



St Mary's Music School
EDINBURGH

Making connections that make a difference

Annual Review 2017 | 2018



“When you have something as amazing as a shared musical heritage, it’s not just a connection to Edinburgh or to Scotland, it’s a proper world connection. When you’re playing and you’re part of it, it really connects you and focuses you and helps you to think about issues in a very different way; it gives you skills that you can take forward into any kind of situation.

Music gives you a basis from which you see yourself as part of a world community that’s been going for hundreds and thousands of years. If there’s any time spent on music it is never time wasted, it helps beyond music itself. St Mary’s has given me a real sense of my place in everything – it’s been amazing.”

Emily Addis, Head Girl, 2017/18

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A bridge from School to community

In our Strategic Plan 2018-2022, we made a clear commitment to expanding our outreach programme through increased activities and wider engagement. Our strategy involves collaborating with other arts organisations involved in music and music-related activities; seeking opportunities to extend our existing outreach activities beyond Edinburgh; and exploring connections and opportunities afforded by our Saturday Music Classes.

Reaching new audiences in new ways

As Scotland's national music school, we have a critical role to play in providing access to high quality teaching and music excellence to as many young people as possible with a talent for music, regardless of their means and circumstances. That means coming up with new ways to reach people who may not know who we are. To raise awareness of the School in Scotland's rural communities, we offered training sessions for strings and woodwind students at Elgin's Moray Music Centre in February 2017, returning in March with two of our own pupils who played solo flute and violin to 500 people at the Centre's Easter Concerts. Closer to home, a collaboration with Amnesty International in June allowed us to present our Senior Jazz Concert at St Andrew's and St George's West Church in Edinburgh. Both events significantly boosted our usual audience of friends, family and alumni with new supporters, many of whom engaged with the School for the first time.

Building a community of young musicians

During 2017/18, 150 children aged between 4 and 12 enthusiastically attended our Saturday Music Classes where, in addition to four large classes – Singing, Dalcroze, Kodály and Theory – we provided a range of small group instrumental tuition – violin, cello, clarsach, guitar, clarinet, recorder, and trumpet. With lessons priced to encourage the widest possible access, and fee assistance available, classes were at capacity largely due to the limited size of the rooms at the School. Although this continues to be an issue until the proposed move to the former Royal High School building can be achieved, next session St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral are allowing us to launch our new Friday Choirs in the uplifting venue of their Song School.

"We have both a responsibility and a desire to forge links with local communities throughout Scotland, raising awareness of the School and opening up musical opportunities to as many young people as possible."

Some 'frank but insightful' criticism

The Fitzwilliam String Quartet led our 2018 Nigel Murray Masterclass in April, in Stockbridge Parish Church, with 150 young people from all over Scotland attending and two of our own string quartets performing. In May, we launched the inaugural Edinburgh Masterclass Series. Led by renowned French violinist, Renaud Capuçon, it attracted 66 pupils from 16 Scottish schools as well as violin teachers from all over Scotland. Four of our own violinists plus a guest student played for Capuçon, receiving comments that were described by one pupil as 'somewhat frank but insightful'! Next year we hope to extend our Masterclass provision and to collaborate with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra to build a term-time, Edinburgh based, Youth Symphony Orchestra.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. J. Taylor".

Kenneth Taylor, Headteacher

A meeting of mathematics and music

I talk about mathematics with the same passion that the young people here talk about music and we really do learn from each other. The ancient Greeks made critical connections between mathematics and music and I firmly believe that applied mathematics sits at the heart of absolutely everything! Our teaching, across every subject, makes meaningful connections that put learning in context to create an accessible, inspiring and rewarding experience for every pupil.



Balancing core curriculum with specialist musical studies

Although we follow a standard academic curriculum at St Mary's Music School, longer teaching days allow us to provide a 50/50 balance between academic teaching and musical training (academic music, individual lessons, music groups and practice). As pupils progress through the School, this requires increasingly individualised timetables – always a challenge but one that we've always achieved! Staff are the bedrock of any school and St Mary's Music School is no exception. It's not just the high calibre of our staff or that they're incredibly well attuned to exam board expectations, but the fact that many of our pupils will be taught by the same teachers for their whole journey through the School. This creates an in-depth understanding of our students' aspirations and capabilities, from both an academic and a personal perspective.

Connecting across campus, across subjects, across careers

All our young people are educated on one campus and this, together with our house system, encourages a great mixing of ages and stages in the playground, in the classroom and through combined activities like our Running Club or the House Music Competition. There's a 'whole school' ethos that builds a genuine sense of unity and also encourages support and respect between older and younger pupils.

Our pupils work hard and understand that they have to make their time at school count. There's a discipline in musical training that rubs off in their approach to their studies and in balancing the demands of the two. Although the majority of our pupils pursue specialist musical studies after S6, our aim is to prepare them fully for whatever choices they make, from engineering to history. Music will always be part of their lives and at St Mary's Music School we make that possible.

Building on success through ambition

Our SQA results for the 2017/18 academic year were the highest on the school's record with pass rates in August 2018 of 98% for SQA National 5, 98% for SQA Higher and 100% for SQA Advanced Higher. Following on from last year, in music we continued to present S4 pupils for the Cambridge IGCSE – achieving a 100% A* or A and, for the first time, our S6 pupils sat the two-year Cambridge Pre-U achieving a pass rate of 100% with 88% achieving Distinction.

“The Curriculum for Excellence is all about making connections between subjects to make sense of the world. If we educate well then exam results and success follow.”



Frances Findlay, Depute Headteacher

A pathway from recruitment to destination

Year on year, recruitment is a top priority and we need to ensure that a knowledge of the School is reaching those young people who would benefit most from being educated and trained here. That means creating pathways to schools, universities and conservatoires; to choirs, orchestras and instrumental teachers; and to musically exceptional young people and their families in Scotland and further afield to support their ambitions.

Building new networks with new audiences

One of our greatest achievements in 2017/18 was the launch of our new website. By creating a more engaging and accessible platform through which to share information, photographs, news and videos, we allowed a much wider audience to connect with the School. In addition to our annual newsletter, we continued to develop our active social media network resulting in a growing following on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. I'm also deeply proud of our Advice to Young Musicians videos. This year, we launched *Performing* and *Composing*, both of which continue to receive thousands of views online. Narrated by the students themselves, they reveal passion, authenticity and a great eloquence.

“St Mary’s Music School is a community that shares a great joy of music.”

A ladder from practice to performance

Our new Edinburgh Masterclass Series, launched earlier this year, has extended the opportunity for young people from all over Scotland, including our own pupils, to hear first-hand the advice of world-class performers. It's very special to see the brilliance of great performing musicians rub off on aspiring ones. At St Mary's Music School we create a secure scaffold for our students, helping them to prepare for professional performance. From weekly performance classes critiqued by their own peers to more formal lunchtime concerts and Cathedral Chancel Concerts in the second half of each term, our pupils grow in confidence and maturity – whether they are singing daily Evensong or taking part in our outstanding Christmas, Easter and Summer concerts. Each step on this performance ladder prepares pupils for the competitions and auditions that will bring them one step closer to achieving their musical goals. Our own Directors' Recital Prize is the peak of solo performance and this year we had the highest entry level ever with the prize ultimately awarded to Salvador Sanchez, a young pianist from Spain who joined the School two years ago.

Equipping students – and ourselves – for a bright future

Throughout the year we welcomed visits from heads of department at UK conservatoires. They are consistently impressed by the comprehensive academic music package we provide here which includes harmony, coaching, composition and daily aural training alongside choirs and ensembles. Our students leave St Mary's Music School extremely well equipped for the next stage in their lives and, as alumni, they remain firmly connected to the school and the new cohort of pupils. We will continue to do what we do and to do it well, but moving to sit atop Calton Hill would certainly be a game changer for us and an amazing fit not just for the school but for the city and Scotland as a whole.



Paul Stubbings, Director of Music

A framework for achievement and attainment

2017/18 at a glance

Curriculum for Excellence

Our classes follow Scottish Government guidelines, in line with the Curriculum for Excellence, helping our pupils to become **Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens** and **Effective Contributors**. The Curriculum for Excellence supports schools to plan learning suitable to their own context and, in the case of St Mary's Music School, specialist music education is woven through the fabric of each pupil's individual timetable.

This includes:

- Aural classes
- Academic music
- Specialist instrumental teaching
- Coaching with a pianist
- Choir
- Chamber music
- Orchestra
- Performance classes
- Jazz
- Individual practice
- Composition



Gardening Club



Science Club



Running Club



Scottish Mathematical Challenge



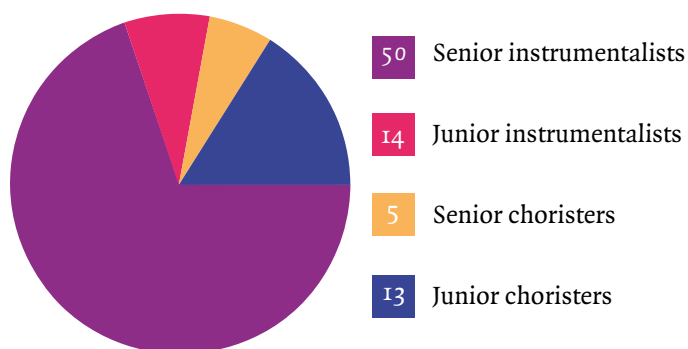
Debating Society



Eco-Schools Club

School Roll 2017/18

82 pupils (49 day pupils and 33 boarders)



Exam Results 2017/18

SQA National 5
98% (84% at A)

SQA Higher
98% (48% at A)

SQA Advanced Higher
100% (83% at A)

Cambridge Pre-U Music
100% (88% at distinction)

Cambridge iGCSE Music
100% (100% at A with 67% at A*)

ABRSM Practical
28 Distinctions, 12 Merits, 3 Passes (Grades III – VIII)

ABRSM Theory
4 Distinctions, 6 Merits, 2 Passes (Grades V and VIII)

Subject Teaching

Art & Design
Biology
Chemistry
English
ESOL
French
Geography
German
History
Italian
Latin
Mathematics
Modern Studies
Music
P.E.
Physics
RME
Spanish



Instrumental & Musical Teaching

Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Trumpet, French Horn, Trombone, Saxophone (Jazz & Classical), Percussion (Jazz & Classical), Harp, Clarsach, Bagpipes, Accordion (Classical & Traditional), Guitar (Classical), Organ, Harpsichord, Composition, Alexander Technique, Voice (Jazz & Classical)



Performing, Listening, Learning
During 2017/18...

We gave **72** performances

We attended **25** 'unmissable' concerts in Scotland

And we took part in **19** masterclasses

In 2017
our pupils came from...

Scotland (70)
Edinburgh 45, Borders 2,
Glasgow 3, East Lothian 5,
West Lothian 1, Fife 1,
Stirling 2, Perth 4,
Highlands & Islands 7

England (6)
Blackburn 1, Cambridge 1,
Derbyshire 1, Hertfordshire 1,
Shropshire 1, Newcastle 1

Overseas (6)
Spain 3, France 1,
Switzerland 1, Hong Kong 1

And in 2018
our leavers went on to...

Scotland
Glasgow University (Music);
Royal Conservatoire of
Scotland (Accordion, Violin)

England
Royal Birmingham
Conservatoire (Viola);
University of Cambridge,
Corpus Christie (Music);
Royal Academy of Music,
London (Violin, Violin, Viola);
Royal College of Music,
London (Piano/Organ);
Trinity Laban Conservatoire
of Music and Dance (Flute)

Overseas
University of Performing Arts,
Vienna (Composition/Piano)

Music Ensembles

Chamber Orchestra	String Ensemble	Early Music Group
Junior Sinfonia	Saxophone, Clarinet & Flute Ensembles	Chamber Groups and Choirs
Scottish Traditional Group	Jazz Combo	Guitar Ensemble

We play and sing with...

National Children's Orchestra, Edinburgh Youth Orchestra, National Youth Jazz Orchestra of Scotland, Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra, National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, Scottish Opera Connect, National Youth Choirs of Scotland



"Being a chorister is a very unique opportunity and it gives you the chance to take part in lots of different experiences. You also get to attend Scotland's only independent music school, which helps you to develop your music even further."

As soon as you arrive at choir you are immediately accepted in a friendly, fun atmosphere. You soon get used to the layout of the cathedral services and you learn to be extremely organised as you're responsible for your own folders and music. One of the most exciting things is that you get to go on choir tours as well doing lots of singing and spending time with the same friends."

Olivia Massimo and Beata McGhee, P7

A link between School and Cathedral

Following Lincoln Theological College and Edinburgh University's New College, John Conway served as Curate at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral before becoming Rector of St Martin of Tours Episcopal Church in 2001. There, he helped to establish St Martin's Community Resource Centre, was Coordinator of Initial Ministerial Education in the Diocese, Co-Convenor of Edinburgh Interfaith Association and Convenor of the Diocesan Mission & Ministry Committee. He was installed as Provost of St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in October 2017.



"Our relationship with St Mary's Music School is crucial and the role of the choir in the Cathedral is huge. We have a mission to serve the city and we throw our doors wide open to people who need our ministry. We're very proud to be the only place in Scotland that provides a sung service every day. Without the choristers, the Cathedral would be a very different place."

Q How central a role does music play in the Cathedral and is music close to your own heart?

A The choral tradition has always been central to the Anglican faith and, as priests, it helps if we can sing at least passably! I've always had a great love of music and I believe that on all sorts of levels music has the ability to change us. People come to the Cathedral for the sermon and are moved by the music – and vice versa – so the two are very much linked. Our sung Evensong at 5.30pm is glorious – when I'm standing here in the midst of this marvelous sound I think it's rather like ending each day with a bath in liturgical music!

Q How do young people become choristers at the Cathedral?

A Young people interested in becoming choristers must audition to gain their place. We currently have 18 choristers, aged between 9 and 14. Only a few places become available each year and what's absolutely critical is ensuring that every hopeful young chorister has a pathway into the choir. All Choristers receive either a means-tested Aided Place or a Scholarship and that's our commitment to providing an absolutely level playing field. Through our Choral Scholarship Foundation we provide the School with 50% of the choristers' fees and we see this as an investment in children who are passionate about music and want to explore that world.

Q What's special about a day in the life of a chorister?

A At 8.30 every morning our choristers begin their day with a rehearsal in the Cathedral's Song School before starting their academic day at St Mary's Music School at 9.45am. They're back at the Cathedral for a further rehearsal at 4.50pm and perform Evensong between 5.30pm and 6.10pm as well as singing twice on a Sunday. When you witness these young children singing solo and together in the Cathedral, in front of congregations of 200 or 300 people and up to 1,000 on Christmas Eve for Nine Lessons and Carols, you really appreciate what this training has given them – it's as much about teamwork and confidence as it is about developing their musical capabilities.

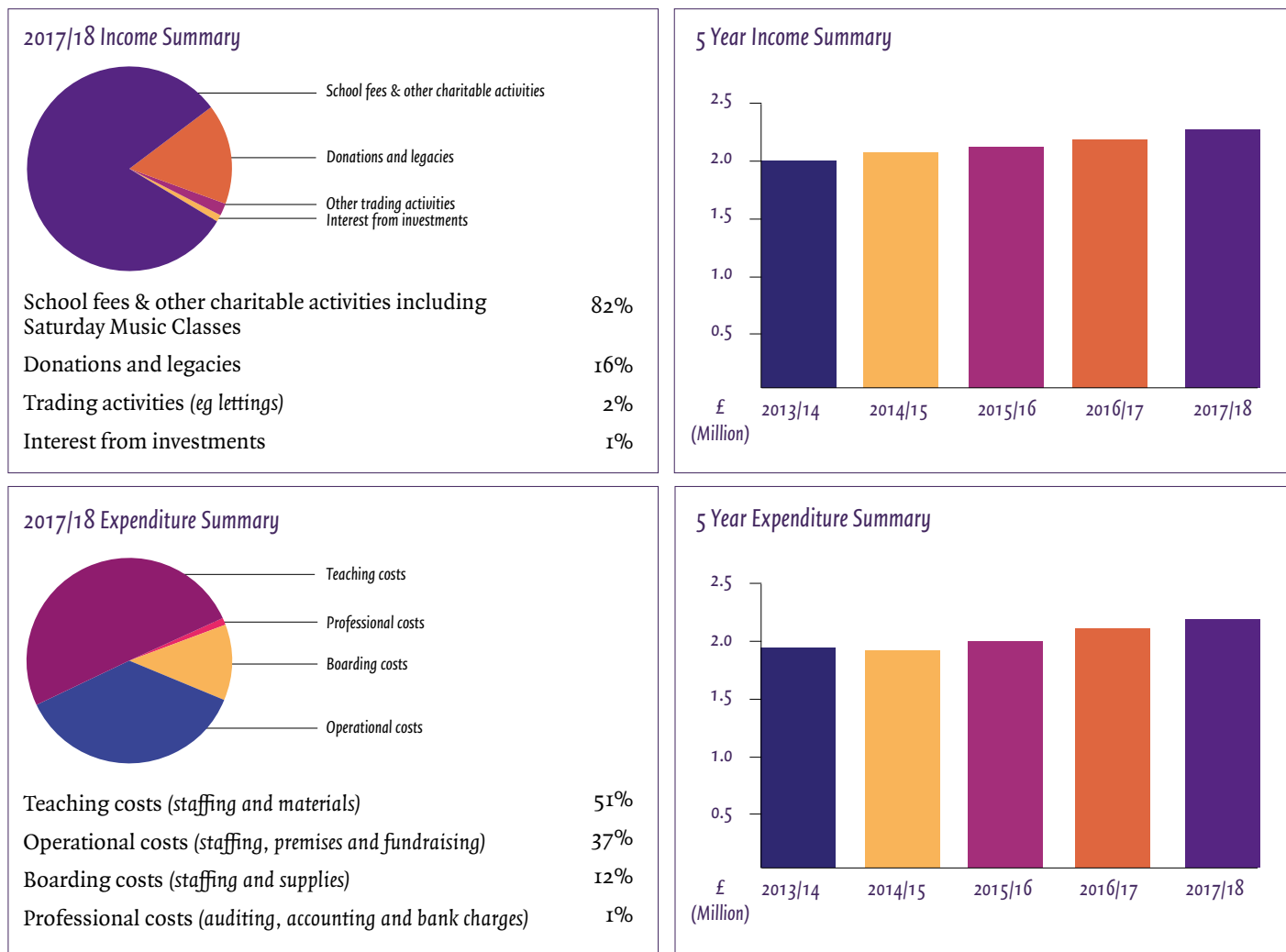
Q How closely involved are you and the Cathedral involved with the School?

A Over the last year I've been building a relationship with the School. It's all about getting to know people and I've come in to conduct assemblies and even been on tour with the choristers. We're all part of one team – one of the Cathedral's curates takes on a chaplaincy role with the School and our Organist and Master of Music, Duncan Ferguson, is an absolute lynchpin between Cathedral and School. He's also an outstanding organist, which is crucial in terms of our shared music making!

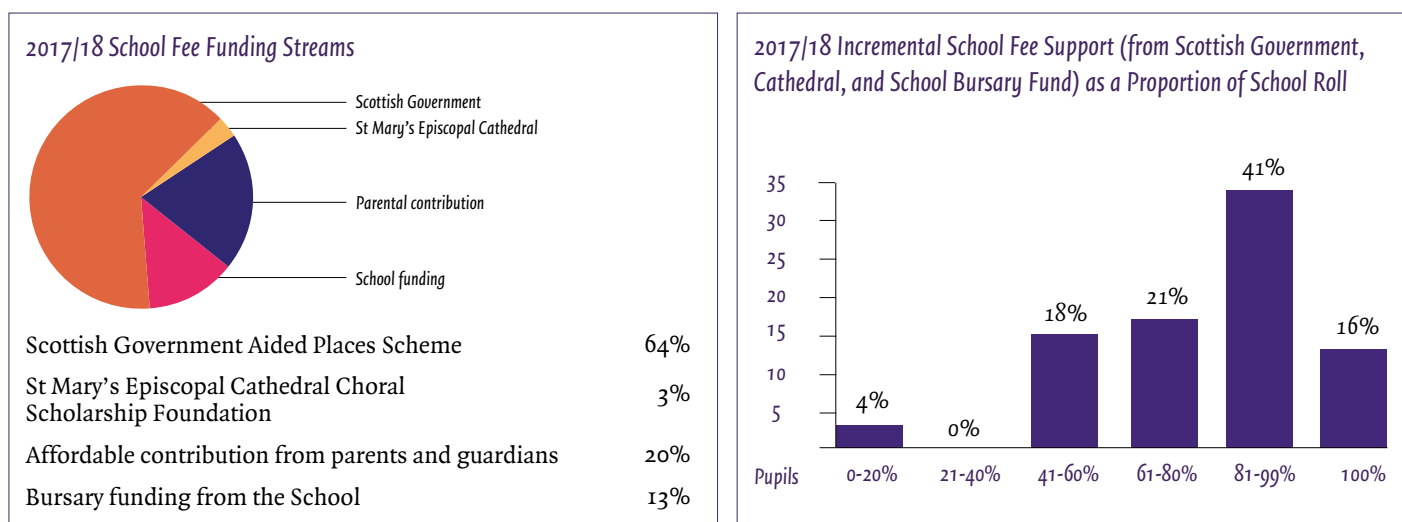
A balance of investment and expenditure

Summary financial report for 2017/18

£1.6 million of financial support towards music education



96% of families received financial support for fees with 16% receiving 100% fee support



Playing our part in Perfect Harmony

The appetite for musical training and performance in Scotland is vast and, as Scotland's national music school, we continue to actively pursue ways in which to meet this welcome demand. In October 2017, we were delighted to play our part at a reception at the Scottish Parliament hosted by Gordon Lindhurst, MSP to promote the Perfect Harmony campaign which supports the School's proposed relocation to the former Royal High School building on Calton Hill. This move would allow us to substantially expand our outreach, create new partnerships, encourage diversity and fulfill our potential as a national cultural asset. In partnership with the Royal High School Preservation Trust, St Mary's Music School continues to encourage public support for this ambition.

"This is no longer a local Edinburgh matter, but a national issue. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity with an iconic building, philanthropic funding, and the chance to create a major cultural and educational hub, coming together for the whole of Scotland."

William Gray Muir, Chairman, Royal High School Preservation Trust
For more information, please visit rhspt.org



Our Board

Jo Elliot (Chairman, from November 2018), William Moyes (Chairman, resigned November 2018), Paul Baxter (resigned May 2018), Graham Burnside, John Conway (appointed December 2017), James Cook, Gavin Gemmell, Kat Heathcote, Alistair Hector, Neil Short, Brian Smith (retired December 2017) and Chris Torkington.

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Our mission is to open our doors to outstanding young instrumentalists and choristers from Scotland and beyond – regardless of their means or circumstances – allowing them to flourish and excel, musically and academically, in a safe, supportive and inspiring environment.

St Mary's Music School is Scotland's national music school. We are one of the UK's leading music schools, Scotland's only independent music school, and the Choir School of St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh.

We offer a world-class standard of music and academic education to musically gifted young choristers and instrumentalists, aged between 9 and 19 years. Thanks to the Scottish Government's Aided Places Scheme, the Cathedral's Choral Scholarship Foundation, and our own tireless fundraising efforts, parents make an affordable contribution to fees, based on financial means, with support available up to the full cost of fees.

Your support not only enables these talented young people to excel, but ensures that we are developing a national cultural asset that makes a vital contribution to musical excellence on the national and international stage. We aim to bring the joy of music to the widest possible audience, making it accessible and relevant to everyone.



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