



St. George's Cathedral Children's Choir Handbook



Kingston, Ontario

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Welcome

Welcome to the St. George's Cathedral Children's Choir, where children can experience the **joys of singing together** in a safe, accessible, fun, educational setting, at **no charge to the participants**. There are no prerequisites for membership, except for an interest in singing, learning, and making friends. The choir **rehearses once a week**, and sings for **worship services once a month**. Other musical or recreational activities are offered from time to time.

Registration

Parents must complete an **Information and Permission Form** for each child in the choir. Prospective choristers undertake a **four-week trial period** before making a commitment to sing regularly. During the trial period, it is important to **communicate with the choir director** about how your child is doing.

No Fee

There is **no fee for participating** in the choir. Some fundraising is done to enable the choir to hold recreational events, and to provide for the purchase of choir materials such as music and uniforms. Your **voluntary financial support** in the form of donations to the choir or St. George's Cathedral is welcome. Tax receipts are provided for contributions.

Attendance

Regular attendance at rehearsals and services is vital to the success of the choir. However, some absences are unavoidable. If your child must be away, **inform the choir director by email** (preferred) or phone, as soon as you can.

A **choir schedule** of Sunday services and other events is sent out at the beginning of the term, and in subsequent communications, and is posted on the Cathedral website for reference. Parents should **note all dates carefully**, and make every effort to **align your family schedule** with choir attendance!

Cancellation

Rehearsals are **every Friday** from September to May, **including PA days** and holidays. Occasionally a rehearsal must be cancelled due to inclement weather. If weather conditions are severe, parents should **check their e-mail or the Facebook group** for communication from the choir director.

Friday Rehearsal

Children **arrive any time after 3:45pm for a snack** in the library. Rehearsal **begins promptly at 4:15pm**, and ends promptly at 5:15pm. The choir director will be available to do **individual tests before and after rehearsal**.

Sunday Service

Arrival time is **9:30am**. After children **check in with the Duty Parent**, parents and members of the adult choir will assist with putting on their robes. Then children go into the choir room to get their music and proceed into the Cathedral for rehearsal.

Between the end of their rehearsal and the beginning of the service, the children come back into the choir room to wait with the adult choir; they are supervised by the adult choir members and the Duty Parent. At 10:25am they line up in the Stuart Room and follow the adult choir into the Cathedral.

At the end of the service, all children take off their robes, put their **medal and ruff into the pocket of the robe**, and hang up the robe. They can then proceed to the **back of the Cathedral for refreshments**. Remember to **check out with the Duty Parent!**

Recreational Events

From time to time, fun recreational events for the choir members are organized by parent volunteers. Each choir member must be **accompanied by a parent or guardian**.

Dress

Each child is fitted with a **choir robe**. For services, the only dress requirement is **dark shoes** (black is preferred). For rehearsals, casual or school clothes are fine. In winter, choristers must **remove boots** before entering the choir room. For non-liturgical singing events, choristers wear **blue choir shirts**, which are provided by the choir.

Medals

Choristers can earn medals by passing a series of **tests** on musical ability, responsibility, and participation. The colour of the ribbon indicates the level of achievement: white, light blue, dark blue, green, yellow. In addition there are special medals awarded at the end of the season:

Head Boy, Head Girl (leadership and experience)

St. Cecilia Chorister (most improved girl)

Bishop's Chorister (most improved boy)

Dean's Chorister (best overall contribution)

Supervision

Arrival: Parents must **bring their children into the building** for rehearsals and services (not drop them off outside) and **register them with the Duty Parent**. If you arrive prior to the DP, wait until they arrive.

Departure: After a rehearsal or service, children must be **picked up inside**, after the **Duty Parent checks them out**. The person who arrives to pick up the child must be indicated as authorized on the Information and Permission Form.

Older Children: Parents may give permission for older children to come to choir on their own, and/or return home on their own. These older children are to report to the Duty Parent upon arrival and when leaving. Acceptance of these arrangements is at the discretion of the choir director.

PARENTS

Parents are encouraged to support the work of the choir in various ways:

Duty Parents

A Duty Parent is present for each rehearsal or service. The DP is responsible for **taking attendance**, making sure the children are where they should be, and ensuring their safety. All DPs must undergo **screening** and supply a copy of a **current police check** (CPIC, Vulnerable Sector Check).

Snack Duty

Parents are asked to take turns **bringing healthy snacks** and **supervising the children** as they gather in the library prior to Friday rehearsals.

Robes

At Sunday services, parental assistance with putting on choir robes is appreciated.

Fundraising Activities

To keep the choir program free and accessible to all, a fundraising **tea and concert in May** is held annually. Parents are asked to help with this event.

Social Events

The choir usually has a party in the Fall, a Christmas party in December, sings the National Anthem at the Frontenacs hockey game in February, and a party at the end of the season. Parental assistance makes these fun events possible.

DUTY PARENTS

Friday Rehearsal - Snack Duty

The parent on Snack Duty should **arrive by 3:45pm** and **remain in the library** until after the rehearsal. Please make sure that all toys in the library are put away after use, and that noise levels are kept to an acceptable level.

Friday Rehearsal - Duty Parent

The Duty Parent should **arrive by 3:45pm**, pick up the DP clipboard and name tag, sit in the hallway near the entrance, and **check children in** as they arrive. Once rehearsal begins, the DP **moves into the choir room** with the children, and **stays with them** if they move to another location, such as the Cathedral sanctuary or Great Hall.

At the end of rehearsal, the DP **checks each child out** as they are handed over to the parent/guardian who is authorized to pick them up. The DP **remains until all children** have been picked up.

Sunday service

The Duty Parent should **arrive by 9:15 am**, and be prepared to **check children in** as they arrive at 9:30am.

At the start of the service, the DP **moves into the Cathedral** and sits in the **front row of the congregation**, near the Stuart Room door. When the children leave at the sermon time, the DP **accompanies them to the choir room**.

If a child leaves, either to go to the washroom or because of illness, the DP **follows the child**, and either waits outside the washroom or – in case of illness – contacts the parent and follow the medical protocol provided below. It is strongly advised that more than one adult be present if a DP needs to enter the washroom.

Following the service, the DP **checks children out** as they are picked up by their parent or guardian.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

The red binder containing the Information and Permission Forms is kept on the book shelf in the choir director's office. If a child has a significant health issue, the parent will be required to indicate where the parent can be reached and what medical protocol is to be followed in case of a medical incident. The form must include the location of the child's medication, puffer or epi-pen, and indicate whether they can self-administer. Children who require medication or medical equipment will be expected to have it with them at all times.

If a child suffers an injury and it is deemed to be serious, an ambulance will be called and the child will be transported to hospital. The parent will be contacted and can meet the child at the hospital.

NOTE: If using the phone in the hall outside the choir room, dial 9 to get an outside line.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions or comments at any time, please contact the choir director, Michael Capon, by telephone at 613-548-4617x23 or by email at organist@stgeorgescathedral.ca.

Cathedral website: stgeorgescathedral.ca

Facebook group: facebook.com/groups/cathedralchildrenschoir

NOTES

Updated 2018-07-13