



FOREST SCHOOL

11+ Music Scholarships at Forest School

Frequently asked questions

How do I register?

When you register your interest in Forest there is a box to tick on the form to indicate that you would like your child to be considered for a Music scholarship. You will then be contacted by the Admissions office who will ask you to complete a form giving information about the musical details of your son/daughter. In December, ALL registered music scholarship candidates will take part in a Music Day. Shortlisted candidates will be called back for individual auditions in January.

What can be awarded? What is the difference between an Exhibition and a Scholarship?

There are two types of awards: Exhibitions and Scholarship. An Exhibition is a monetary award that pays for the cost of instrumental or vocal tuition. It is equal to the cost of thirty lessons each of forty-minutes duration at the school rate i.e. one year of tuition. Exhibitions can be used for tuition with Forest music teachers and with external music teachers. However, if an external teacher costs more, the School will not pay any more than the Exhibition value. Pupils may hold more than one Exhibition. When an Exhibition is awarded it is given for the entire school career of the pupil, subject to successful progress each year.

Scholarship is remission from fees. We can award up to a maximum of 20% remission. Some candidates will be offered both Scholarship and Exhibition(s), some just Scholarship, and some only Exhibitions.

How many places are available?

There is not a fixed number of places for Music Scholarships. The Director of Music makes recommendations after the audition process. If no candidates meet the standard, no offers will be made; if there are many strong candidates, then a panel of senior staff will decide how to divide up the offers.

Can I combine Scholarships, and can that extend beyond the 20% limit?

Scholarship awards can be combined. Many pupils have, for example, both Academic and Music Scholarship awards. However, the total combined award cannot extend above 20% remission.

What happens at the Music Day?

This is an excellent opportunity for potential Music Scholars to experience music at Forest and gain familiarity with the teachers and environment of the Music Department before the auditions in January. The pupils will have the opportunity to rehearse alongside existing Forest young musicians in a variety of sessions such as a choral workshop, an orchestral and/or band rehearsal and some masterclass sessions.

What happens at the audition?

The audition will last approximately 20 minutes. Before the audition the candidate will be able to warm-up and briefly rehearse with an accompanist (if required). In the audition, the candidate will perform all pieces first, then will be given some aural tests and sight-reading. The level of these tests will be of a similar standard to the pieces offered at the audition. Finally, there will be a short interview with the Director of Music and the panel of specialist music teachers, who will be keen to know more about the candidate's musical interests, passion, work ethic and ambitions.

What grade does my child have to be?

This is really the wrong question to be asking. Better would be what musical skills and qualities are you looking for? To deal with the thorny issue of grades first: most of the offers go to candidates who are already playing at Grade 5 ABRSM level and beyond. Some offers are made to candidates who are between Grades 3 and 5 but this is *dependent on many factors*.

There are no hard and fast rules about what grade is required – what we are looking for is evidence of musicianship, and performances that are clearly the outcome of high-quality focused practice. Furthermore, we are looking carefully at how the candidates react to the aural and sight-reading tests in the audition; it is not necessarily a case of getting things right the first time, but a matter of how the candidate responds to coaching, questioning and challenges that may be encountered in those tests.

What if my child doesn't do graded exams?

That is fine. We would simply need an indication of the equivalent level at which they are playing. This can be supplied by their instrumental/vocal teacher. We also request references from these teachers. The chosen repertoire for the audition should reflect their current standard of playing.

For candidates who do not take graded exams, we would want to ensure that, going forward, they receive the correct technical guidance as part of a carefully planned programme of study, which would include an appropriate musical examination board.

What is a principal study? Is singing an instrument?

The application form asks for first (or principal) instrument, then also second and third. The first study will usually be their most advanced instrument, which also tends to be the one that the candidate has been learning for the longest time. The principal study instrument should also be their favourite!

There is no necessity to offer more than one instrument, although most candidates offer two. Singing is considered an instrument and can be the principal study.

How many pieces to play?

At audition the candidate should play two pieces on the principal study and one on any other instruments. If they feel they have a joint principal study, they could prepare two pieces on each.

However, at the audition we may indicate to the candidate that we will stop them during the performance if the pieces are long – this never means we do not like what we are hearing! It just means we need to keep the auditions moving forward so we stay on schedule.

Do I need to use accompaniment? Can I use backing tracks?

If a piece requires accompaniment, it should be performed with that accompaniment. Backing tracks can be used for drum-kit, electric & bass guitar, jazz saxophone and others. Any backing tracks should be brought on a portable device (such as a mobile phone) and this will be connected to a bluetooth speaker in the audition room. Backing tracks can also be sent in advance by email.

Are there any instruments you don't consider?

Not really! We are open-minded. It is fair to say that our offering of tuition at Forest is mainly based around orchestral and band instruments; this includes electric guitar and bass, drum-kit and vocal studies in both classical and musical theatre/rock and pop styles. We have made awards to Hindustani and Carnatic instrumentalists and vocalists, folk musicians, and given awards for composition and song writing.

What is required of a Music Scholar?

We ask our Music Scholars and Exhibition holders to participate in at least two musical ensembles (although most of them are in more!) Music Scholars are all expected to sing in a choir.

The successful candidates will be the ones who love music and show focus and ambition in their instrument(s). By doing so and participating in the musical life of the School, they will be our leading lights, setting an example of enthusiasm, curiosity and dedication to the many other Forest pupils who are musicians but not award holders.

Music Scholars who join Forest via the 11+ selection are expected to continue with music in the classroom to at least GCSE level.

What is your best advice for preparation for the audition?

Listen to the advice of your instrumental/vocal teacher(s)! Play pieces that you know very well and enjoy playing. Do not try to play anything that is not ready, unprepared, half-done, or too difficult. By playing or singing pieces that you know and enjoy you will be able to show musicality. That means, the music will come to life, will be nuanced and expressive. Practice everyday but for a short-time and with focus; use a

metronome and set it to a slow tempo to ensure you learn the notes correctly; do not only play from beginning to end but practise the bits that need work.

Be honest when we ask you questions about music and what you are listening to – there are no trick questions in the audition, we just want to find out more about what makes you tick as a musician!

I don't want to put my son/daughter under too much pressure – what should I do?

We want to make the audition process as positive and welcoming as possible. We appreciate that the pupils will be nervous, but we will do what we can to put them at ease and give them encouragement. Ultimately, the decision to go for an award must be taken between you and your son/daughter. To gain advice about whether your child should apply you can arrange a pre-audition with the Director of Music.

What is a pre-audition? How can I arrange one?

During the Trinity and Michaelmas term the Director of Music can meet with prospective candidates and their parents, subject to times being available. Candidates can visit Forest for a short pre-audition where the Director of Music will hear the candidate play in the presence of their parents and give them advice about whether they should be applying.

To arrange a pre-audition please contact

Jana Valentová

Music School Manager

music@forest.org.uk

Tel: 020 8509 4988

When will we find out if we have been successful?

All the correspondence dealing with offers is sent during February. Should you have any other questions or need more information please contact the Music Department using music@forest.org.uk



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