



Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust

Inspire • Nurture • Excel

Welcome to County Junior Strings 2025 – 2026

Congratulations on being awarded a place in this year's County Junior Strings! Whether you are a brand new member, or returning for another year, we are excited for you to be a part of the NMPAT community, and look forward to an exciting year of sharing music and performing arts with you.

This letter, along with any other communication from us throughout the year, will be available on the NMPAT website, as well as being emailed directly to families: www.nmpat.co.uk/letters

Rehearsals

Our first rehearsal will be on **Monday 8th September** and we will meet each Monday during term time. Full details and term dates can be found on our website at www.nmpat.co.uk/countyensembles

Rehearsals take place from 5.15-7.00pm in the Richard Coles Hall, which is accessed through Door 1. Please arrive in plenty of time to warm up and be ready to play together at 5.15pm – on your first week, there will be lots of NMPAT staff around the car park, to make sure you know where to go.

For rehearsals, you will need: a pencil, your CJS folder (which you will be given at the first rehearsal), your instrument and yourself. You may also wish to bring a drink and a snack, or change for the tuck shop.

Access to the NMPAT building is controlled by a keypad. The code was included in the email to which this letter was attached. Please do not share this code with anyone, and, although it's tempting to be polite, try to avoid holding the door open for anyone that isn't in your group.

Please try to tell us in advance if you know you are not able to attend a rehearsal for any reason. The easiest way to do this is online, via iPresto. You can also email us using the details at the end of this letter, or contact the main office on 01604 637117. We take online registers for all County Ensembles, using iPresto. This means that an automatically generated email will be sent home if you are not at a rehearsal and we don't already know that you are going to be absent.

Open evening

Before our first rehearsal, you are invited to come to the NMPAT open evening. Particularly if you are in a moving to a new group this year, you may like to familiarise yourself with a different part of the building before your first rehearsal. Anyone is welcome – families included – anytime from 4.00-6.00pm, on **Monday 1st September**.

The Friends of NMPAT

The Friends of Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust (FNMPAT) are an invaluable support to the work the County Ensembles, providing refreshments at rehearsals and concerts and arranging the sale of the ever-popular NMPAT Hoodies! Funds raised go towards subsidising the cost of travel to out-of-county events, and purchasing specialist instruments for use in County Ensembles.

The Friends need the involvement of parents and supporters to continue to provide all that they do, and any help is welcome. You will find members of the Friends in the Common Room / kitchen at NMPAT – do please have a conversation if you think you might be able to help in any way.

Frontier Residential Course

We have a residential course at the Frontier Centre, Irthlingborough, planned for **Wednesday 29th to Thursday 30th October**.

This is a really great opportunity for us to spend some time getting to know each other, as well as getting some extra rehearsal time in before our first performance. Please do make sure you register using the online form, no later than Friday 26th September. If you're not able to attend the course for any reason, please still use the online form so that we have accurate information all in one place.

<https://bit.ly/CJSFrontier2025>

We will write again, nearer to the course, with a bit more information. For now, details can be found on our website: www.nmpat.co.uk/courses

Events and performances

Please make a note of all our planned performances, and let us know as soon as possible if you can foresee any availability clashes. These dates are correct at the time of writing:

- **Wednesday 29th – Thursday 30th October** – Frontier residential course
- **Saturday 22nd November** – Autumn Festival of Music, at Spinney Theatre, Northampton (3.00pm start)
- **Saturday 7th February** – String Spectacular, Venue TBC. (6.00pm start)
- **Monday 18th May** – open rehearsal at Mount Pleasant Church, Northampton (normal rehearsal time)
This is an opportunity for new students to come and join us for a rehearsal, to find out what it's like to be part of a County Ensemble. There will be a short, informal performance to friends and family at the end – details to follow.
- **Sunday 5th July** – Summer Festival of Music: New Generation Concert at Derngate, Northampton (12.00noon start)

The most up to date information on all NMPAT concerts and events can be found on our online events calendar – which you can also link to your own personal calendar, if you would like to:

www.nmpat.co.uk/events

Concert dress: for performances, we have our very own CJS uniform of branded polo shirts. We ask that students wear them with black trousers/skirts and black socks/tights with clean black shoes.

CJS red polo shirts, embroidered with our logo, are available to purchase via the link below. If you already have a polo shirt that fits from last year, you don't need to buy a new one. We also have a selection of pre-loved shirts - for those wishing to make use of these, please talk to us in rehearsals to see what sizes are available. Order your polo shirt here: <https://forms.office.com/e/SuQrYErddR>

We are really looking forward to working with you this year, and look forward to seeing you at our first rehearsal on **Monday 8th September**.

Beth Gifford and Janine Mold
CJS Conductors

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