury*	24 October
Hampstead	10-11 October	Wells*	31 October & 1 November
Kimbolton	26 October	Weston-super-Mare	11-12 October
Leeds	29-31 October		

* venues which are suitable for percussion auditions

We allocate audition slots on a first come, first served basis, so it's best to submit your application as soon as possible but by 30 September 2011 at the latest. We may be able to accept late applications, but please contact [Geraldine Jones](#), our Orchestral Manager, to discuss this. Late applications may incur an additional administration charge.

For applicants from Northern Ireland, Isle of Man or the Channel Islands we are able to accept auditions by video. Please contact [Geraldine Jones](#) to discuss before applying.



ACCESS FOR ALL

Fees & Funding

We aim to make joining the NCO as easy as possible for everyone, irrespective of financial circumstances.

Bursaries

For those most in need, we offer a range of bursaries, to help meet the costs of joining the NCO and travelling to courses and concerts. The bursaries operate on a sliding scale. Any household with an annual income of up to £56,000 is eligible to apply for a bursary, subsidising part of your membership fee. For households with an income of less than £28,000 we can offer you a full bursary to meet the entire cost.

We send bursary application forms with offer letters following the auditions, which explain how to apply in more detail. Further details can be found on our [website](#).

Scholarships

Through the generosity of the Leverhulme Trust, we are also able to provide 20 scholarships each year. You can't apply for these scholarships; they are awarded at the discretion of the Director of Music to recognise outstanding performance at audition.

Membership Fees

The annual membership fee for 2012 depends on which Orchestra you are invited to join, and covers all your course expenses:

- Training, Under 11 and Under 12 Orchestra: £765
- Under 13 and Main Orchestra: £1495

Through fundraising activities, the NCO subsidises all places to make them more affordable for you – these fees are only about half of what it actually costs.

