

Leeds Cathedral Choir School
Annual Report 2015-16



Another year at the Choir School has whizzed by and we are another year closer to becoming a true Singing School, with all but one year group having had access to the singing programme since the moment the children arrived in school. There have been many highlights since the last report was published, including the choir's performance at a Global Learning Conference at Leeds Trinity University, a Summer Choral Celebration alongside the renowned Scunthorpe Co-operative Junior Choir in Leeds Cathedral and, maybe most special of all, a Christmas Concert in York Minster at the invitation of the Chapter House Choir.

As a musician it is easy to become jaded as Christmas music makes yet another appearance, but I will never forget the look on the children's faces as they stood onstage in the Minster's magnificent Nave and sang with the Chapter House Choir, accompanied by a brass band and the organ at full power. They were all absolutely thrilled, enjoying the power and beauty of a sound that literally shook the ground beneath their feet. The children charmed the other musicians and the audience and sang Christmas carols all the way home.

This year has also been a time when we have looked inwards, at the singing curriculum we are offering throughout the school. Choral Director Sally's Egan's work as an Advisory Teacher with Lady Suzi Digby's Voices Foundation has led to the adoption of the Voices Foundation's newly-published Singing Curriculum in school. The curriculum has its roots firmly in the Kodaly Method and is based on beautifully simple folksongs that children all over the world have loved singing for hundreds of years. The curriculum has been in place since September 2015 and we are already seeing a marked difference in the way that children from Y1 – 4 in particular are developing their understanding of fundamental musical concepts such as pitch, pulse, metre, phrase and dynamics; the curriculum also encourages a structured approach to listening to music, and the children are all enjoying listening to an increasingly wide range of music – Classical, folk, jazz, pop, the very best in every possible genre – and sharing their responses to it.

The choir school's influence continues to spread, as visitors from around the world come to visit and see what we are doing. A delegation of teachers and students from Notre Dame University visited last term to observe class singing sessions and choir rehearsals and left determined to recreate our model back in the US. All our visitors comment on the simplicity of what we are doing – just 30 children and one Choral Director in a room – and on the obvious effects on the children's confidence and self-esteem that the work is having. This year we can also share some hard data about the beneficial effects of the school's Singing Programme.

Source: Raiseonline Validated and Final Summary Report February 2016

	National		School		National	School	National	School
	Level 4+	Level 5	Level 4+	Level 5	Expected Progress	Expected Progress	More than Expected Progress	More than Expected Progress
Reading	89%	48%	89%	48%	91%	96%	33%	43%
Writing	87%	36%	96%	33%	94%	100%	36%	43%
Maths	87%	41%	100%	67%	90%	100%	34%	75%

These dramatic improvements in results across the curriculum are being replicated in other schools around the country with specialist music programmes; clearly a trend is emerging and one that we are very proud to be a part of.

As I write the Summer term is underway and we are preparing repertoire in 4 languages (English, Latin, Zulu and Swahili) for upcoming liturgies and performances. It has been a great year at the choir school but however hard we are working in the present, we must look to the future. Our funding is only secure until December 2018 and if our work transforming lives in inner-city Leeds is to continue we must find new ways of sustaining it. We couldn't have come this far without the generous and invaluable support of our patrons, but 6 years in we all feel that we've only just begun!



Sally Egan
Choral Director

Throughout the year the Appeal Steering Group has met regularly with two simple objectives, namely fund-raising and monitoring progress. A major fund-raising event is planned for early December, which, if successful, will build upon the extraordinary financial support we continue to enjoy from our two principal funders, the Holbeck Charitable Trust and the Leeds College of Music. We are very grateful to them both for the confidence they have placed in us and hope that they will find in this report ample evidence of progress and some reward for their generosity."



Robin Smith
Steering Committee Chairman

Our heartfelt thanks to all our donors, Steering Committee and supporters, who enable our children to achieve so highly and share their amazing talents for the benefit of all.



Elizabeth McDonagh-Smith
Headteacher



Leeds Cathedral Choir School

Receipts & Payments from 01st April 2015 until 31st March 2016

April 2015-March 2016

Year ended 31.03.16

Receipts		Payments	
Individual Donations	£2,095.00	**Salary	£21,133.80
* College of Music	£7,000.00	Transport	£1,060.00
Holbeck Trust	£12,000.00	Uniform	£0.00
Gift Aid	£73.63	Food & Drink	£549.22
		Bank Charges	£88.27
		Insurance	£118.40
		***Apprentice Scheme	£340.00
Total Receipts 15-16	£21,168.63	Total Payments 15-16	£23,289.69

*The sum of £1000 per month has been received since Nov 2012 by the Leeds College of Music as per an agreement for partnership services.-£5000 outstanding for this financial year

**Plus salary due to be paid £11,334.03 April'16 for fee Nov-Feb'16

***C.Rhodes student placement-£340 Final payment 05'15

Cash in Bank 31.03.15	£14,812.29
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Cash in Bank 31.03.16	£12,691.23
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