

CHESTER YOUNG MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR COMPETITION 2026

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

Chester Music Society is pleased to announce the Chester Young Musician of the Year competition 2026 which is open to instrumentalists and singers up to and including age 18.

Date and Time: Sunday 15 November 2026.

Registration from 09.30am Competition to begin at 10.00am

Entrants may express a preference for a morning or afternoon performance: we will try and meet your preferences but cannot guarantee it. Entrants will be advised of their start time in advance

Venue: The competition will be held at Abbey Gate College, Saighton Grange, Saighton, Chester CH3 6EN

Classes: the competition will be open to singers and instrumentalists in three classes:

- **Class 1:** entrants up to and including age 12 who have achieved minimum grade 3 or equivalent
- **Class 2:** age 13 to 15, minimum grade 6 or equivalent
- **Class 3:** age 16 to 18; minimum grade 8 or equivalent

Eligibility: Entrants may enter for any instrument of their choice (other than the organ). Entrants must be resident within a 40-mile radius of Chester and have achieved the age stated on the date of the competition.

Recommendation: Entrants must be recommended by their music teacher, whose details must appear on the application form.

Competition Format: Each entrant will be required to perform a varied programme of their own choice, of which only one piece must be performed from memory. Performance Duration:

Class 3: 15 minutes.

Classes 1 and 2 approximately 10 minutes.

Prizes and Awards

- £150 for each Class winner
- £50 for the runners up in each Class.
- The winners in each of the three classes will be further judged for the title of **Chester Young Musician of the Year 2026**, who receives an additional £350, and is awarded the prestigious David Woods Trophy, retained for 12 months
- £50 and The Lila Hallett Award for the most promising musician from the Under 12s and 13-15 age groups who isn't a Class winner

Bursaries: Winners and runners up in Class 3 and the overall Young Musician of the Year will be invited to apply for one of the two bursaries, each worth up to £750. These will be awarded at the Society's discretion to applicants who show outstanding promise and undertake to use the bursary to advance their musical education.

Adjudication: The competition will be judged by Adam Swayne, Deputy Dean of School of Keyboard Studies and Professor of Piano at the Royal Northern College of Music. The Adjudicator's decision shall be final. The organisers will not enter into correspondence concerning the outcome of the competition.

Music: Copies (which may include photocopies) of music to be

performed shall be supplied by the entrants free of charge for the use of the adjudicator.

Accompanists: Entrants are expected to provide their own accompanist (if required). If you do not have an accompanist, Lauren Turner, an experienced pianist, will be available on the day. Please contact her in good time to arrange rehearsal, fees and repertoire: 07742 587373 or laurenacturner@hotmail.com

Closing Date for Entries: Friday 23 October 2026

A non-refundable entry fee of £15 should be submitted on application. Entrants must also submit no later than Friday 6th November– either by post or email – a brief biography and a list of the music to be performed. Copies of the actual scores for the use of the adjudicator may be brought on the day of the competition.

Data Protection: Information and photographs of applicants are kept for the administration and publicity of this competition and in our database of potential performers in Society events. You have the right to see the information we hold on you and the right to amend or request deletion of such data on application to the organiser below.

Public Admission: The competition on Sunday 16 November 2025 will be open to the public (including competitors' family and supporters) Admission: £5. Admission for the public performance at St Mary's Creative Space on 1 March 2026 will be £10. Full time students and Under 18s £5.

Further help: contact Claire Hallett-Rorke claire.hr59@gmail.com or telephone 07947 743535. An online entry form & information may be found on our [website](#)



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