



CHELtenham
COLLEGE

Director of Music
Start date: Sept 26
Information for Candidates



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Message from the Head of College, Nicola Huggett



I am delighted that you are considering a role here at Cheltenham College. I will be working closely with the Head Elect, Mr Chris Townsend (currently Head at Felsted School) on this appointment. Chris takes over as Head at Cheltenham in April 2026. Music really is at the heart of our community as a school and this will be a vitally important appointment for the continued success of this thriving department.

The College itself lies in the heart of one of the country's most beautiful Regency spa towns, only a few short miles from the rural delights of the Cotswolds. This means that as a place to live and work, you truly have the best of both worlds; a cosmopolitan centre with wonderful restaurants, shops and of course, four major cultural festivals a year, in addition to easy access to walks, nature and the great outdoors.

As staff at Cheltenham, we all benefit from the very wide range of activities that our pupils enjoy, with access to wonderful sports facilities for you and your family, a beautiful Common room, full IT provision, a thriving staff consultation committee and many staff social events. You will also have a tailored professional development programme and extensive support from our dedicated HR team.

Whilst we may seem a large organisation, we operate as a close community with a family feel. I know that as a new member of staff you will find that our focus lies in developing you as an individual. Just as we expect you to go the extra mile for your pupils, we will engage with your own professional and personal development from the start. We will ensure that you enjoy and feel valued in your new role as quickly as possible.

We recognise the time and thought that goes into an application and if you have any further questions about this opportunity, the HR department via recruitment@cheltenhamcollege.org will be happy to help.



Cheltenham College

Cheltenham College is a thriving community, with over 1100 pupils from the Prep and Senior Schools combined, cared for by 700 support and academic staff.

We have high class facilities for academic development, boarding, sport, music and drama, as well as a truly awe-inspiring chapel.

We are a 24/7 operation, working a six-day week with Saturday School. With our focus on full boarding (80% of our pupils are boarders, 20% of our pupils reside overseas), we are able to get to know our pupils very well and that makes inspiring them in and outside the classroom all the more enjoyable.

The appointment

The Director of Music is responsible to the Head, via the Deputy Head (Co-Curricular), for the music co-curriculum and the quality of pupils' music-making in the College.

He/She is also responsible to the Head, via the Deputy Head (Academic), for the teaching, leadership, administration and development of Academic Music in the Senior School. He or she is a member of the Heads of Departments' Committee.



The Music Department

Music is central to life at College, and all members of the community are involved in some way. This ranges from enthusiastic singing of hymns in Chapel to large-scale choral/orchestral concerts and outdoor pop/jazz gigs (and everything in between!). Musical life is rich and varied, and all genres and styles are celebrated. Pupils regularly continue their musical studies after College, and in the last 24 months pupils have been offered scholarships at Juilliard, Truro Cathedral, Exeter Cathedral, the Royal Academy of Music, Royal Northern College of Music, Downing College Cambridge and Merton College Oxford. Two pupils have won the Gloucestershire Young Musician of the Year competition in recent years, and this resulted in them performing full concertos with local semi-professional orchestras. There are weekly lunchtime recitals for all manner of musical offerings (including DJing and the sharing of music technology-based composition work) as well as frequent opportunities for both formal and informal performances. Two Choral Evensong services are sung during each term, and there is a sung chapel service on a selection of Sunday evenings.

There are four full-time music staff at College, including the Director of Music, Assistant Director of Music, Head of Performance & Vocal Studies and the College Organist. The rest of the department comprises the part-time Music Department Administrator, and Heads of faculty for Strings, Woodwind, Brass & Percussion and Keyboard. There are around 30 visiting instrumental and vocal teachers, all with a wealth of teaching and performing experience.

All members of Year 9 study Music, and they have the option to continue at GCSE and A Level; the AQA specification is followed for both. Excellent teaching and learning have led to outstanding outcomes, with GCSE cohorts achieving 70% 9-7 and A Level cohorts achieving 100% A*-B in recent years. There is a flourishing Academic Music Society in which pupils give presentations on a broad range of topics, and concert/musical theatre trips are run routinely to Symphony Hall, Birmingham and theatres in Cheltenham, Bristol, and Oxford.



Thirlestaine House

The Music Department (continued)

Cheltenham College is an All-Steinway School and boasts two Model D Concert Grand pianos. Piano lessons are given on Steinway Model A pianos, and all practice rooms are equipped with Steinway-designed Essex uprights.

The department is located in Thirlestaine House, a beautiful former stately home with fully-equipped classrooms and rehearsal/performance spaces. Our composition suite houses 15 M1 iMacs running Sibelius and Logic Pro.

Outside the Music Department there is a magnificent 800-seat chapel with generous acoustics and a celebrated three-manual Harrison & Harrison organ, fully refurbished in 2016. The chapel is also equipped with professional streaming cameras and microphones, and our online following is continuing to grow. The majority of performances are held in our main performance space, Big Classical, which has a staged area and raked seating for a capacity audience of 300; it houses one of the Model Ds. Large ensemble rehearsals take place in Thirlestaine Long Gallery, where the second Model D is located.

Generous Music Scholarships and Exhibitions are awarded each year at both 13+ and 16+, providing musical leadership at all levels throughout the school.

The department's YouTube channel can be viewed [here](#), and the chapel's channel [here](#); the day-to-day life of the department is shared on our highly successful Instagram [@cheltcolmusic](#).

Musical Events

- Weekly lunchtime recitals
- Evening recitals
- Instrumental and Vocal concerts at Pittville Pump Room in Cheltenham
- Annual House Singing Competitions
- Piano, instrumental and singing Competitions
- Orchestral and Jazz Band concerts
- Concerto performances for advanced students
- Band performances at Cheltenham Jazz Festival
- Candlelit Advent and Christmas carol services
- Choral Evensong
- Evensongs in Winchester, Gloucester and Salisbury Cathedrals, and St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle
- Choral concerts, including Bach's Mass in B minor
- Choral Society performances, including Elgar *Dream of Gerontius* and Verdi *Requiem*
- International Tours – including our most recent tour to Paris in 2025
- Various performances including Battle of the Bands competition, Cheltenham College Festival of Music (outdoor event), Upper College Cabaret evening, Jazz Café



The role:

Leadership and Development

- Establishing a vision for Music in the academic and co-curricular life of the College;
- Formulating a departmental development plan;
- Ensuring that teaching and learning are excellent, specifically through lesson observation, appraisal, continuing professional development, and departmental audit;
- Fostering a delight in the subject, an excellent work ethic and a culture of high expectations, achievement and success amongst staff and pupils, and setting the highest academic standards;
- Organising concerts, competitions, workshops, masterclasses (where appropriate); provisioning promotional materials and producing programmes; organising refreshments;
- Maintaining excellent communications with the department and relaying College academic policy to the Department;
- Further developing the appropriate use of ICT as a tool for teaching and learning;
- Assisting in appointing new staff and providing opportunities for responsibility to be assumed by members of the Department;
- Representing the Department within the College and promoting Music in the wider community including feeder schools;
- Planning each year's musical events and coordinating all calendar entries; attending calendar meetings to ensure that there are no clashes with other College events;
- Leading the weekly whole-school congregational practice which is a much-loved tradition at College;
- Organising staffing, accommodation and resources for musical activities, including orchestras, choirs, bands, ensembles chamber music etc.
- Mentoring Music Award Holders.
- Liaising with the Senior Chaplain over music for College's daily worship and other services;
- Appointing and supervising the Assistant Director of Music, College Organist, Visiting Music Teachers and Music Administrator;
- Inducting Visiting Music Teachers and providing guidance/day-to-day support;
- Encouraging independent learning specifically through the use of formative assessment and thorough, imaginative schemes of work;
- Annually reviewing the hourly teaching rates and liaising with the Bursary and HR departments on matters relating to pay and welfare of Visiting Music Teachers;
- Organising teaching accommodation and timetables;
- Coordinating professional development reviews within the Department;
- Monitoring of pupils' attendance at instrumental/vocal lessons; liaising with parents, tutors and resident staff regarding absences and any issues arising;
- Organising outings, concert visits, external performances, prep school music days (choral and instrumental) and open days;
- Organising music scholarship auditions at 13+ and 16+; recommending appropriate awards for instrumental/choral/organ candidates;

Administration

- Monitoring and recording the learning of pupils in the Department, and overseeing the support of those with additional needs;
- Writing and updating schemes of work and programmes of study;
- Maintaining excellent systems to record pupil data and track their progress;
- Monitoring and supporting the progress of both new and established staff;
- Organising lectures and talks by outside speakers;
- Providing curriculum information as required;
- Dealing with syllabus enquiries, updating, investigating alternatives and changing syllabuses as necessary;
- Establishing and overseeing subject enrichment within the co-curricular programme;
- Researching, updating and ordering resources;
- Arranging departmental displays;
- Managing and organising trips, where appropriate;
- Monitoring the setting of prep;
- Providing information for 3rd Form pupils making GCSE choices and 5th Form pupils making A Level choices;
- Meeting and communicating with parents when required;
- Preparing and presenting the annual Departmental Academic Review and supplementary documentation;
- Keeping up-to-date with subject developments;
- Producing and updating a departmental handbook.

Universities

- Assisting with university applications, including organising and conducting mock interviews in accordance with the arrangements made by the Head of Upper College;
- Collating and disseminating up-to-date University and UCAS information;
- Providing comments for UCAS references as well as other relevant details as required;
- Providing assistance, extra tuition and general guidance for Oxbridge applicants.

Examinations

- Organising internal examinations, including setting, marking and moderating papers, collating statistics and publishing results;
- Organising entries for public examinations;
- Providing details of estimated public examination entries and candidates for re-sits, and supplying predicted grades;
- Dealing with examination boards, including complaints, re-marks and appeals;
- Handling public examination results, including answering parental enquiries, and providing comments, data and statistics as required.

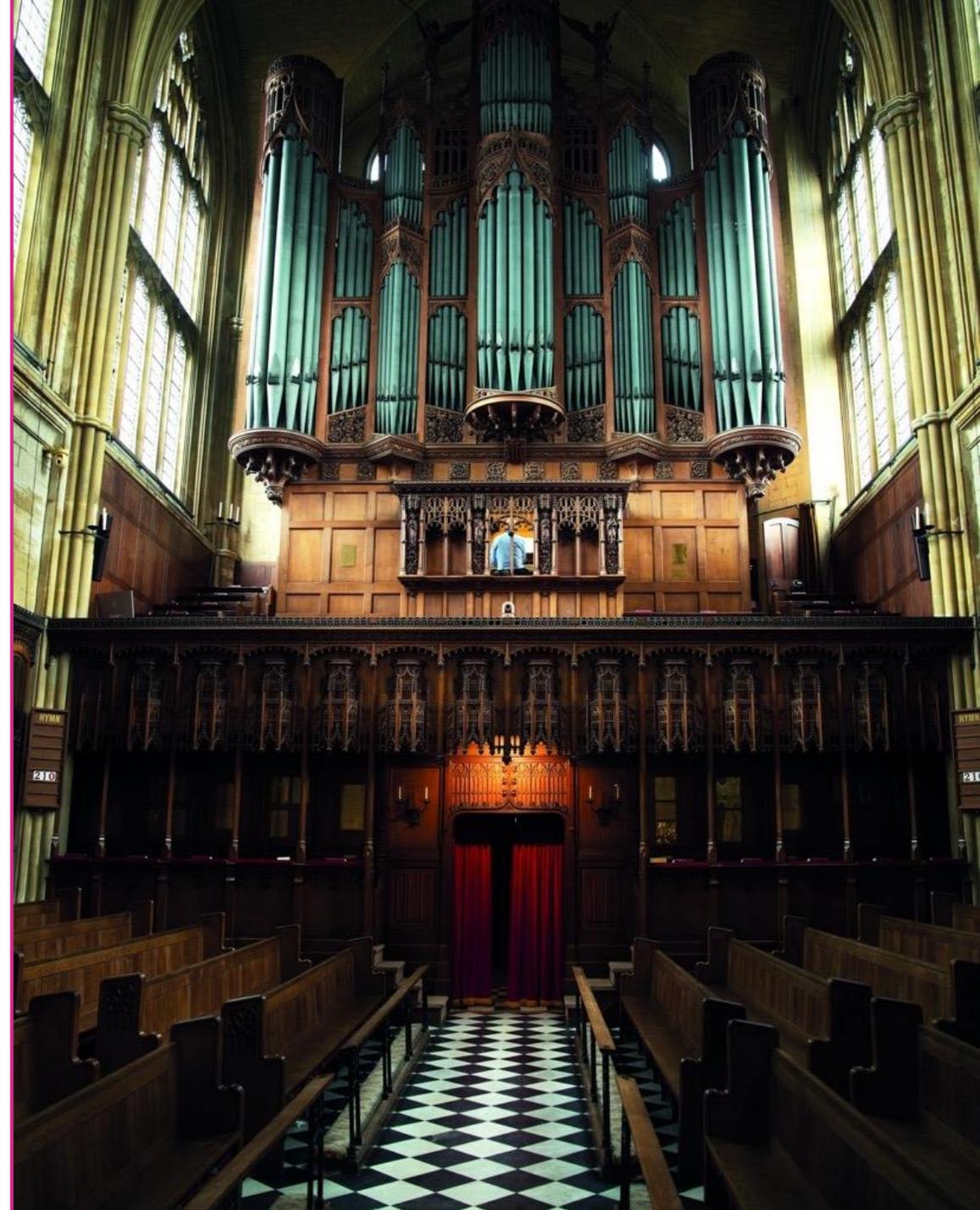


General

- Preparing, submitting and controlling the departmental academic and co-curricular budgets;
- Maintaining, tuning and storage of the Department's pianos and instrumental resources; supervising instrumental hire;
- Organising published musical resources, recordings, and audio-visual resources; organising IT provision in the Department;
- Ordering materials for co-curricular activities, academic work and individual music lessons;
- Processing invoices and submitting sundries sheets;
- Writing references when required;
- Maintaining and updating the department section of the College website and published written materials.
- Reviewing and updating the departmental handbook;
- Providing occasional reports for College publications on departmental academic developments;
- Running weekly departmental meetings;
- Attending HoDs' and other meetings as required;
- Making arrangements for cover of absent members of the department;
- Teach a number of individual lessons on their specialist instrument/voice.

Staff Continuing Professional Development

- Consider the expectations and needs of other members of staff, and ensure that trainees and ECTs are appropriately monitored, supported and assessed in relation to QTS and Induction standards and those of the School, e.g. by the incorporation of targets related to leadership, professional development and pupils' attainment;
- Carry out appraisal of certain teachers and teacher assistants as required by the Performance Management programme and use the process to develop the personal and professional effectiveness of each member of staff to engage all employees;
- Manage a range of learning styles and pace of learning within the department and provide colleagues with differentiated learning opportunities and techniques and support as appropriate;
- Meet regularly with colleagues to discuss, review and monitor progress made in implementing change;
- Assist staff to identify existing knowledge and practice, guide professional learning by identifying success criteria, and support the process through a programme of reflective practice;
- Work with other teachers to develop practice by:
 - leading professional development activities;
 - assisting colleagues in matching teaching approaches to learning styles;
 - establishing a professional dialogue with colleagues to ensure staff feel confident to improve their skills;
 - acting as consultant to teams that develop strategies for pupils experiencing difficulties;
 - supporting staff in their professional development by being a critical friend, providing constructive criticism and further opportunities to develop teaching skills;
 - auditing staff skills and experiences against requirements for change in practice to meet the demands of new initiatives and any requirements leading to successful implementation;
 - trialing teaching procedures, reporting back on successes and areas for further development and be open to colleagues' contributions and judgements;
 - network with professionals at other /similar /feeder schools to enhance learning opportunities for staff.





The Candidate

The Department is very well resourced in terms of the range of skills our staff have, so there are no fixed ideas about the type of musician to be appointed, however, the ability to work with a range of ensembles and musical genres is essential as are the following attributes:

- A creative thinker with a clear idea and vision for taking music at a major public school forward in new and interesting directions;
- A musician of outstanding performance standards who is able to lead by example;
- An experienced graduate teacher up to A Level with excellent subject knowledge;
- Up-to-date knowledge of the music industry, as well as associated equipment and software;
- A confident and experienced leader with experience of marketing school music and attracting scholarship candidates both here and overseas;
- A proven ability in both orchestral and choral conducting;
- An enthusiastic and motivated leader with excellent delegation skills as well as the dedication and vision to identify areas for development, and to prioritise and then deliver;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, in particular with regard to promoting College music and encouraging attendance at concerts and participation;
- A strong administrator in particular with regards to managing Visiting Music Teachers and liaising with the Common Room;
- A natural leader and team-player with a good sense of humour, who is also able to support teachers to develop their professional skills;
- A track record of inclusive participation and the ability to give music in the College a broad appeal to specialists and non-specialists alike;
- An ambassador for College music, able to forge links with prep schools (in particular aimed at broadening the field for scholarships), the Cheltenham Festivals, professional performers and groups;
- Previous experience of working within a broadly similar school's music department is not essential but would be an advantage.

Terms and Conditions



A formal contract detailing terms and conditions will be drawn up on appointment. The following notes provide guidance, without prejudice, on the likely main provisions.

General notes:

- A highly competitive remuneration package is available with, for the right candidate, a salary to match the best.
- The appointment is subject to one term's notice.
- The position carries a significant reduction in teaching load (up to 14 lessons per week) in line with the demands of the role.
- Generous fees discount is available for children attending the Prep and College
- College offers a defined contribution Workplace Pension Plan plus a Flexible Benefits Pot. The scheme offered is through APTIS: Aviva Pensions Trust for Independent Schools and includes a generous College contribution.
- Subsidised Health Scheme membership.
- The candidate's performance will be subject to a regular appraisal.
- Shortlisted candidates will be asked to undertake identity and qualification checks which conform to the School's Safeguarding Policy. They must also agree to references being taken up at that stage and checks made with past employers.
- The appointment is subject to satisfactory references, clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service, proof of identity and qualifications and a satisfactory medical declaration.



Important Information



Child Protection

Cheltenham College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

All applicants should read the School's Child Protection policy, which is available on the website, and are required to declare any criminal convictions or cautions, or disciplinary proceedings related to young people.

The successful candidate will be required to complete an application for Enhanced Disclosure, to initiate a Disclosure and Barring Service Check (working with children) in accordance with the School's Recruitment Policy which may be obtained from the Bursar upon request.

The School is registered for the processing of personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Equal Opportunities

Cheltenham College is an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and applications from suitably qualified individuals are encouraged regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.

We encourage all candidates to ensure that College is aware of your particular requirements, should you be invited to interview.



How to Apply

If you are excited by the opportunity of playing such a key role at Cheltenham College, please complete the application form electronically and email it to recruitment@cheltenhamcollege.org, together with a covering letter (no CVs please) explaining your suitability for the role.

Timeline

The deadline for applications is: **12 noon on Wednesday, 11th February 2026**

Longlist interviews will be in the week commencing **Monday, 23rd February 2026**

Shortlist interviews will take place in the week commencing **Monday, 2nd March 2026**.

Thank you

