



DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**

# **Choral Director**

## **Diocesan Schools Singing Programme**



**Candidate Pack**

Thank you for your interest in working for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle Schools Singing Programme.

We appreciate your interest in the Choral Director role, which involves delivering whole class singing sessions and developing outstanding choirs across the North East. This is a new position and will afford the successful candidate an opportunity to shape the future provision of music so that it enhances the delivery of our Diocesan Mission.

Having explored this information, we hope you will be interested in applying. The closing date for applications is 12pm on Monday 12 May. The auditions and interviews will be held in person in Newcastle on Thursday 22 May. We welcome informal enquiries prior to application.

With best wishes



Catherine Craig  
Director of Education

Diocesan Values

Integrity | Respect | Trust | Service | Compassion



## The Diocese and Our Heritage

The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle is steeped in a rich spiritual and musical tradition, rooted in the deep Christian heritage of North East England. This region was a cradle of early Christianity in Britain, home to the great monastic centres of Lindisfarne (Holy Island) and Jarrow, where saints such as St Cuthbert, St Aidan, and the Venerable Bede helped spread the faith. The choral tradition here draws from centuries of sacred music that has resonated in churches and cathedrals since the time of the Northern saints.

Today, the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle continues to preserve and celebrate its rich Christian heritage. Pilgrimages to Holy Island, Durham Cathedral (the resting place of St Cuthbert), and Ushaw College (a historic seminary) remain important traditions. The Diocese also upholds the legacy of social justice, education, and community service established by its forebears. This strong and enduring heritage makes Hexham and Newcastle one of the most historically significant Catholic dioceses in England.

## Cathedral Organ

Crafted by Kenneth Tickell and installed between 2012 and 2013. This instrument is strategically positioned on a newly constructed wooden gallery at the cathedral's west end, which also accommodates the cathedral choir. The design thoughtfully ensures that the organ's central structure is low enough to preserve the visibility of the west window from the cathedral floor. Its installation marked the culmination of the cathedral's renovation efforts, enhancing the



musical experience complemented by this modern addition, which continues to play a central role in its worship and musical events. The Cathedral Church of St Mary welcomes near to a thousand parishioners each weekend for the various Masses it holds.

## Outside of work

The city of Newcastle offers plenty to enjoy. The Quayside, with its scenic riverside walks and lively bars, is a popular spot, while Jesmond and Ouseburn



provide more relaxed, trendy atmospheres with independent cafes, galleries, and music venues. Newcastle is also well known for its passionate sports culture, home to Newcastle United Football Club and the renowned Great North Run. For those who love the outdoors, the beautiful countryside and coastline are just a short driveaway, offering stunning beaches, historic castles, and plenty of opportunities for hiking and exploration. With its friendly people, affordable cost of living, and rich cultural life, Newcastle upon Tyne is an exciting and rewarding place to live and work.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

To develop music in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle through leadership of singing in schools and the Cathedral Church of St Mary's.

### Duties and Responsibilities

- Visit schools to lead high quality choral singing sessions.
- Identify and organise performance opportunities and projects for schools in which to participate.
- Establish two after-school choirs, one for boys and one for girls, with weekly rehearsals.
- Identify, develop and maintain relationships with schools throughout the Catholic Education Trust who may benefit from membership of the Diocesan Schools Singing Programme.
- Provide continued professional development in singing leadership to school staff.

### General

- Where necessary, attend, support and contribute to in-house and external training programmes to aid continuous individual development.
- At all times act in a professional and appropriate manner and actively promote the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.
- Undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required of you that are commensurate with your level of responsibility and experience.



# PERSONAL SPECIFICATION

## Qualifications

### Essential

- Educated to degree level or equivalent standard

### Desirable

- Postgraduate qualification in music or education

## Experience

### Essential

- Experience of and ability to provide musical excellence in choral teaching and performance with children of all ages

### Desirable

- Experience of primary music education
- Experience of leading music in liturgies

## Skills and Knowledge

### Essential

- Developed skills as an enthusiastic musician, able to draw from singers committed musical and responsive performances through rehearsal, pedagogical and conducting methods
- Good keyboard skills, capable of accompanying singers from a piano
- Strong communication and IT skills
- Understanding and experience of safeguarding responsibilities and best practice

### Desirable

- Awareness of the Model Music Curriculum (2021) and the National Plan for Music Education (2022)
- The ability to lead rehearsal from the keyboard

## Personal Attributes

- Ability to work on own initiative, planning and prioritising work
- Ability to respond flexibly and resiliently to manage competing demands and work independently to deadlines
- Passion for music education and the transformative role that singing plays



## Other

A Full UK driving license and access to a vehicle is required, along with the ability to travel throughout the Diocese

The post-holder must be conscientious and loyal to the aims and objectives of the Diocese, always having regard to its Catholic character.

## PAY AND CONDITIONS

### Salary

£29,000 - £34,000 per year, depending upon experience, and a workplace pension scheme where we match up to a maximum of 7.5% of your salary. Salaries are reviewed annually.

### Contract

Permanent – subject to satisfactory probationary period

Hours of work: Full-time, 37.5 hours per week, Sunday – Thursday

### Location

St Cuthbert's House, West Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 7PY - hybrid working is available

### Benefits

- Holidays: 28 days holiday per year plus statutory holidays
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- Free on-site parking
- Employee health and well-being support



**Better Health**  
at Work Award  
Silver Award



## APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply, please send:

- A letter of application saying why you want to work with us and what you would bring to the role, with examples of how your skills and experience would enable you to fulfil your duties and responsibilities
- A CV, including the names of two people we may approach for professional references Please send these by email to [human.resources@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:human.resources@diocesehn.org.uk)

If you would like to discuss the role, please contact Catherine Craig, Director of Education by emailing [catherine.craig@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:catherine.craig@diocesehn.org.uk).

Deadline for applications: 12pm on 12 May 2025

Auditions and interviews: 22 May 2025

## OTHER INFORMATION

This appointment will be subject to:

- Two satisfactory professional references
- Evidence of the right to work in the UK
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS check

## SAFEGUARDING

The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle is committed to safeguarding all children and vulnerable groups at risk within its community. All employees are expected to contribute to the creation of a safe environment, challenge inappropriate behaviours and report concerns in line with procedures. In fulfilling the duties of this role, the post holder will come into contact with children or vulnerable adults. Therefore, they must adhere to diocesan safeguarding policies and procedures.

## DATA PROTECTION

We won't hold the information you give us longer than necessary. Our Candidate Privacy Notice is available on our website [www.diocesehn.org.uk](http://www.diocesehn.org.uk)

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