

Borough Ensembles



Solihull Music Service:
Where every child's
music matters.

**SOLIHULL MUSIC SERVICE
BOROUGH ENSEMBLES**

Being in a Borough Group – what are the benefits?

- An opportunity to make music with others to the highest standards, from beginner to advanced level.
- High-class direction and coaching from specialist instrumental and vocal staff.
- A range of concerts, events and courses, both within the Borough and beyond.
- Great music, great people, great fun!

Joining A Borough Ensemble

- For the *majority* of Borough Ensembles there are no formal auditions to enter the system. Pupils are placed into the ensemble that best matches both their technical and musical abilities. The ensemble director and assistant monitor their performance throughout the year. Thereafter movement from one group to another will usually happen in January and/or September each year.
- A flat-rate charge of **£33.10 per term or part thereof (free of charge for those having evening lessons from SMS at music centres)** is made for membership of Borough Ensembles, no matter how many ensembles the pupil is in. For this fee we will try to ensure that we provide at least 30 rehearsals and three concerts in each year. The exact number of rehearsals each term will vary in line with school term dates, and the dates of all events will be published in advance. A charge may also be made for tickets for concerts to cover costs of the hire of the venue etc.
- All those eligible for free school meals are eligible for remission of fees as above. Please note that a Free Lesson Application Form must be completed and corroborative checks will be made.
- Parents and students must agree to be committed to their group, and accept the membership expectations. Once a student joins an ensemble, parents should complete a registration and consent form to ensure that emergency contact details are logged.

We set high standards for the children's playing and singing. Our motto is "*Pride in Performance*". Your child's participation in a Music Service Borough Ensemble is dependent on the following:

- Membership is generally expected for a minimum of one academic year. Termination of membership before this is only acceptable under exceptional circumstances.
- Music making should always be fun and enjoyable. However, it is also a very disciplined and focussed activity. At all times children should be positive, co-operative, willing to participate fully and work as a team.
- Regular, punctual attendance at **all** rehearsals and concerts is expected. Children should arrive at least *ten minutes* before the start of the rehearsal to set up and tune up. Please allow for traffic delays when planning your journey to the Music Centre.
- Requests for *known* absence should be made in advance, preferably **in writing** to the conductor. For unexpected absence, e.g. illness, please telephone the Music Centre prior to the start of the rehearsal. Following three unacceptable absences during a term, a student's membership will be reviewed.
- Mobile phones should be turned off during rehearsals and concerts. Eating and drinking is not permitted during rehearsals, although children may bring small bottles of water.
- Members are expected to help set up and pack away chairs, stands and equipment.
- Prior to concerts and events you will receive written confirmation of relevant information e.g. location, travel arrangements, start and end times, and concert dress. You will need to confirm your child's attendance, and the group director may ask for this verbally or in writing, depending on the event.
- In the event that a student's behaviour or attitude persistently affects the progress of the ensemble, or contravenes the above conditions then they may be asked to discontinue membership. In this extreme case the decision of the Head of Service will be final.

Health and Safety

- The safety and wellbeing of your child is always our first priority. All our rehearsals, concerts and events are risk assessed, organised and supervised in line with our Service Child Protection Policy, which has been developed in conjunction with the Borough's Education Welfare team. A copy of our Child Protection Policy is available to parents if they so wish.
- Appropriate footwear should be worn for all events. In particular the use of "heelines" is not permitted at any rehearsal or concert.
- Our duty of care will commence as your child arrives for the event, and will normally end on his/her departure from the venue at the end of the event.
- For certain events there may sometimes be the opportunity for your child to have unsupervised free time. This will be specified in the information provided before the event together with details of the staff contact point.
- If your child takes part in any type of residential course or concert tour organised by the Service, additional consent forms will need to be completed and details will be made available prior to any event taking place.

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