



Welcome to County Youth Choir 2025 – 2026

Congratulations on being awarded a place in this year's County Youth Choir! 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

Who

Wendy Dawn Thompson – Director
Adrian Taylor – Vocal Coach
Steven Garfirth – Piano Accompanist

Rehearsals

Our first rehearsal will be on **Wednesday 10th September** and we will meet each Wednesday during term time. Full details and term dates can be found on our website at www.nmpat.co.uk/countyensembles

Rehearsals take place from 6.45-9.00pm in the Richard Coles Hall, which is accessed through Door 1. **Please arrive in plenty of time to warm up and be ready to sing together at 6.45pm.** For every rehearsal, you will need a **pencil, your music, and a drink of water.** You may also wish to bring a snack, or some money for the tuck shop, for during the break.

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.

If you know in advance that you will be unable to attend a rehearsal for any reason, please let Mr Taylor know as soon as possible. The easiest way to do this is via **iPresto**. We take online registers for all County Ensembles through iPresto, where parents can record absences. You can also inform us by contacting the main office at **01604 637117** or by emailing me using the details below. If you have not notified us of your absence in advance and do not attend a rehearsal, an automatically generated email will be sent home.

Open evening

Before County Ensemble rehearsals recommence, you are invited to the NMPAT open evening. This is an opportunity to re-familiarise yourself with the building, and make sure you know where to go before your first rehearsal. If you've been attending NMPAT for a long time, you may feel comfortable supporting younger students on their first open evening – please let us know if you would like to help show new families around (office@nmpat.co.uk)

Anyone is welcome, 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.

Events and performances

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

- **Sunday 16th November** – Youth in Concert, Derngate, Northampton (6.00pm start)
- **Wednesday 10th December** – Choirs at Christmas, Northampton Cathedral (7.00pm start)
- **Wednesday 11th March** – Big Sing, at Derngate, Northampton (6.30pm start)
- **Wednesday 22nd April** – Spring Song, Christchurch, Northampton (7.00pm start)
- **Wednesday 1st July** – Summer Choral Festival, Christchurch, Northampton (7.00pm start)
- **17th - 23rd July** - Gabrielli ROAR Empower (TBC) further details to follow

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: we will perform wearing all black with at least quarter-length sleeves, including clean black shoes. Any skirts/dresses should be at or below knee length, and worn with black tights.

Additional opportunities

In addition to County Ensembles, we offer a wide range of additional opportunities to support your musical journey. Some details are included below and you can find more information on our website.

Theory classes - students taking ABRSM exams on their instrument / voice will need to have Grade 5 Theory in order to take the Grade 6 instrument / voice exam. For those students not taking ABRSM exams, it's a useful qualification to help develop your musical knowledge and understanding. For more information and to register for classes, please go to www.nmpat.co.uk/theory

Aural classes - to assist with ABRSM and Trinity College London exams, we offer additional Aural Classes. These are fully funded for NMPAT County Ensemble members. For more information and to register for classes, please go to www.nmpat.co.uk/aural

Music Production – classes take place online, via Zoom, on Tuesday evenings and are open to anyone, with no prior experience required. For more information and to register, please go to www.nmpat.co.uk/production

Centres: as an existing County Ensemble member, you are entitled to join a Centre for just £30 per term! Please let the NMPAT Office (nmpat@office.co.uk) know if you would like to utilise this offer. Some Centres also offer leadership and work experience opportunities for older students. More information can be found at www.nmpat.co.uk/centres

I am really looking forward to working with you this year, and look forward to seeing you at our first rehearsal on **Wednesday 10th September**.

Wendy Dawn Thompson
Director: County Youth Choir
wdthompson@nmpat.co.uk