

No other School in England still retains its own choir School to provide the treble line for its Chapel Choir.

‡ Upholding an unbroken tradition of over 600 years, the School's 16 Quiristers are an integral part of Winchester College and of the wider choral community. In addition to regular choral services, the Quiristers are involved in recitals, recordings, broadcasts and tours both in the UK and further afield.



“It is nothing short of miraculous that the Quiristers are still here. Their contribution to the worship and musical life of the College, through their excellent singing, provides constant spiritual nourishment.”

Malcolm Archer

Director of Chapel Music

Selected through an annual audition process, Winchester College’s 16 Quiristers remain a remarkable and unique part of our organisation. Aged between 8 and 13, the Quiristers form the treble line for the Chapel Choir and, by doing so, uphold an unbroken tradition that has lasted for over 600 years.

When William of Wykeham founded Winchester College in 1382, it was with the purpose of educating boys to exercise leadership in society. His motto, *Manners Makyth Man*, embodied his belief that a civilised society relies for its future on good education. An integral part of his vision was to initiate a tradition of social charity, providing the greatest possible access to education whatever a person’s social background or their parents’ means.

The Quiristers have been a key part of this vision from the School’s beginning. The College’s first statutes, translated from Latin, include the statement that the choir “must always consist in and of... sixteen boy choristers who have to serve in the divine offices of the Chapel of the said College.”

Remaining true to these principles today, the College’s 16 Quiristers follow a routine of daily practices and sing regular choral services in the College Chapel. Since 1966, the Quiristers have received their schooling at the nearby Pilgrims’ School. They receive a full and well-rounded education, have the opportunity to learn at least two musical instruments and live in their own boarding house within the College (known as Q School).

This very special opportunity for young boys comes at a considerable cost to the College — currently £200,000 per annum. This sum includes a 50% scholarship towards each Quirister’s boarding school fees and musical and vocal coaching, subsidised accommodation at Pilgrims’ and the provision of a Director of Chapel Music.

Yet the value of this tradition is immense. While no other school in England still retains its own Choir School to provide the treble line for its Chapel Choir, the Quiristers also have a role beyond the immediate environs of the College. They have a wide secular repertoire and, as part of Winchester College Chapel Choir, are involved in recitals, recordings, broadcasts and tours both in the UK and further afield.

