



REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1203095

SYLLABUS 2026

and regulations

Entries close: 6th February 2026

Festival Competition Dates –

20th and 21st March

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Festival Rules, Safeguarding Policy and Privacy Policy can be viewed online – www.newcastlefestival.org.uk

Please note that some classes may be switched between the Friday and the Saturday depending on the number of entrants. If a competitor is not available for one of the sessions, please add this information when you complete the online entry.

Competitors are reminded to check the revised details about the Festival Accompanist, as they must now make their own private arrangements.



Friday 20th March

6.00pm to 9.00pm

Saturday 21st March

9.30am to 12.30pm

2.00pm to 5.00pm

Venue

The Clayton Hall Academy
Clayton Lane, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 3DN

We are delighted to have the following adjudicators for Festival 2026, all of whom are experienced in taking competition classes:

SPEECH AND DRAMA

Vanessa Buckley
Rebecca Vines

MUSIC

Piano – John Foster
Instrumental – Iona Sherwood-Jones
Vocal – Andrew Padmore

Biographies of all five adjudicators will be available to view on the 'Who's Who' page of the website - newcastlefestival.org.uk

ENTRY ONLINE

www.newcastlefestival.org.uk

ENTRIES OPEN 14th DECEMBER 2025

ALL ENTRIES CLOSE 6th FEBRUARY 2026

All entries will incur a small Paypal fee.

We are sorry but we will not accept late entries, or late alterations.

All enquiries to: The Entries Coordinator, Karen Shutt,
14 Craig Walk, Alsager, Cheshire ST7 2RJ
Tel: 01270 874157 Email: entries@newcastlefestival.org.uk

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME FESTIVAL FOR MUSIC, SPEECH AND DRAMA

President

Margaret Tebby LRAM ATCL B Ed

Vice-Presidents

John Callister Head of Entrust Music Service Staffordshire
www.entrust-ed.co.uk

Barbara Kelly Professor of Musicology,
Royal Northern College of Music

Brian Rawlins BA (Hons) LLAM LRAM

Ruth Steele City of Stoke-on-Trent Music Service Lead
www.musicmark.org.uk/members/stoke-on-trent-city-music-service

We were very sorry to hear about the death of Mike Lloyd, of Music Mania. Mike has been a great supporter of the festival and a Vice President for several years.

The festival is an opportunity for amateur competitors of all ages to perform in public and receive advice from experienced professional adjudicators. For some, the festival may be part of their preparation for examinations and perhaps a career, for others it is an extension of their absorbing interest in music-making and drama.

The festival is organised and staffed by a team of dedicated volunteers who give their time and enthusiasm to continue the festival tradition. It is great fun to be part of. If you would like to find out more about the many volunteer roles available please speak to any of the volunteers on the festival weekends or make contact through the website www.newcastlefestival.org.uk.

TAKING PART IN THE FESTIVAL

Where All competition classes will be held at the Clayton Hall Academy, Clayton Lane, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 3DN.

When For some classes, the syllabus shows the most likely days and times on which classes will be held.
We will make every effort to keep to the scheduled sessions but heavy or conflicting entries may mean we have to make changes. If this becomes necessary we will let competitors know as soon as possible.

Please indicate, at entry, if you are not available for any of the three sessions.

To help us keep the schedules running to time competitors must keep to the time limits shown in the syllabus. The adjudicator may ask competitors performing beyond the set time to stop.

Facilities Cakes, biscuits, chocolate and drinks (hot and cold) will be on sale near to the information desk.

Rooms are provided to allow ensembles to assemble and warm-up.

Audience Audience admission to the two-day festival is £4.00 per adult, with free admission for young people aged 16 and under. (There is no entrance fee for competitors).

Programmes will show all the classes and competitors, and can be purchased for £5 on the day (or £6 in advance, to include cost of postage, if ordered through the online entry system).

Entries Entries should be made online. (also see page 10)

The deadline for entries is 6th February 2026.

Entries will not be accepted without payment. Payment should be made online using Paypal or the credit card option. Online entries will receive receipt of entry immediately by email.

About 3-4 weeks after the entry deadline all competitors should receive notification of the time and location of classes.

If you have not received this notification by 6th March 2026, please contact the Entries Coordinator on 01270 874157

or email: entries@newcastlefestival.org.uk

Accompaniments

Vocal Solos (except Musical Theatre and pop) and Instrumental Solos require live accompaniment, unless the solo has no accompaniment.

Backing tracks cannot be used for these classes.

Pop and Musical Theatre competitors may use live or recorded accompaniments. Any electrical equipment must be provided by the performer and must have a valid PAT test sticker.

Any arrangement to employ the services of the Festival Accompanist should be done by private arrangement, and should be agreed by 17th February 2026.

The Festival Accompanist is: **Karen Shutt** BA(Hons), LTCL(per), PGCE
14 Craig Walk, Alsager, Cheshire ST7 2RJ Tel: 01270 874157

A letter from Liz Richardson (Chair of the Festival)

Dear Festival supporters,

Thank you to everyone who supported Newcastle Festival in 2025 and coped with the difficulties we experienced with taking payments. The festival was well-attended, and we received encouraging feedback from competitors, family members and adjudicators.

We now have RunMyFestival software managing the entries and payments, and hope things will be 'trouble free'!! You will notice that all entry payments will incur a small Paypal fee, including any card payments.

Festival 2026 will run in a similar way to 2025 with all classes taking place on either the Friday evening (20th March) or the Saturday (21st March). Please make it clear on your entry if the competitor is not available on one of those days.

We now use National Curriculum year groups instead of age groups for most of our classes. Please check carefully that the competitor is entered in the correct age group. (A table is provided to help you check that the correct NC year group is selected.)

We have reintroduced the Choral Speaking classes for age categories and they can be found in the Speech and Drama section.

It is important that you read the rules relating to copyright. Competitors who do not abide by these rules will be unable to win their class.

The Trustees and I hope that you will find suitable classes to enter. You should contact the Entries Coordinator with any queries.

Please support the Festival in any way that you can. We are grateful to the volunteers who give up their time each year to help the festival weekend to run smoothly. If you could become a volunteer, please contact us (info@newcastlefestival.org.uk)

With best wishes,

Liz Richardson (Chair of Festival Trustees)

NATIONAL CURRICULUM YEAR GROUPS

Below is a table to indicate how age groups match with National Curriculum Year Groups. Please check carefully when entering for age group classes.

Date of Birth	Age	National Curriculum Year Group
01/09/2020-31/08/2021	4 -5	Reception
01/09/2019-31/08/2020	5-6	Year 1
01/09/2018-31/08/2019	6-7	Year 2
01/09/2017-31/08/2018	7-8	Year 3
01/09/2016-31/08/2017	8-9	Year 4
01/09/2015-31/08/2016	9-10	Year 5
01/09/2014-31/08/2015	10-11	Year 6
01/09/2013-31/08/2014	11-12	Year 7
01/09/2012-31/08/2013	12-13	Year 8
01/09/2011-31/08/2012	13-14	Year 9
01/09/2010-31/08/2011	14-15	Year 10
01/09/2009-31/08/2010	15-16	Year 11
01/09/2008-31/08/2009	16-17	Year 12
01/09/2007-31/08/2008	17-18	Year 13

THE NEW MARKING SYSTEM

The Newcastle-under-Lyme Festival for Music, Speech and Drama is affiliated to BIFF (British and International Federation of Festivals <https://www.federationoffestivals.org.uk/>)

A new marking system was introduced by BIFF in April 2024 and is being used by all affiliated festivals and adjudicators. The descriptors are clear and the details can be seen by clicking the links below. The marks will not correlate with marks given in festivals before 2024, so they need to be understood using the new criteria.

Please see the links below for the full details.

Speech and Drama -

<https://www.federationoffestivals.org.uk/sites/federationoffestivals.org.uk/files/sd - descriptors and criteria -new marking scheme 0.pdf>

Music -

<https://www.federationoffestivals.org.uk/sites/federationoffestivals.org.uk/files/music - descriptors and criteria - new marking scheme 0.pdf>

Festival Information

The following cash prizes will be awarded in 2026:-

George Finney Award

Youth Choral. VC 189 Songs from the Shows, 19 years and under.
Each competing group will receive a bursary of £100.

Barracks Trust Award – Adult Choirs

Adult Vocal Ensemble. CH 530 Own Choice

1st, 2nd and 3rd places will be awarded cash prizes of £100, £50 and £30 respectively, donated by The Barracks Trust.

Barracks Trust Award – Open Vocal Ensemble

Vocal Ensemble Open. CH 532 Own Choice

Cash prizes for 1st and 2nd places of £70 and £30, donated by The Barracks Trust.

The festival trustees are very grateful to the Barracks Trust for their support of the festival.

Trophy

A trophy will be awarded to the winner of each class, at the discretion of the Adjudicator.

The Lions Brass Trophy

The Lions Brass trophy will be awarded to the most promising player of a brass instrument at the festival. The award may be to a soloist or to a player in a group or band and may not necessarily be to the winner.

The Adjudicator's decision will be taken after the completion of all classes involving brass.

Entries

We will be using the new BIFF marking system. Please see page 8 for details. When candidates are entered for the Newcastle Festival it is important that all the relevant information is given. Titles and Composers of all Own Choice pieces must be given and not changed later.

If a competitor is not available for the whole weekend that must be stated at entry. If a competitor is in other classes, or has siblings that are also entered, this must be stated at entry, to allow us to avoid clashes where possible. Late changes are not possible. The date of birth for under 18s, should be given at entry.

Age Group Classes

Most of the Own Choice classes for under 18s have been revised to be allocated to National Curriculum School Year Groups (NC) rather than to the previously stated age ranges.

Unfortunately, a few competitors were entered incorrectly in 2025, and this caused several last minute rescheduling issues.

We reserve the right to refuse a change of class by cancelling the entry and providing a refund.

Please check carefully that the competitor has been entered correctly. (Ages for Ensembles and Music Composition classes are calculated from the first day of the festival – 20th March 2026.)

Copyright Rules – Music Classes

The rules about copyright are strict and competitors who do not bring an original copy of their music **will not be permitted to win the class**.

Photocopies that have been legally downloaded are permitted.

A photocopy for the adjudicator can be made and should be marked '**Adjudicator's copy**'. All photocopies will be destroyed after the Festival and cannot be returned to the competitor.

Speech and Drama

Most, but not all, of the classes will be on the Saturday. Please indicate at entry if you are not available on the Friday evening. There will be two Speech and Drama adjudicators in 2026.

High Scorers' Concert – There will be a concert on Saturday 9th May 2026, at St Luke's Methodist Church in Clayton. High Scorers at the festival will be invited to take part.

Music

Graded classes – The Graded classes for Instrumental and Pianoforte classes have been popular and will continue to be offered. These classes are open to competitors of any age. The piece chosen must be from a current exam syllabus for that grade. The title of the piece must be given at entry and cannot be changed later. The exam board and publisher must be named at entry. A copy of the music must be provided for the adjudicator.

Pianoforte – Set Piece classes were replaced by Graded Classes in 2020. Piano OPEN classes will take place in the Library at Clayton Academy on the Saturday, probably in the afternoon.

Instrumental Classes – Significant changes have recently been made to these classes. All instrumental solo classes are now for all instruments, excluding piano solos.

Duets and Trios – There are three Piano Duet classes. Any other instrumental duets and small ensemble groups, including Piano Trios, should be entered into class EN 410 or EN 411.

Vocal and Musical Theatre classes – All the Junior classes that were previously organised according to age have been replaced with National Curriculum School Year Group Classes. Please check that you enter for the correct age group.

Please check the publisher's copyright rules to ensure that you have permission to perform the pieces you select.

Vocal Ensembles - The approximate number of performers, and the name of the conductor, should be given when completing the entry form.

Instrumental Ensembles - The approximate number of performers, and the name of the conductor, should be given when completing the entry form.

Composition Classes – There are composition classes for Music and Verse.

Festival 2027 – The dates for the festival in 2027 have been confirmed. They are 12th and 13th March 2027.

SPEECH AND DRAMA

Rules to be aware of –

1 A copy of the text must be brought to the competition room. The copyright laws governing the copying of texts must be adhered to. The Festival pays for a licence through its affiliation to BIFF (Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society).

A copy should be provided for the Adjudicator and it may be a photocopy. All photocopies submitted to the adjudicator will be destroyed by the Festival Office staff.

2 The online entry requires the title, the author or poet's name and the details of the publication being used, including the ISBN number. (This allows us to complete the licensing requirements after the festival, when every piece performed has to be reported.)

3 Duologues are not covered by the BIFF licence. The competitors must ensure that they have permission to perform the piece. (LAMDA allow their works to be performed).

4 Solo Dramatic items may qualify for copyright indemnity provided that the item is announced with title and author at the time of performance. The performer must not change the words or the gender of a character.

Verse Speaking – Own Choice

Poems should be announced by the competitor naming the title and author. Timing of own choice poems starts after this announcement. The verse should normally be spoken from memory.

The title of the Own Choice poem needs to be stated on the entry form and a copy should be presented to the Adjudicator on the day of the festival. Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

SD 01	VERSE SPEAKING NC YEAR 4 AND UNDER.	Entry Fee £7.50
	Own Choice. Not to exceed 2 minutes.	
SD 02	VERSE SPEAKING NC YEAR 5	Entry Fee £8.50
	Own Choice. Not to exceed 3 minutes.	
SD 03	VERSE SPEAKING NC YEAR 6	Entry Fee £8.50
	Own Choice. Not to exceed 3 minutes.	
SD 04	VERSE SPEAKING NC YEAR 7	Entry Fee £10.50
	Own Choice. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	
SD 05	VERSE SPEAKING NC YEAR 8	Entry Fee £10.50
	Own Choice. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	
SD 06	VERSE SPEAKING NC YEARS 9 and 10	Entry Fee £10.50
	Own Choice. Not to exceed 5 minutes.	
SD 07	VERSE SPEAKING OPEN	Entry Fee £12.50
	Own Choice. Not to exceed 6 minutes.	

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

Prose Reading – Own Choice

Pieces should be announced by the competitor, naming the title and author. Timing starts after this announcement. The title of the own choice passage needs to be stated on the entry form and a copy should be presented to the Adjudicator on the day of the festival.

Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

SD 11	PROSE READING NC YEARS 4 AND BELOW Own Choice. Not to exceed 3 minutes.	Entry Fee £7.50
SD 12	PROSE READING NC YEARS 5 AND 6. Own Choice. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	Entry Fee £8.50
SD 13	PROSE READING NC YEARS 7 AND 8 Own Choice. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	Entry Fee £10.50
SD 14	PROSE READING NC YEARS 9 AND 10 Own Choice. Not to exceed 5 minutes.	Entry Fee £10.50
SD 15	PROSE READING OPEN Own Choice. Not to exceed 6 minutes.	Entry Fee - £12.50

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

Sight Reading

Competitors remain outside the competition room. They will be called in programme order and will have 30 seconds to scan the set passage before reading it. Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

SD 21	SIGHT READING NC YEARS 6 AND BELOW	Entry Fee £8.50
SD 22	SIGHT READING NC YEARS 7 TO 10	Entry Fee £10.50
SD 23	SIGHT READING NC YEAR 11 AND ABOVE	Entry Fee £12.50

Choral Speaking

The title of the own choice passage needs to be stated on the entry form and a copy should be presented to the Adjudicator on the day of the festival. Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

SD 24	CHORAL SPEAKING NC YEAR 6 AND BELOW Two contrasting pieces. Own Choice. Not to exceed 5 minutes.	Entry Fee £27
SD 25	CHORAL SPEAKING NC YEAR 11 AND BELOW Two contrasting pieces. Own Choice. Not to exceed 5 minutes.	Entry Fee £27
SD 26	CHORAL SPEAKING. OPEN Two contrasting pieces. Own Choice. Not to exceed 6 minutes.	Entry Fee £27

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

Solo Drama

Small hand props are allowed but no costume. Passages should be introduced by the competitor, including naming the title and author. Timing starts after the announcement. The title of the Own Choice piece needs to be stated on the entry form and a copy should be presented to the Adjudicator on the day of the festival. Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

SD 30	SOLO DRAMA NC YEARS 4 AND BELOW Own Choice. Not to exceed 3 minutes.	Entry Fee £7.50
SD 31	SOLO DRAMA NC YEARS 5 AND 6. Own Choice. Not to exceed 3 minutes.	Entry Fee £8.50
SD 32	SOLO DRAMA NC YEAR 7 Own Choice. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	Entry Fee £10.50
SD 33	SOLO DRAMA NC YEAR 8 Own Choice. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	Entry Fee £10.50
SD 34	SOLO DRAMA NC YEARS 9 AND 10 Own Choice. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	Entry Fee £10.50
SD 35	SOLO DRAMA OPEN Own Choice. Not to exceed 6 minutes.	Entry Fee £12.50
SD 38	SOLO DRAMA - SHAKESPEARE NC YEARS 8 AND BELOW Own Choice. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	Entry Fee £10.50
SD 39	SOLO DRAMA - SHAKESPEARE OPEN Own Choice. Not to exceed 6 minutes.	Entry Fee £12.50

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

Duologue

Small hand props are allowed but no costume. A copy should be presented to the adjudicator on the day of the festival. Passages should be introduced by the competitors, including naming the title and author. Timing starts after this announcement. Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|------------------|
| SD
40 | DUOLOGUE
NC YEARS 6 AND BELOW | Entry Fee £12.50 |
| Own Choice. Not to exceed 3 minutes. | | |
| SD
41 | DUOLOGUE
NC YEARS 7 to 9 | Entry Fee £14.50 |
| Own Choice. Not to exceed 5 minutes. | | |
| SD
42 | DUOLOGUE
OPEN | Entry Fee £14.50 |
| Own Choice. Not to exceed 5 minutes. | | |

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

Group Drama

This is a class for Drama and is not part of Musical Theatre.
Own choice from published works, not including Musical Theatre. No restriction on age. Small props and an impression of costume may be used. An introduction to the drama, setting the scene, should be given. The Adjudicator should be provided with a script or outline.

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------|
| SD
60 | GROUP DRAMA
OPEN | Entry Fee £22 |
| Minimum of 3 and maximum of 15 performers
Own Choice. Not to exceed 10 minutes. | | |

Verse Composition

Own composed poem to be submitted by email. A copy of the composition for the Adjudicator must be sent, to be received by 17th February 2026, to the Entries Coordinator: entries@newcastlefestival.org, giving the full name of the competitor, contact details and class number.

The Adjudicator will discuss the poetry composition at the festival, using the compositions submitted, and announce the successful winners.

Performance of winners' verses to be given by the authors (or their agreed replacement) during the class at the festival. the author must be present during the class at the festival. The author must be present for the adjudication.

Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

N.B. THE COMPOSITION SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED OR ENTERED INTO ANOTHER FESTIVAL. The Festival organisers reserve the right to publish the work where this would help promote the Festival.

**SD 50 VERSE COMPOSITION
NC YEAR 6 AND BELOW**
Not to exceed 3 minutes.

Entry Fee - £8

**SD 51 VERSE COMPOSITION
NC YEARS 7 to 10**
Not to exceed 4 minutes.

Entry Fee - £10

**SD 52 VERSE COMPOSITION
OPEN**
Not to exceed 5 minutes.

Entry Fee - £12

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

Could you help with the Festival in 2026?

Volunteers needed!

Our local festival relies totally on volunteers and each year we try to recruit a few new ones to take the place of those who have served for many years and feel it is time to retire!

There are many roles that volunteers can take on and we would love to hear from anyone who is ready and willing to join the team. We would love to have a few young people helping us also!

secretary finance cashier publicity
advertising liaison planning website
photography graphic design data handling
various admin roles adjudicator's secretary fund raising
room stewards writing certificates car park steward

Piano

An original copy of the music must be produced in the competition room. The copyright laws governing the copying of music must be adhered to. A copy for the Adjudicator may be a photocopy as long as the original copy is also present in the room. All photocopies submitted to the Adjudicator will be destroyed by the festival office staff.

GRADED PIANO

These classes are open to competitors of any age,. Competitors should only enter ONE graded class. They should choose the class closest to the level at which they are currently working. The title of the chosen piece (ONE PIECE ONLY) needs to be stated on the entry form and a copy of the music must be provided for the Adjudicator. Pieces should be chosen from a current music examination syllabus. Trophies will be held for one year.

(If the examination board is allowing an overlap, then a piece from either list is acceptable. Please be clear on the entry form by listing the title, composer, piece reference and syllabus date.)

PN **GRADED PIANO SOLO PRE GRADE 1** Entry Fee - £7.50
100

Choice of one piece from current syllabus of any examination board for Initial or Prep Test.

PN **GRADED PIANO SOLO GRADE 1** Entry Fee - £7.50
101

Choice of one piece from current syllabus of any examination board for Grade 1 only.

PN **GRADED PIANO SOLO GRADE 2** Entry Fee - £7.50
102

Choice of one piece from current syllabus of any examination board for Grade 2 only.

PN **GRADED PIANO SOLO GRADE 3** Entry Fee - £8.50
103

Choice of one piece from current syllabus of any examination board for Grade 3 only.

PN **GRADED PIANO SOLO GRADE 4** Entry Fee - £8.50
104

Choice of one piece from current syllabus of any examination board for Grade 4 only.

PN **GRADED PIANO SOLO GRADE 5** Entry Fee - £10.50
105
Choice of one piece from the current syllabus of any examination board for Grade 5 only.

PN **GRADED PIANO SOLO GRADE 6** Entry Fee - £10.50
106
Choice of one piece from the current syllabus of any examination board for Grade 6 only.

PN **GRADED PIANO SOLO GRADES 7 + 8** Entry Fee - £12.50
107
Choice of one piece from the current syllabus of any examination board for Grade 7 or Grade 8 only.

PIANO SOLOS FOR 18 YEARS AND UNDER.

The title of the Own Choice piece (ONE PIECE ONLY) needs to be stated on the entry form and a copy of the music must be provided at the festival for the Adjudicator. Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

PN **PIANO SOLO NC Y4 AND BELOW** Entry Fee - £7.50
110
Not to exceed 2 minutes. Own Choice.

PN **PIANO SOLO NC Y5 AND 6** Entry Fee - £8.50
111
Not to exceed 3 minutes. Own Choice.

PN **PIANO SOLO NC Y7 AND 8** Entry Fee - £10.50
112
Not to exceed 4 minutes. Own Choice.

PN **PIANO SOLO NC Y9 AND 10** Entry Fee - £10.50
113
Not to exceed 5 minutes. Own Choice.

PN **PIANO SOLO NC Y11 AND 13** Entry Fee - £12.50
114
Not to exceed 6 minutes. Own Choice.

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

OPEN PIANO

These Piano classes are open to all ages and will be held on the Saturday of the festival. The competitor should decide which class is most appropriate for their piece. The Adjudicator may take into consideration the performer's choice of piece when awarding the mark. Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

PN **PIANO SOLO OPEN** Entry Fee - £14.50
120 **OWN CHOICE**
Not to exceed 7 minutes.

PN **PIANO SOLO OPEN** Entry Fee - £14.50
121 **BAROQUE PERIOD**
Not to exceed 7 minutes. Own Choice.

PN **PIANO SOLO OPEN** Entry Fee - £14.50
122 **CLASSICAL PERIOD**
Not to exceed 7 minutes. Own Choice.

This class includes late Beethoven and late Schubert.

PN **PIANO SOLO OPEN** Entry Fee - £14.50
123 **CHOPIN**
Not to exceed 7 minutes. Own Choice.
Award: Robert Ratcliffe Trophy
One piece by Chopin.

PN **PIANO SOLO OPEN** Entry Fee - £14.50
124 **POST CLASSICAL TO PRESENT DAY**
Not to exceed 7 minutes. Own Choice.
This class excludes Beethoven and Schubert.

PIANO DUETS

PN **PIANO DUET** Entry Fee - £14.50
130 **NC YEARS 8 AND UNDER.**
Not to exceed 3 minutes. One or two duets allowed.

PN **PIANO DUET** Entry Fee - £14.50
131 **NC YEARS 11 AND UNDER**
Not to exceed 4 minutes. One or two duets allowed.

PN **PIANO DUET** Entry Fee - £16.50
132 **OPEN**
Not to exceed 5 minutes. One or two duets allowed.

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

INSTRUMENTAL SOLOS

An original copy of the music must be produced in the competition room. The copyright laws governing the copying of music must be adhered to. A copy for the Adjudicator may be a photocopy as long as the original copy is also present in the room. All photocopies submitted to the Adjudicator will be destroyed by the festival office staff.

GRADED INSTRUMENTAL SOLOS

Any instrument except Piano. These classes are open to competitors of any age. Competitors should only enter one graded class. They should choose the class closest to the level at which they are currently working. The choice of piece (ONE PIECE ONLY) needs to be stated on the entry form and a copy of the music must be provided at the festival for the Adjudicator. Pieces should be chosen from any current music examination syllabus. (No repeats unless required by the examination board). Piano accompaniment allowed. The Official Festival Accompanist is available by private arrangement. Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

IN 200	GRADED INSTRUMENTAL SOLO GRADES 1 AND 2	Entry Fee £7.50
	Own Choice. One piece from the current syllabus of any examination board for Grades 1 and 2.	
IN 201	GRADED INSTRUMENTAL SOLO GRADES 3 AND 4	Entry Fee £8.50
	Own Choice. One piece from the current syllabus of any examination board for Grades 3 and 4.	
IN 202	GRADED INSTRUMENTAL SOLO GRADES 5 AND 6	Entry Fee £10.50
	Own Choice. One piece from the current syllabus of any examination board for Grades 5 and 6.	
IN 203	GRADED INSTRUMENTAL SOLO GRADES 7 AND 8	Entry Fee £10.50
	Own Choice. One piece from the current syllabus of any examination board for Grades 7 and 8.	

INSTRUMENTAL SOLOS - OWN CHOICE

Any instrument including Recorder and Guitar, but excluding Piano. The choice of piece (one piece only) needs to be stated at the time of entry and a copy of the music presented to the Adjudicator on the day of the festival. Piano accompaniment allowed. The Official Accompanist is available by private arrangement. Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

**IN 210 INSTRUMENTAL SOLO
NC YEAR 6 AND BELOW**

Entry Fee £8.50

Not to exceed 3 minutes.
Own Choice

**IN 211 INSTRUMENTAL SOLO
NC YEARS 7 TO 9**

Entry Fee £10.50

Not to exceed 4 minutes.
Own Choice

**IN 212 INSTRUMENTAL SOLO
NC YEARS 10 AND 11**

Entry Fee £10.50

Not to exceed 5 minutes.
Own Choice

**IN 213 INSTRUMENTAL SOLO
NC YEARS 12 AND 13**

Entry Fee £12.50

Not to exceed 6 minutes.
Own Choice

**IN 214 INSTRUMENTAL SOLO
OPEN.**

Entry Fee £14.50

Not to exceed 7 minutes.
Own Choice. This class is open to all ages.

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

ADVANCE NOTICE

High Scorers' Concert

There will be a concert on Saturday 9th May 2026, at
St Luke's Methodist Church in Clayton.
High Scorers at the festival will be invited to take part.

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VOCAL SOLOS

including Musical Theatre Solos

VOCAL SOLOS INCLUDING MUSICAL THEATRE.

An original copy of the music must be produced in the competition room. The copyright laws governing the copying of music must be adhered to. A copy for the Adjudicator may be a photocopy as long as the original copy is also present in the room. All photocopies submitted to the Adjudicator will be destroyed by the festival office staff.

VOCAL SOLOS

Piano accompaniment allowed. The Official Accompanist can be available by private arrangement. The choice of song (one song only) needs to be stated at the time of entry and a copy of the music must be presented to the Adjudicator on the day of the festival. No props, action or costume. Live accompaniment only. Winners trophies will be held for one year.

VC 300	VOCAL SOLO NC YEARS 6 AND UNDER	Entry Fee £8.50
	Not to exceed 3 minutes. Own Choice	
VC 301	VOCAL SOLO NC YEARS 7 TO 10	Entry Fee £10.50
	Not to exceed 4 minutes. Own Choice	
VC 302	VOCAL SOLO NC YEARS 11 TO 13	Entry Fee £12.50
	Not to exceed 5 minutes. Own Choice	
VC 303	VOCAL SOLO OPEN	Entry Fee £14.50
	Not to exceed 7 minutes. Own Choice. Open to all ages and voices. Two songs allowed.	

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

MUSICAL THEATRE VOCAL SOLOS

Small props, movement and an impression of costume should be used.
The choice of song must be stated at the time of entry and a copy of the music must be presented to the adjudicator on the day of the festival. Please check copyright rules on page 10. Winner's trophy will be held for one year.

VC 310	MUSICAL THEATRE VOCAL SOLO NC YEARS 4 AND UNDER	Entry Fee £8.50
	Not to exceed 3 minutes. Own Choice	
VC 311	MUSICAL THEATRE VOCAL SOLO NC YEARS 5 AND 6	Entry Fee £8.50
	Not to exceed 4 minutes. Own Choice	
VC 312	MUSICAL THEATRE VOCAL SOLO NC YEARS 7 TO 10	Entry Fee £10.50
	Not to exceed 6 minutes. Own Choice	
VC 313	MUSICAL THEATRE VOCAL SOLO NC YEARS 11 TO 13	Entry Fee £12.50
	Not to exceed 6 minutes. Own Choice	
VC 314	MUSICAL THEATRE VOCAL SOLO OPEN	Entry Fee £14.50
	Not to exceed 8 minutes. Songs from Operetta, Music Hall and Musical Theatre. Two songs allowed.	
VC 320	POP (SOLO) OPEN	Entry Fee £14.50
	Not to exceed 6 minutes. Own Choice Pop vocal with live accompaniment (can be self accompaniment) or recorded accompaniment. Must bring own PAT-tested equipment.	

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

VOCAL ENSEMBLES / CHOIRS

An original copy of the music must be produced in the competition room. The copyright laws governing the copying of music must be adhered to. A copy for the Adjudicator may be a photocopy as long as the original copy is also present in the room. All photocopies submitted to the Adjudicator will be destroyed by the Festival Office staff. **Junior Choir classes will be held on the Friday.**

CH **GROUP MUSIC THEATRE**
500

Entry Fee £22

Minimum of 3 and maximum of 20 performers
Two songs allowed. Not to exceed 10 minutes.
Own choice from published works of Musical Theatre or film.
Small props, movement and an impression of costume should be used.
The approximate number of singers must be stated at the time of entry.
Winner's trophy will be held for one year.

CH **JUNIOR CHOIR**
510 **NC YEARS 6 AND UNDER**

Entry Fee £27

Minimum of 10 and maximum of 50 performers
Not to exceed 7 minutes.
Two contrasting own choice pieces. Time limit includes both.

CH **JUNIOR CHOIR**
511 **NC YEARS 7 TO 11**

Entry Fee £27

Minimum of 10 and maximum of 50 performers
Not to exceed 7 minutes.
Two contrasting own choice pieces. Time limit includes both.

CH **JUNIOR CHOIR**
512 **NC YEARS 13 AND BELOW**

Entry Fee £27

Minimum of 10 and maximum of 50 performers
Not to exceed 7 minutes.
Two contrasting own choice pieces. Time limit includes both.

CH **SMALL VOCAL ENSEMBLE**
531 **OPEN**

Entry Fee £17

Minimum of 2 and maximum of 8 performers
Not to exceed 7 minutes.

NC stands for 'National Curriculum Year Group'. Please check on page 7 to ensure that the competitor is entered into the correct age group class.

VOCAL ENSEMBLES / CHOIRS

An original copy of the music must be produced in the competition room. The copyright laws governing the copying of music must be adhered to. A copy for the Adjudicator may be a photocopy as long as the original copy is also present in the room. All photocopies submitted to the Adjudicator will be destroyed by the Festival Office staff.

CH **YOUTH CHORAL** Entry Fee £60
520 **(SONGS FROM THE SHOWS)**
 19 YEARS AND UNDER

Minimum of 10 and maximum of 50 performers

Not to exceed 10 minutes. Award: George S. Finney trophy.

Every choir taking part will receive a bursary of £100.

Own choice of up to three songs from shows.

(Please check copyright rules and obtain any permission required from the publisher.) The conductor does not need to be within this age bracket.

CH **YOUTH VOCAL ENSEMBLE** Entry Fee £27
521 **22 YEARS AND UNDER**

Minimum of 3 and maximum of 20 performers

Not to exceed 8 minutes.

Two contrasting own choice pieces. Time limit includes both.

The conductor does not have to be within this age bracket.

CH **ADULT CHOIR (Barracks Trust Award)** Entry Fee £50
530 **OPEN**

Minimum of 10 and maximum of 75 performers

Not to exceed 12 minutes.

Programme of two or more contrasting pieces to be performed within the time limit.

Open to any category of adult choir, including Community, Gospel and Barber Shop.

School and youth choirs are excluded, though no more than four school-aged members are allowed.

Cash prizes donated by the Barracks Trust. (see page 9)

CH **VOCAL ENSEMBLE (Barracks Trust Award)** Entry Fee £40
532 **OPEN**

Minimum of 3 and maximum of 20 performers

Not to exceed 8 minutes.

Cash prizes donated by the Barracks Trust. (see page 9)

VOCAL ENSEMBLES / CHOIRS

An original copy of the music must be produced in the competition room. The copyright laws governing the copying of music must be adhered to. A copy for the Adjudicator may be a photocopy as long as the original copy is also present in the room. All photocopies submitted to the Adjudicator will be destroyed by the Festival Office staff.

CH **POP OPEN**
540

Entry Fee £17

Minimum of 2 and maximum of 5 performers

Not to exceed 6 minutes. Own Choice

Pop vocal with live or recorded accompaniment, which can be vocal and/or instrumental. Must bring own PAT tested equipment. (Please check copyright rules and obtain any permission required from the publisher.)



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MUSIC COMPOSITION

Own composition to be submitted by email.

A copy of the composition for the Adjudicator must be sent, to be received by 17th February 2026 to the Entries Coordinator: entries@newcastlefestival.org.uk, giving the full name of the competitor, contact details and class number.

The composition is to be played or sung at the festival. It can be for solo or a small group of instruments or voices not exceeding six performers including a conductor, if used. The composer is the named entrant for this class. The onus is on the entrant to arrange for the performance of the composition, although the entry will not be judged on the performance or the lyrics. The composer need not perform but must be present for the adjudication. (The composition should not have been previously published or entered into another festival. The festival organisers reserve the right to publish the work where this would help promote the Festival.)

The winner's trophy will be held for one year.

CO 600	MUSIC COMPOSITION AGE 14 YEARS AND UNDER.
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Entry Fee - £10

Not to exceed 5 minutes.

CO 601	MUSIC COMPOSITION AGE 18 YEARS AND UNDER.
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Entry Fee - £12

Not to exceed 6 minutes.

CO 602	MUSIC COMPOSITION OPEN
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Entry Fee - £14

Not to exceed 8 minutes.

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For more details, please contact Liz Richardson
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Music from the Movies 6th June 2026

- **Williams:** Indiana Jones
- **Williams:** Jurassic Park
- **Zimmer:** Gladiator
- **Powell:** How to Train Your Dragon
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- **Hermann:** Psycho Suite
- **Williams:** E.T. The Extra

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INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES, ORCHESTRAS AND BANDS

An original copy of the music must be produced in the competition room. The copyright laws governing the copying of music must be adhered to. A copy for the Adjudicator may be a photocopy as long as the original copy is also present in the room. All photocopies submitted to the Adjudicator will be destroyed by the festival office staff.

Piece information should be given at the time of entry and cannot be altered later on. The approximate number of players must be stated on the entry form. No conductor may perform with more than one group in the same class. Large groups are allowed 10 minutes setting up time with five minutes to clear at the end of the performance. The **large ensemble classes** will be held on the **Saturday morning**. Winners' trophies will be held for one year.

SMALL ENSEMBLES

EN **FAMILY CLASS** Entry Fee - £17
400

Minimum of 2 and maximum of 10 performers

Not to exceed 6 minutes.

One or two pieces.

A group of family members; two or more members of one family, including voices or instruments or both, of any ages. More than one entry can be made if different people are competing, but no person can take part twice in this class.

EN **SMALL INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE** Entry Fee - £17
410 **14 YEARS AND UNDER**

Minimum of 2 and maximum of 5 performers

Not to exceed 7 minutes.

One or two pieces.

All players to be within the age limit. A non-playing conductor is allowed. A Piano Accompanist does not need to be within the age group and need not be counted as one of the performers.

EN **SMALL INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE** Entry Fee - £17
411 **OPEN**

Minimum of 2 and maximum of 5 performers

Not to exceed 7 minutes.

One or two pieces.

A non-playing conductor is allowed. Any piano accompanist counts in the total number of performers.

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES

These classes will take place on the **Saturday morning**.

Please refer to the information at the top of page 32.

EN INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Entry Fee - £22

412 14 YEARS AND UNDER

Minimum of 6 and maximum of 12 performers

Not to exceed 7 minutes.

One or two pieces.

All players to be within the age limit. A non-playing conductor is allowed. A Piano Accompanist does not need to be within the age group and need not be counted as one of the performers.

EN INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Entry Fee - £22

413 **19 YEARS AND UNDER.**

Minimum of 6 and maximum of 12 performers

Not to exceed 7 minutes.

One or two pieces.

All players need to be within the age limit. A non-playing conductor is allowed. A Piano Accompanist does not need to be within the age group and need not be counted as one of the performers.

EN INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Entry Fee - £22

414 OPEN

Minimum of 6 and maximum of 12 performers

Not to exceed 7 minutes.

One or two pieces.

A non-playing conductor is allowed. A Piano Accompanist is not counted as one of the performers.

THE LIONS BRASS TROPHY

The Lions Brass trophy will be awarded to the most promising player of a brass instrument at the festival. The award may be to a soloist or to a player in a group or band and may not necessarily be to the winner.

The Adjudicator's decision will be taken after completion of all classes involving brass.

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES - ORCHESTRAS AND BANDS

The large ensemble classes will be held on the Saturday morning.
Please read the information at the top of page 32.

EN **ORCHESTRAS/BANDS** Entry Fee - £27
420 **14 YEARS AND UNDER**

Minimum of 10 and maximum of 50 performers

Not to exceed 7 minutes.

Up to three pieces allowed.

A non-playing conductor and a piano accompanist do not need to be within the age group.

EN **ORCHESTRAS/BANDS** Entry Fee - £27
421 **19 YEARS AND UNDER**

Minimum of 10 and maximum of 50 performers

Not to exceed 7 minutes.

Up to three pieces allowed.

A non-playing conductor and a piano accompanist do not need to be within the age group.

EN **ORCHESTRAS / BANDS OPEN** Entry Fee - £27
422

Minimum of 10 and maximum of 50 performers

Not to exceed 10 minutes.

Up to three pieces allowed.

EN **COMMUNITY BAND OPEN** Entry Fee - £27
423

Minimum of 10 and maximum of 50 performers

Not to exceed 10 minutes.

Up to three pieces allowed.

This class is for community bands only and does not include school groups.

Could you support the Festival?

Newcastle Festival is run entirely by unpaid volunteers. However, items such as professional adjudicators and venue hire need to be paid for and entry fees only partly cover the costs. Please consider making a donation.

**Donations can be paid directly to our HSBC account -
Newcastle under Lyme Festival for Music Speech & D
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In order for the Festival to benefit from Gift Aid, you will need to contact the Treasurer – janeharrop03@gmail.com

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Each time we print a new programme, we list the names of Friends and Patrons who have made donations during the previous 12 months. You will also be sent a free programme and receive free admission to the next festival.

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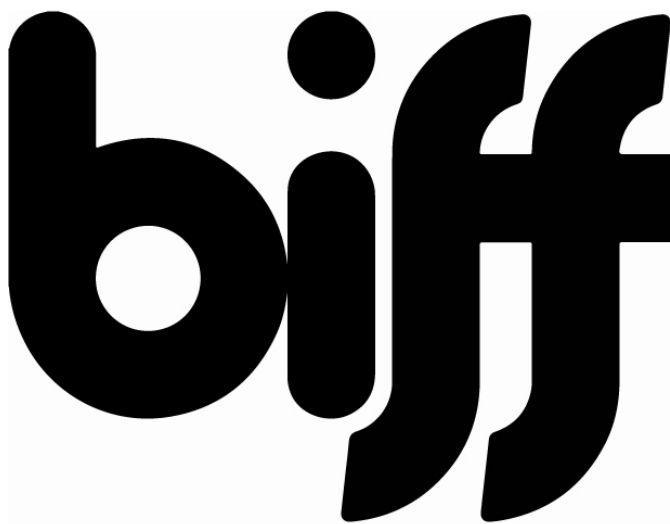
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