



HEREFORD  
CATHEDRAL

# Choir Chaperone





Information for Applicants

Music Department

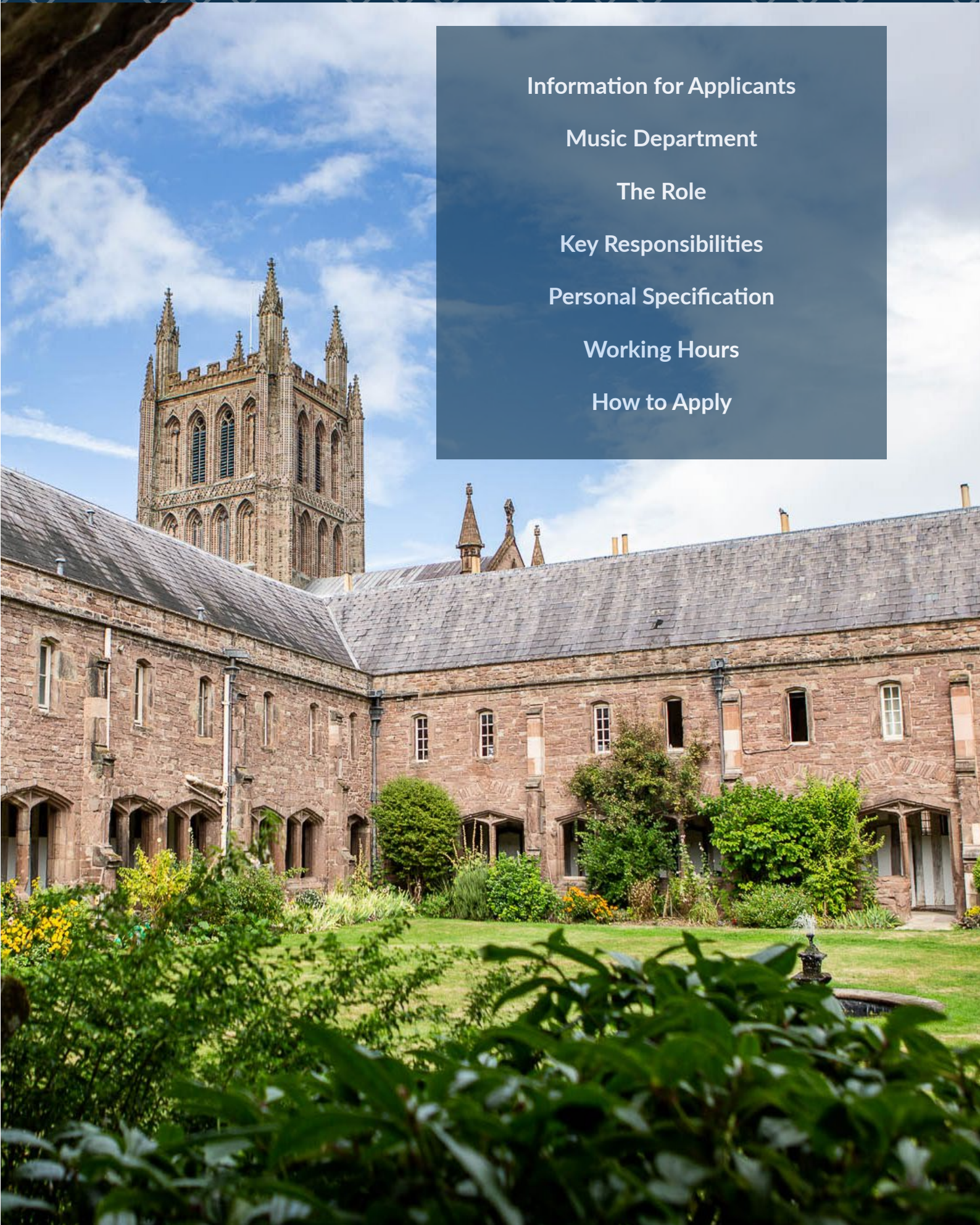
The Role

Key Responsibilities

Personal Specification

Working Hours

How to Apply





Thank you for your interest in our vacancy. We undertake to ensure that everyone has fair access to employment with us.

### **WHY WORK AT HEREFORD CATHEDRAL?**

Working at Hereford Cathedral puts you at the centre of the region's largest place of worship, tourist destination and indoor event venue, already welcoming up to 130,000 visitors per year. With its unique Mappa Mundi, its world-class music, a friendly city and beautiful landscapes all around, it is an unbeatable place to work. A small and friendly team of staff is working hard to modernise and grow the business within this significant centre of heritage and worship, which is keen to provide opportunities for staff and volunteers focused on making its attractions available to new and wider audiences. A major programme of exciting new activities in the recently-restored College of the Vicars Choral promise significant changes in how the cathedral presents itself the outside world. Whatever your skills, you can be assured of the support of the whole cathedral in joining and helping with its business, its worship and its entertainment!

### **OUR STAFF ENJOY:**

- A pleasant working environment within historic buildings
- Working in the city centre with free on-site car parking available
- The camaraderie of supportive and friendly colleagues
- Responsibility and independence in a small team
- Opportunities for continuing professional development
- Discounts in the on-site café and shop

### **OUR VISION STATEMENT**

Our vision is to create sacred space at the heart of the diocese in which worship is offered and the holiness of God is encountered in an open and inclusive way; common ground where issues shared by the whole of humanity can be explored in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Inspired by the Gospel, we work to build a welcoming, inclusive and engaging environment which, through the delivery of a diverse and inspiring programme of worship, events, educational activities and community outreach, fulfils and spiritually enriches all who experience our cathedral.





Music has been an important part of the cathedral's life for hundreds of years. There has been a choir since the thirteenth century and today it maintains a regular schedule of eight choral services a week (during term time) in the building's magnificent acoustic. The choir's full complement numbers eighteen boy and girl choristers, six lay clerks (adult singers), three assistant lay clerks (who sing at weekends and for special occasions), and three gap-year choral scholars, who sing alongside the lay clerks at all services.



The choir currently enjoys a fine reputation and was featured in a recent issue of BBC Music Magazine in an article '20 choirs you must hear this Christmas'. Concert performances of Bach's *St John Passion* or *St Matthew Passion* are an annual feature of Holy Week, and the choir has also given several performances of his *Christmas Oratorio*.

Once a year, on the cathedral's Feast of Dedication in May, there is an orchestral Eucharist: the choir recently started a third cycle of Haydn's six last masses, and other settings have included Beethoven's Mass in C. The choir broadcasts Choral Evensong regularly on BBC Radio 3, including on Ash Wednesday 2012, when the Guardian described the choir's performance of Allegri's *Miserere* as sung 'with glorious aplomb'. Appearances on television have included Christmas and Easter editions of Songs of Praise; most recently the cathedral's 2017 Easter Day Eucharist was broadcast live on BBC One.

The choir has undertaken six concert tours to the USA in the last twenty-two years, and in 2010 toured South Africa. CD recordings of music for Easter and Christmas, and others of music by Byrd and Howells, have received excellent reviews in the national press. In 2018 the choir took part in a gala concert at Buckingham Palace with the English Chamber Orchestra, and travelled to Rome to sing at a concert in the Sistine Chapel and at the Papal Mass in St Peter's Square for St Peter's Day, jointly with the Sistine Chapel Choir. In 2019 the choir took part in the 75th anniversary commemoration of the D-Day Landings in Normandy and gave a concert in Bologna at the invitation of the British Embassy in Rome. In June 2024, the choir returned to Normandy to take part in the 80th anniversary commemoration of the D-Day Landings.

Each year, the choir takes a major part in the annual Three Choirs Festival, probably the longest-established such festival in the world, which rotates between Hereford and the neighbouring cities of Gloucester and Worcester. The next Hereford festival takes place in 2025, from 26 July to 2 August.



The Choir Chaperone's role is to assist the director of music in the safeguarding and pastoral care of the cathedral choristers, and to liaise with the senior management teams of Hereford Cathedral School (HCS) and Hereford Cathedral Junior School (HCJS) in all day-to-day matters regarding the choristers, who are spread across Years 3–8.

### **NATURE OF THE ROLE**

This post requires an experienced childcare professional or someone who has worked with children aged 7–14. In view of the requirement to attend up to eight cathedral services a week in term time, in addition to various special services and concerts of sacred music, it would particularly suit a practising Christian and/or choral music enthusiast for whom this would be a welcome prospect. These are not requirements, however, for this appointment.

### **SAFEGUARDING**

We are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment, and this role will require the post holder to complete a satisfactory enhanced with children's barred list Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before their appointment can be confirmed.

### **PASTORAL CARE**

The ability of the Choir Chaperone to exercise safeguarding oversight and to offer pastoral care will flourish only if they make an effort to get to know the choristers: this is not just a supervisory role, therefore, but a role requiring engagement with the children, whose wide age-range, unique working environment and spirited character give rise to the need for regular encouragement and occasional behaviour management strategies. Frequent interaction and liaison with the choristers' parents are key aspects of the role.

### **CONCERTS AND VISITS TO OTHER CHURCHES**

Whenever the choir gives a concert or visits another church to sing a service, the Choir Chaperone is expected to be in attendance, and to travel with the choristers.

### **CHOIR TOURS**

From time to time, the choir undertakes short tours abroad (typically 3–4 days in duration) and, while it is not a requirement of the post, the Choir Chaperone will be encouraged to travel with the choir (free of charge and accommodation costs) and to act as the lead chaperone during the tour.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

To avoid conflicts of interest, the Chapter has resolved not to appoint to this post a close relative or household member of one of the serving choristers.



- To have responsibility for the choristers' daily supervision and wellbeing in accordance with Chapter's safeguarding policy and procedures, reporting any concerns to the relevant person promptly
- To provide 'main adult' cover for the choristers during practices, rehearsals, services and concerts
- Supervising Sunday lunchtime and the choristers' free time after lunch and before their afternoon practice
- To provide refreshments for the choristers during breaks and to supervise toilet visits
- To provide first aid and pastoral care of choristers during practices, services and concerts, and to record any GP prescribed medicines administered to the choristers
- As first aider, to ensure that all first aid equipment and materials in the Choir House and Song School are replenished when necessary
- To keep close at hand appropriate records of the choristers' health and special needs and to be fully involved in discussions relating to any special requirements
- To maintain a record of any tensions and/or incidents affecting the choristers' wellbeing
- To assist the choristers with robing and ensure that they are smart and tidy
- To prepare choristers before concerts and supervising them during intervals
- To supervise the collection of choristers by their parents/carers after services and concerts
- Liaison with chorister parents concerning schedule changes to rehearsals and services
- Liaison with HCS & HCJS concerning the choir schedule and the choristers' extra-curricular work
- Attending meetings with parents and/or the school(s) regarding the welfare of the choristers
- To assist the choir tour manager and the educational visits coordinator with the completion of the EVOLVE system for choir visits and tours
- To be responsible for the choristers' supervision and wellbeing whilst visiting other churches and concert venues
- Liaison with Hereford Cathedral Choir Association
- To ensure that the choristers' part of Choir House is kept tidy and user-friendly, and to report any health & safety concerns to the appropriate person
- To facilitate (with written parental consent) the taking of official chorister photographs and associated media





- Where appropriate, to attend music department, safeguarding team and HCS/HCJS meetings and training sessions
- Liaison with the team of vergers, on a daily basis
- To ensure compliance with the cathedral's safeguarding policies and procedures, including attaining a satisfactory enhanced with children's barred list DBS check and successfully completing safeguarding training to the levels required for the role
- To ensure compliance with all other cathedral policies and procedures, in particular health and safety, confidentiality and data protection
- To complete successfully and keep up to date all training deemed necessary for the role by the line manager, safeguarding officer or the health and safety officer
- To take part in the cathedral's annual joint review process and take advantage of any available training and professional development opportunities offered
- To maintain an effective relationship across the whole cathedral community, attending and participating in regular meetings as appropriate, and contributing to the overall ethos, work and aims of Hereford Cathedral.



## ESSENTIALS

- Experience of working or volunteering with children in a school or education setting
- Ability to attain a satisfactory enhanced with children's barred list DBS certificate
- Trustworthy and dependable
- Proactive, energetic and self-motivated
- A practical approach to the pastoral needs and the care of the choristers
- Capacity to provide concise and regular up-dates to the director of music on the day-to-day well-being of the choristers
- Recognition of the confidentiality requirements of different types of information
- The ability to work both independently and as part of a team
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, including a sense of humour
- Good standard of education to GCSE level or equivalent, including proven writing skills to enable the confidential recording of incidents and concerns
- Confident working knowledge of ICT systems, including Microsoft Office Word and Outlook
- Hold a current first aid qualification, or a willingness and ability to attain one
- Willingness to undertake all relevant training
- Flexibility in working hours including during school holidays & weekends
- Core values that are aligned to those of the cathedral.

## DESIRABLES

- Willing to contribute to the life of the cathedral
- Classroom teaching or assistant experience
- An interest in the sacred choral music repertoire.







Normally 22½ hours per week during cathedral choir terms, which can be longer than academic terms and include Christmas Day and Holy Week, including Good Friday & Easter Day.

<b>Monday</b>	10.15–10.45 am	Hereford Cathedral School staff meeting
4¾ hours	10.45 am – 12.45 pm	Cathedral music department staff meeting
	4.30–5.20 pm	Afternoon rehearsal to care for choristers' needs
	5.20–5.30 pm	Helping to supervise the robing of choristers and then escorting them to cathedral
	5.30–6.45 pm	Evensong and choristers' collection by parents
<b>Tuesday</b>	4.30–5.20 pm	Afternoon rehearsal to care for choristers' needs
2¼ hours	5.20–5.30 pm	Helping to supervise the robing of choristers and then escorting them to cathedral
	5.30–6.45 pm	Evensong and choristers' collection by parents
<b>Thursday</b>	4.30–5.20 pm	Afternoon rehearsal to care for choristers' needs
2¼ hours	5.20–5.30 pm	Helping to supervise the robing of choristers and then escorting them to cathedral
	5.30–6.45 pm	Evensong and choristers' collection by parents
<b>Friday</b>	4.30–5.20 pm	Afternoon rehearsal to care for choristers' needs
3 hours	5.20–5.30 pm	Helping to supervise the robing of choristers and then escorting them to cathedral
	5.30–6.30 pm	Evensong
	6.30–7.30 pm	Evening rehearsal and choristers' collection by parents
<b>Saturday</b>	4.15–5.20 pm	Afternoon rehearsal to care for choristers' needs
2½ hours	5.20–5.30 pm	Helping to supervise the robing of choristers and then escorting them to cathedral
	5.30–6.45 pm	Evensong and choristers' collection by parents
<b>Sunday</b>	8.30–9.50 am	Choristers' arrival and morning rehearsal and preparing post-Eucharist refreshments
7¾ hours	9.50–10.00 am	Helping to supervise the robing of choristers and then escorting them to cathedral
	10.00–11.10 am	Cathedral Eucharist
	11.10–11.30 am	Choristers' refreshment break in Choir House
	11.30 am–12.30 pm	Matins (during which the Choir Chaperone may take their ½ hour unpaid lunch break)
	12.30–2.50 pm	Supervising choristers' lunchtime with the music scholars
	2.50–3.20 pm	Afternoon rehearsal to care for choristers' needs
	3.20–3.30 pm	Helping to supervise the robing of choristers and then escorting them to cathedral
	3.30–4.45 pm	Evensong and choristers' collection by parents



In addition, the Choir Chaperone attends other meetings, including a two-hour choristers' welfare meeting and a two-hour meeting of the safeguarding management group each term, and occasional meetings with the director of music and the safeguarding officer as required.

Furthermore, the Choir Chaperone is contracted and remunerated separately by HCS/HCJS for an additional 4 hours each week during school term time to lead the supervision of choristers' tea in the adjacent HCJS and to provide 'main adult' cover. The working hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday from 3.30–4.30 pm.

### **FESTIVALS**

In the days leading up to Christmas and during Holy Week (including Easter Day), the Choir Chaperone is expected to provide pastoral cover for the afternoon practices, as well as the special services, which are set out on the termly choir schedule that is published by the director of music.

### **HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS**

As the Choir Chaperone is required to work only during cathedral choir terms, plus the week leading up to Christmas and the week leading up to Easter Day, they will not be required to work at all other times. No holiday or days off may be taken during choir terms or the above weeks, apart from exceptional circumstances that have been agreed in advance with the director of music. Wednesday will normally be a complete day off. When the cathedral choir is required to sing on Wednesdays (e.g. Ash Wednesday or BBC Radio 3 Choral Evensong broadcasts), another day is taken off in lieu by the choir and the Choir Chaperone. The choir is also on holiday at school half terms, including both weekends (except in the event of a choir tour), a week after Christmas and a week before or after Easter, as well as the HCS/HCJS summer holiday.

### **REMUNERATION**

The work for Hereford Cathedral will command a salary of £14,000 per annum, with an 8% non-contributory pension scheme. The salary is paid in equal instalments over twelve calendar months. No overtime is payable, but no deductions are made if services or rehearsals are cancelled.

The work for HCS/HCJS is to be remunerated at an annual salary of £2,038, calculated as: 4 hours x £12.25 hourly rate x 41.6 weeks per year (36 + 5.6 weeks holiday). This is paid directly to the Choir Chaperone by HCS/HCJS under a separate employment contract.



We want our recruitment process to be clear and easily understood, and hope that the following guidelines will help you to understand what information we need from you if you decide to apply for our vacancy. On our website [Vacancies | Hereford Cathedral](#), you will find the following two pieces of documentation:

### THE APPLICATION FORM

A copy of the application form is available to download:

- Please complete all appropriate sections in full.
- If desired, you may attach a portfolio or links to any previous work that you wish to include.
- Please ensure that you list all your previous employment, including any gaps, and use a separate sheet if necessary.
- Canvassing will lead to disqualification for appointment.
- False statements or failure to disclose any information requested in the application form may disqualify a candidate; discovery after appointment may lead to dismissal or disciplinary action.
- All appointments are subject to the cathedral receiving two satisfactory references, and the application form asks you to identify two individuals for this purpose. Your referees should have direct knowledge of your work skills and abilities. Your first referee should be your present or most recent employer or educational establishment. References will not be accepted from relatives or from people writing solely in the capacity of friends.

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING FORM

Please complete this. It will be separated from the application form once received. This information is treated confidentially and is used for equal opportunity monitoring purposes only; it will not be considered during the selection process.

**Please return your application forms by the closing date to: HR Department, 5 College Cloisters, Cathedral Close, Hereford, HR1 2NG or via email to: [recruitment@herefordcathedral.org](mailto:recruitment@herefordcathedral.org). Late applications may not be considered.**

This is a key appointment in the music department, and we will be glad to receive expressions of interest: we always appreciate the time and effort that it takes to complete a job application. If you would like to arrange an informal conversation to discuss the role, you are welcome to telephone The Reverend Canon Andrew Piper, Precentor of Hereford Cathedral, on 01432 374 271 for an informal discussion.

The closing date for applications is Monday 15 July 2024 at midday. The interviews for this post will be held on Friday 19 July 2024. We normally inform all unsuccessful applicants and acknowledge their applications after an appointment has been made.



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*Images by Gordon Taylor, Caroline Potter, Kath Proctor, Neil Proctor*