



Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust

Inspire • Nurture • Excel

## Welcome to Northamptonshire County Youth Orchestra 2025-2026

Congratulations on gaining a seat in the orchestra. Whether you are a brand new member, or returning for another year, we hope that you will find your time with CYO a really rewarding and enjoyable experience.

The information below sets out the basic plan for the year, including all key dates that we know about at the time of writing. This letter, along with any other communication from us throughout the year, will be emailed directly to families, as well as available on the NMPAT website ([www.nmpat.co.uk/letters](http://www.nmpat.co.uk/letters))

### Rehearsal details

CYO rehearses every Saturday in term-time (including the first Saturday of half-terms) from **9.00am – 12.30pm**. Our first rehearsal will be on **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September** and a full list of all rehearsal dates for the year can be found on our website: [www.nmpat.co.uk/countyensembles](http://www.nmpat.co.uk/countyensembles)

Our normal rehearsal structure will be as follows:

9.00 – 10.15am - full rehearsal

10.15 – 11.15am - sectional rehearsal (followed by a 15-min break)

11.30am – 12.30pm - full rehearsal

CYO sectional coaches this year will be:

Richard Smith (violin 1)

Jon Spinner (violin 2)

Beth Gifford (viola)

Lucy Astill (cello)

Peter Smith (basses)

Andy Kirkwood (woodwind)

John Bickerdike (brass)

Matt Butler (percussion)

### Attendance

In order for CYO to play to its full potential, we need attendance levels to be good from every player. Please try to tell us in advance if you know you are not able to attend a rehearsal for any reason, and (wherever practical) arrange for your CYO folder to be left with the office so that it can be used by your desk partner/section.

The easiest way to let us know you are unavailable for a rehearsal is online via iPresto. You can also contact the office by phone (01604 637117) or email ([office@nmpat.co.uk](mailto:office@nmpat.co.uk)). 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.

### Access and Supervision

All doors to the NMPAT buildings are 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.

We assume that all CYO students will remain on site during the whole morning, where there will be numerous NMPAT staff on hand. Any students choosing to leave NMPAT before the end of a rehearsal do so at their own risk and will not be supervised.

## 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](mailto:office@nmpat.co.uk))

Anyone is welcome, anytime from 4.00-6.00pm, on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

## Concerts and Performances

Please make a note of **all** concert and performance dates, and let us know as early as possible if you have any availability clashes, to enable us to plan accordingly.

All dates are correct at the time of writing, and rehearsal times will be shared closer to each event.

<b>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Youth in Concert (Derngate)	<b>6.00pm</b> concert
<b>Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December</b>	End of Term Concert (Spinney Theatre)	<b>7.00pm</b> concert
<b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Orchestra Spectacular (Derngate)	<b>6.00pm</b> concert
<b>Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July</b>	End of Year Concert (Spinney Theatre)	<b>3.00pm</b> concert

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: [www.nmpat.co.uk/events](http://www.nmpat.co.uk/events)

## Concert Dress

CYO performs in **all black** concert dress. Please note that we require musicians to dress smartly for concerts; items such as jeans, trainers, white socks, excessively high heels, short skirts, low-cut tops etc. are not appropriate concert dress and should not be worn.

Please do speak to us during rehearsals, or contact us via email, if you have any questions. CYO is one of the flagship groups of the Trust and we are really excited to be working with you this year, and look forward to seeing you at our first rehearsal, on **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September**.

John Bickerdike and Richard Smith

CYO Conductors

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