

Music Awards: An Introduction

The Governors offer **Music Awards** to pupils who have gained a place through the normal entry process (tests and interviews).

Music Scholarships are awarded at the discretion of the Head and Governors, and come with a fee remission of up to 10%, which may be combined with means-tested bursarial support. **Music Exhibitions** and **Music Potential Awards** are offered without fee remission.

All Music Scholars, Exhibitioners and Potential Award Holders are offered free tuition on either one or two of the instruments auditioned (including voice) with the school's music teachers during school time. Music Awards are normally tenable throughout a pupil's time at the School, provided progress and conduct remain satisfactory.

Award holders are expected to contribute regularly and fully to the musical life of the school throughout their career and their progress is monitored by the Director of Music. There are regular concerts during term-time and many opportunities for solo performances. The House Music Competitions, solo instrumental and vocal competitions and masterclasses provide opportunities for pupils to work with distinguished visiting professionals.

Music at Highgate

Highgate music has a long and distinguished tradition, and many former pupils are now leading musicians. They include John Tavener (composer), John Rutter (composer and conductor), Howard Shelley (pianist and conductor), Jan Latham-Koenig (conductor), and Daniel Hope (violinist). Pupils are offered a wide range of musical opportunities with participation and excellence central to the ethos of the department.

School activities in recent years have included:

- Performances of Duruflé's Requiem and Bach's *St Matthew Passion* at Southwark Cathedral; Tippett's *Child of Our Time* and Tchaikovsky's *Romeo & Juliet Overture* at the Royal Festival Hall; Bach's *St John Passion* and *Missa in F*; Fauré's Requiem; Handel's *Messiah* and *Zadok the Priest*; Haydn's "Nelson" Mass; Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 2; Mozart's "Coronation" Mass; Rutter's Requiem; and Vivaldi's Gloria in Southwark Cathedral and at St John's, Smith Square
- Regular orchestral concerts, with highlights including Beethoven's Symphony No. 5; Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro* and *Serenade for Strings*; Holst's Suite in F; Ravel's *Bolero*; Schubert's Unfinished Symphony; and Schumann's Symphony No. 4 performed by the Chamber Orchestra, Symphonic Band and Symphony Orchestra
- Performances of the musicals *Sweeney Todd*, *Les Misérables*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Cabaret*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Oklahoma*, *West Side Story* at RADA; *Guys and Dolls* and *Legally Blonde* at Arts Depot
- Choral services at St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, St Peter's Rome, Southwark, St Albans, Llandaff and Chichester cathedrals
- Tours to Northern France, Belgium, Venice, Rome, Czech Republic, Paris and Vienna
- Regular chamber and solo concerts and music competitions

Music Awards: 11+ entry in 2026

Key Dates

Application Deadline: 12 noon on Wednesday 5 November 2025

First Round Musical Discovery Day: Wednesday 7 January 2026

Second Round Auditions: Thursday 15 or Friday 16 January 2026

Types of Awards

We offer Music Scholarships, Music Exhibitions and Music Potential Awards at 11+.

Candidates should choose the award most suited to their playing standard/experience and apply for **ONE** of the following Categories:

Music Scholarship or Exhibition

Requirements: Candidates of Exceptional ability presenting **two instruments / voice** (Grade 5-8 standard on first instrument, Grade 3+ on second instrument)

Music Potential Award

Requirements: Candidates who demonstrate exceptional musical ability and potential on **voice or one ensemble instrument** (not piano) at Grade 3-5 standard

Please note that these grade standards are indicative only. It is not necessary to have formal exam results, but performances presented at audition should be at or above the levels given for the experience to be worthwhile for the candidate.

Assessments

First Round: Musical Discovery Day on Wednesday 7 January 2026

Candidates who are invited for an academic interview after our 11+ entrance tests are invited to spend a morning at Highgate School where they will be involved in a wide variety of musical activities. Candidates will arrive at the school at **9.00am** with their instruments (if appropriate) and will spend the morning with the Music Department.

The morning will include a whole group session that includes singing in a choir rehearsal, some musical games, and a rhythmic percussion composition. After a short break, there will be an orchestra and a music lesson in which there will be some further singing, theory, and aural activities. The morning will conclude with candidates performing the music they have learnt during the morning in a short concert. Candidates will be ready to leave at approximately **12.00pm**.

Following the Musical Discovery Day, around 10-20 candidates will be invited back to audition.

Second Round: Auditions on Thursday 15 & Friday 16 January 2026

We aim to offer a positive experience for all candidates auditioning! Auditions will proceed as follows:

- Auditions will take around 20 minutes
- Candidates should offer around 10 minutes of music
- Candidates are encouraged to perform two short contrasting pieces / extracts on their principal instrument / voice, and one piece on their second instrument/voice (where applicable)
- If required, an accompanist will be provided. Rehearsal time will be allocated before the audition, and parts may be requested in advance. Candidates must bring original accompaniment parts (or well bound copies) on the audition date.
- Auditions will include sight-reading and aural tests (NB: we do not ask for scales)
- Candidates will be asked by the Director of Music about their musical experiences, knowledge and interests

How to Apply

Please apply as normal as indicated on the [Admissions web page](#), indicating on your Application Form that you wish to apply for a Music Award. You will then be sent a link to a separate online application form.

If you would like to discuss the music audition process further or would like any advice, please feel free to contact the Music Department Manager at musicoffice@highgateschool.org.uk

Music Awards: 16+ entry in 2026

Key Dates

Application Deadline: 12 noon on Friday 17 October 2025

Auditions: Tuesday 11, Wednesday 12 or Thursday 13 November 2025

Types of Awards

We offer Music Scholarships and Music Exhibitions.

Requirements: Candidates of Exceptional ability, usually presenting **two instruments** (Grade 8+ standard on first instrument, Grade 5+ on second instrument). Candidates who are able to present just **one ensemble instrument (not piano) or voice** may also be considered.

Please note that these grade standards are indicative only. It is not necessary to have formal exam results, but performances presented at audition should be at or above the levels given for the experience to be worthwhile for the candidate.

Assessments

Candidates will be invited to attend an **Assessment** between 1pm and 4pm on Tuesday 11, Wednesday 12 or Thursday 13 November 2025.

Candidates are asked to present a 12-minute **recital** of their choice demonstrating attainment on each instrument (or voice) offered. If required, an accompanist will be provided. Rehearsal time will be allocated before the audition, and parts may be requested in advance. Candidates must bring original accompaniment parts (or well bound copies) on the audition date.

Following the recital, candidates will have a short panel **interview** to discuss their musical experiences and knowledge.

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