

Northampton Festival of the Performing Arts

Syllabus 2026



A chance to perform

A chance for appraisal

A chance to hear others perform

Entries close 31st March 2026

Enter online via www.northamptonfestival.co.uk

Festival Chair's Welcome

Welcome to the 49th Year of the Northampton Festival of the Performing Arts. We are delighted to be returning once again to the Deco Theatre, Northampton. This year we are extremely fortunate to welcome back to the adjudication panel Ben Costello (Music) and Jenny Thorton (Drama).

There are a range of both competitive and non-competitive classes for performers of all ages and levels of current achievement, and the recital classes in music create an opportunity for students to improve their stamina because they demand a higher level of concentration, which in turn develops how to sustain a longer performance.

Entries can be done online, postal or email but we strongly encourage you to use our online entry system for your ease. This can be found at www.northamptonfestival.co.uk. Please do email us at contact@northamptonfestival.co.uk should you need any assistance.

During the festival, I would actively encourage performers to go and support musicians and drama students in other classes. Watching and listening to classes in other art disciplines, whilst listening to feedback from the adjudication will provide another form of musical and drama development.

The festival is supported by several dedicated volunteers and a committee, which has worked very hard to ensure this year is a total success. Please do get in contact with us if we can help further. I look forward to meeting you at the festival.

The closing date for entries is the 31st March 2026, with an exciting end to the Festival weekend with the gala performance being held on Sunday 17th May 2026. Good luck and make sure you have fun!

Best wishes,

Gemma Coombes

Festival Chair, Northampton Festival of the Performing Arts

www.northamptonfestival.co.uk

**Thank you to Northampton Magazines
who generously supported our festival
with sponsored advertising**

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Email - admin@northamptonmagazines.com
Website - northamptonmagazines.com**

Northampton Festival of the Performing Arts

49th Festival Year

Festival Venue: The Deco Theatre, Abington Square, Northampton NN1 4AE

Speech & Drama - Adjudicator: Jenny Thorton

Friday 15th, Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th May 2026

NB Performance Licenses will be required for Y6 and Under Monologue and Duologues

Music Festival - Adjudicator: Ben Costello

Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th May 2026: Piano, instrumental and vocal soloists.

Friday 15th May 2026: School choirs

Final Concert: Sunday 17th May 2026

Closing date for entries: 31st March 2026

Non-Competitive classes:

Are ideal for those entering the Festival for the first time or those seeking appraisal only. You will receive a certificate and hand-written feedback but no medal placing.

Age groups:

Our classes are open to performers of any age – we would welcome adults and children alike, as soloists, groups or ensembles.

Music Festival:

In Music we have classes for vocal and instruments for soloists or ensembles.

Speech and Drama:

There is poetry, memorised prose and prepared reading, acting, devising and mime for soloists and groups.

Trophies:

If you won a returnable trophy in the 2025 festival, would you please return it to your teacher by 27th March 2026 so that we can have them ready to award for 2026. Medals and non-returnable trophies do not have to be returned.

HOW TO ENTER THE FESTIVAL

The Festival is run completely by volunteers and we would respectfully ask you to use our online system, if possible, to make your entries should you have difficulties we have also provided alternative methods

ENTER ONLINE

Go to our website www.northamptonfestival.co.uk and click the box which will take you into the entry portal. You will be asked to enter your personal details and then you can go ahead and enter your chosen classes. If you have entered online before your previous details will have been saved.

Payment can be made by PayPal or BACS or you can send a cheque, made payable to Northampton Festival of the Performing Arts to the Festival Chair, Mrs Gemma Coombes, 1 Willoughby Way, Piddington NN7 2EH

Before completing any entry form, please read the syllabus very carefully and if you have any queries, please email contact@northamptonfestival.co.uk

Once entries have closed the festival programme will be compiled and class timings will be emailed to the entrant, parent or teacher who made the entry.

BY EMAIL – **FOR USE IN EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE ONLY**

Download the entry form from our website www.northamptonfestival.co.uk, complete and email to contact@northamptonfestival.co.uk

You can simply pay by either bank transfer or BACS to the following account with your contact as a reference:

Account name: Northampton Festival of the Performing Arts

Sort code: **54 -10 -44** Account number: **45916896**

When payment is received your entries will be processed.

BY POST - **FOR USE IN EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE ONLY**

Download the form from our website www.northamptonfestival.co.uk and print a copy, complete it and send with your cheque to the festival Chair, Mrs Gemma Coombes, 25 Bedford Road, Denton, Northampton, NN71DR

FESTIVAL COMMITTEE	
Chair	Gemma Coombes
Vice Chair	Arghavan Atife
Secretary	Jenaya Smith
Treasurer	Mike Naylor
Drama Festival Coordinators	Jenaya Smith and Kelly Hartnett
Music Festival Coordinators	Serena Knight and Arghavan Atife
Trophy Secretary	Serena Knight
General Members	Alex Sullivan & Leonie-Jane Walker
If you are interested in helping with the festival in anyway, please email us on contact@northamptonfestival.co.uk	

SPEECH AND DRAMA

- Trophies and awards will be listed in the programme.
- Please make yourself aware of our rules including time limits.
- Where appropriate CD accompaniment may be used.
- Time limit does not include a brief introduction or setting of stage.

SPEECH AND DRAMA ADJUDICATOR

Jenny Thornton AGSM,
ALAM, Cert. Ed., LISTD, CDE,
LAMDA examiner



Jenny trained at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama gaining awards for Character Acting and for Most Promising Teacher.

Jenny has led the Performing Arts Teams in large Comprehensives, been an Assistant Principal for Edexcel, LAMDA examiner and now enjoys running her own Performance Centre with ages from 4 years to adults delivering drama, dance and musical theatre and also writing. Her play called "Gone" gained a Commended when performed at The Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond as did her most recent play "Young Love".

"Drama is a life skill that changed me from a stuttering introvert to a confident individual. We can give our children no better opportunity."

Jenny Thornton

CHILD LICENSING

Please note licences are required for Primary Aged Solo and Duologue Acting Classes Only as these will take place on the afternoon of Friday 15th May and may require entrants to miss a small section of the school day. Due to the penalties associated with unlicensed performers NO CHILD WITHOUT A LICENSE WILL BE ABLE TO PERFORM AND A REFUND WILL NOT BE GIVEN.

Please access link below to apply when you add your entry:

[West Northants](#)

[North Northants](#)

If you live outside of Northants, you will need to contact your local council

Please note that both the music and speech and drama festivals classes apart from Primary Aged Acting mentioned above will be held over the weekend so a performers licence will not be required. If your child is performing as part of a school group, then the school will cover all aspects of child licensing on your behalf. The festival will apply for the necessary Body of Persons Approval to cover all children performing in the festival.

VERSE SPEAKING

OWN CHOICE: Typed copy to be brought to the festival

Own choice of any poem or part of a poem

D1	Year 1 & Under	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£8
D2	Year 2	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£8
D3	Year 3	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£8
D4	Year 4	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£8
D5	Year 5	Not to exceed 3 minutes	£8
D6	Year 6	Not to exceed 3 minutes	£8
D7	Years 7 & 8	Not to exceed 3 minutes	£9

For D7 if using a poem by Mary Oliver, Judith Nicholls or Amanda Gorman please enter D17

D8	Years 9 & 10	Not to exceed 3 minutes	£9
D9	Year 11 and over	Not to exceed 3 minutes	£9

For D9 if using a poem by the current or former poet laureate please enter D19

SET VERSE - All available online (NB you do not need to bring a copy to the festival)

D11	Y1 & Under – Grown Out of OR Throw a Ball	£8
Grown Out Of - The Children's Poetry Archive OR Throw a Ball - Forward Arts Foundation		
D12	Year 2- Growing by Tony Mitton OR How to Turn Your Teacher Purple! by James Carter	£8
Growing - The Children's Poetry Archive OR How to Turn Your Teacher Purple! - The Children's Poetry Archive		
D13	Year 3- Dear Ugly Sisters by Laura Mucha OR Cosmic Disco by Grace Nichols	£8
Dear Ugly Sisters - The Children's Poetry Archive OR Cosmic Disco - The Children's Poetry Archive		
D14	Year 4 Block City by Robert Louis Stevenson OR Low Flying Rabbits Ahead by Roger Stevens	£8
Poetry By Heart Block City OR LOW FLYING RABBITS AHEAD - The Children's Poetry Archive		
D15	Year 5 The Book by Michael Rosen OR Skateboarding by Joseph Coelho	£8
The Book - The Children's Poetry Archive OR Skateboarding - Forward Arts Foundation		
D16	Year 6 Ghost in the Garden by Berlie Doherty OR I Don't Like Poetry by Joshua Seigal	£8
Ghost in the Garden - The Children's Poetry Archive OR I Don't Like Poetry The Poetry Foundation		
D17	Years 7 & 8 Any poem by Mary Oliver, Judith Nicholls or Amanda Gorman	£9
D18	Years 9 & 10 Any poem studied at GCSE	£9
D19	Year 11+ Poem written by current or former Poet Laureate Adult entries welcome	£9

VERSE SPEAKING - STUDENTS WITH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Own choice of any poem or part of a poem

D10	Year 6 & under	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£8
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OPEN NON-COMPETITIVE CLASS – ANY AGE D52 Open Not to exceed 3 minutes £10

Entrant may present any speech or drama discipline

PREPARED READING

PREPARED RELIGIOUS READING - Cannot be same reading as D36/D37

Any version of the Bible			
D35	Year 6 & under	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£8

THE NORTHAMPTON BIBLE SOCIETY CLASS – PREPARED BIBLE READING

NB Cannot be same reading as D35/37

Taken from Jerusalem, New Jerusalem or Good News Bible			
D36	Year 7 to age 19	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£9

PREPARED READING FROM ANY RELIGIOUS TEXT – Cannot be same reading as D35/D36

D37	Open	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£9
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PREPARED READING FROM ANY TEXT

D53A	Year 4 & under	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£8
D53B	Year 6 & under	Not to exceed 3 minutes	£8
D54	Year 7 to age 19	Not to exceed 3 minutes	£9

MEMORISED PROSE & DUET PROSE/POETRY

MEMORISED PROSE SPEAKING

D32	Year 6 & under	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£8
D33	Year 7 & over	Not to exceed 3 minutes	£9

MEMORISED POETRY OR PROSE SPEAKING FOR TWO SPEAKERS (not to be acted)

D34	Open	Not to exceed 5 minutes	£12
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WRITE YOUR OWN POEM OR PROSE – ANY AGE

ORIGINAL POETRY OR PROSE – WRITE AND RECITE

Write your own poem or story then recite it at the festival

To be spoken by the author (must not be the same poem as Class D21)

D20	Open	Not to exceed 2 minutes	£10
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WRITE YOUR OWN POEM – WRITTEN ONLY

D21		£10
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ACTION REQUIRED - copy of poems for both **D20/D21** to be sent via email no later than **April 30th 2026** to contact@northamptonfestival.co.uk – within in email a parent, guardian or teacher is required to verify that it is the unaided work of the student(s).

All poets are invited to attend the adjudication of this class together with parents, teachers and friends however those wishing to perform should enter Class D20 [Must not be the same poem as Class D20]

DRAMA GROUPS

Music allowed in all classes

GROUP ACTING - SHAKESPEARE D22 Open Not to exceed 6 minutes £20

A scene from a Shakespeare play for any number of players (minimum 3)

GROUP MIME D23 Open Not to exceed 5 minutes £20

Short Scene for any number of players (minimum 3). Costume optional but no props

SCHOOLS – GROUP ACTING D25 Open Not to exceed 10 minutes £20

A scene for any number of players (minimum 3). Costume optional.

Limited use of hand props, tables and chairs available.

NON SCHOOLS – GROUP ACTING D26 Open Not to exceed 10 minutes £20

SEE D25 FOR FULL DETAILS

SCHOOLS – MIXED ARTS D27 Not to exceed 15 minutes £20

Must include at least two of the following: Singing, Music, Speech, Movement.

Costume permitted. Minimum number of performers is 6.

NON SCHOOLS - MIXED ARTS D28 Not to exceed 15 minutes £20

SEE D27 FOR FULL DETAILS

GROUP SPEAKING

At least two contrasting pieces of poetry or prose

D29 Year 6 & under Not to exceed 6 minutes £20

D30 Year 7 & over Not to exceed 6 minutes £20

ACTING AND MIME CLASSES

NB – D38A, D38B, D42 & D43 REQUIRE CEE LICENSES DUE TO FRIDAY AFTERNOON SCHEDUING

DUOLOGUE

D38A Years 4 & under Not to exceed 4 minutes £10

D38B Years 5 & 6 Not to exceed 4 minutes £10

D39 Years 7 & 8 Not to exceed 5 minutes £12

D40 Years 9 & 10 Not to exceed 5 minutes £12

D41 Year 11 & over Not to exceed 6 minutes £12

SOLO ACTING

D42 Years 4 & under Not to exceed 3 minutes £8

D43 Years 5 & 6 Not to exceed 3 minutes £8

D44 Years 7 & 8 Not to exceed 4 minutes £10

D45 Years 9 & 10 Not to exceed 5 minutes £10

D46 Year 11 & over Not to exceed 5 minutes £10

SOLO ACTING SHAKESPEARE

D47 Years 7 to 10 Not to exceed 4 minutes £10

D48 Year 11 & over Not to exceed 5 minutes £10

MIME – SOLO or DUO

D49 Open Not to exceed 3 minutes £10 solo or duo

MUSIC

Trophies and awards will be listed in the festival programme

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY BEFORE MAKING YOUR ENTRY

You can perform in any music class using either pre-recorded backing tracks or live accompaniment, such as a pianist. This is your choice.

PLEASE ENTER WITHIN YOUR GRADE BAND

For instance if you are Grade 5 piano entrant then you should enter Intermediate grade classes and play a piece of that level (i.e. a grade 5 piece, not a grade 4 piece). This rule applies to all piano and instrumental classes.

LIVE ACCOMPANIMENT

We do not provide an official festival accompanist.

You may bring your own accompanist, but if you don't have one then please contact us if you have difficulty.

If you engage an accompanist, you must expect to pay for their services and this is your responsibility and not that of the festival.

We advise that you engage an accompanist as soon as you have entered the festival as they get busy and you might also like to have a rehearsal before your performance.

ELECTRONIC ACCOMPANIMENT (backing tracks)

If you choose to use pre-recorded backing tracks for your performance(s) please bring the tracks on a device (i.e. on a CD or Bluetooth). All vocal performances will be performed without a microphone.

TIME LIMITS

Time limits must be adhered to – please make yourself aware of our rules.

CLASS GRADES USED IN THIS SYLLABUS Classes are graded as follows:

Beginners	Of prep test standard or moving towards this grade
Preparatory	Grades 1-2
Elementary	Grades 3-4
Intermediate	Grades 5-6
Advanced	Grades 7-8 or above

MUSIC ADJUDICATOR



Ben is a freelance musical director, adjudicator, singing coach and accompanist, working internationally, and is also Artistic Director and Company Secretary of Thames Concerts. He is a generalist music adjudicator for the British and International Federation of Festivals, having joined in 2009. He is also a music examiner for LCME and a consultant on their musical theatre syllabi.

A specialist in musical theatre and vocal performance, Ben has been musical director for numerous productions across the UK, and a reflective product of this has been his continuing work at the cutting edge of performing arts training in London, with his portfolio over the years including Arts Ed, Mountview Academy, Trinity Laban, Laine Theatre Arts, Italia Conti, Guildford School of Acting, the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, the Royal Academy of Music, Drama Studio London, and the London School of Musical Theatre. Countless of his former singing students enjoy successful careers in the West End and beyond. He also teaches singing at Kingston Grammar School and Tiffin Girls' School.

Born and based in London, Ben trained initially as a flautist before majoring in piano, singing and conducting. He read Music at Kingston University and the London College of Music, subsequently joining the teaching faculty as the College's first resident MD.

Ben remains much sought-after as an accompanist, and collaborates in a variety of genres with countless singers and instrumentalists in many performing environments. He is one of the regular pianists for Cantabile (The London Quartet), and has given concerts with them in Germany, Belgium and the UK.

Ben is a Liveryman and on the Court of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. He chaired the Company's prestigious annual musical direction scholarship for eight years and is presently Chairman of the Company's Jazz Committee.

Outside music, Ben is a keen motorcyclist.

PIANO AND KEYBOARD

PIANO SOLO – COMPETITIVE - One or two own choice pieces

M1	Beginners	2 mins	£8
M2	Preparatory	3 mins	£8
M3	Elementary	4 mins	£8
M4	Intermediate	5 mins	£10
M5	Advanced	5 mins	£10

PIANO SOLO – JAZZ, SWING, RAGTIME OR TV THEMES – Own choice

M9	Beginners	2 mins	£8
M10	Preparatory	3 mins	£8
M11	Elementary	4 mins	£8
M12	Intermediate	5 mins	£10
M13	Advanced	5 mins	£10

PIANO DUET OR TRIO – two pieces of own choice

M6	Elementary and below	5 mins	£10
M7	Intermediate and above	8 mins	£13

PIANO RECITAL – Two or more own choice pieces

For pianists playing at Grade 6 or above standard. Your opportunity to perform in concert style, this class will be a celebration of musical excellence.

M20	18 years and below	12 mins	£13
M21	Adult	15 mins	£16

MODERN BAND INSTRUMENT – COMPETITIVE – Own Choice

Band instruments including electric keyboard, electric guitar or drums. Please bring along your own drum kit,, keyboard, stand, amp and lead

M14	Open to any age	5 mins	£10
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PIANO OR KEYBOARD SOLO – NON-COMPETITIVE – Own choice

You will receive a performance certificate and hand-written feedback but no medal placing. A piano will be supplied but please bring your own keyboard, stand and lead.

M19	Open to any age	5 mins	£11
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INSTRUMENTAL

Please refer to the notes on page 9. In each class, unless specified, you may perform to piano or backing track accompaniment.

BRASS SOLO – COMPETITIVE – Own choice - Any brass instrument

B22	Beginners	2 mins	£8
B23	Preparatory	3 mins	£8
B24	Elementary	4 mins	£8
B25	Intermediate	5 mins	£10
B26	Advanced	5 mins	£10

STRINGS SOLO – COMPETITIVE – Own choice - Any stringed instrument

S22	Beginners	2 mins	£8
S23	Preparatory	3 mins	£8
S24	Elementary	4 mins	£8
S25	Intermediate	5 mins	£10
S26	Advanced	5 mins	£10

WOODWIND SOLO – COMPETITIVE – Own choice - Any woodwind instrument

W22	Beginners	2 mins	£8
W23	Preparatory	3 mins	£8
W24	Elementary	4 mins	£8
W25	Intermediate	5 mins	£10
W26	Advanced	5 mins	£10

BRASS, STRINGS, PERCUSSION AND WOODWIND DUET, TRIO OR QUARTET-

Two pieces of own choice - Any brass, stringed or woodwind instrument (**except piano**)

M28	Beginners	4 mins	£11
M29	Preparatory	4 mins	£11
M30	Elementary	6 mins	£13
M31	Intermediate	8 mins	£16
M32	Advanced	8 mins	£16

INSTRUMENTAL RECITAL – Two or more own choice pieces

For performers of any instrument (not including piano) playing at Grade 6 or above standard. Your opportunity to perform in concert style, this class will be a celebration of musical excellence.

In20	18 years and below	12 mins	£13
In21	Adult	15 mins	£16

BRASS, STRINGS, PERCUSSION, AND WOODWIND SOLO – NON-COMPETITIVE

Any brass, stringed, percussion or woodwind instrument (except piano) You will receive a performance certificate and handwritten feedback but no medal placing.

M33	Open to any age	8 mins	£10
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VOCAL

Please refer to the notes on page 9. In each class, unless specified, you may perform to piano or backing track accompaniment.

JUNIOR VOICE

VOCAL SOLO – ENGLISH ART SONG (Composers such as Sullivan / Ireland / Vaughan Williams / Butterworth / Finzi / Howells / Britten) – Own choice

M37	Years 1-6	3 mins	£8
M38	Years 7-9	4 mins	£10
M39	Years 10-11	4 mins	£10
M40	Years 12-13	4 mins	£10

VOCAL SOLO – CLASSICAL SONG FROM OPERA, OPERETTA OR ORATORIO – Own choice

M72	Years 7-9	4 mins	£8
M73	Years 10-11	5 mins	£10
M74	Years 12-13	5 mins	£10

VOCAL SOLO – MUSICAL THEATRE WITH BACKING TRACK OR PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT

Own choice. Can be performed to pre-recorded backing track or piano accompaniment but sung without a microphone

M41	Years 1-6	4 mins	£8
M42	Years 7-9	4 mins	£8

VOCAL SOLO – MUSICAL THEATRE WITH PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT ONLY

Own choice. To be performed with piano accompaniment only and sung without a microphone. Pre-recorded backing tracks are not allowed for these classes.

M43	Years 10-11	5 mins	£10
M44	Years 12-13	5 mins	£10

CLASSICAL OR MUSICAL THEATRE DUETS AND TRIOS – up to two pieces of own choice

If ages are mixed, the group enters in the class for the oldest performer

M45	Years 1-6	4 mins	£11
M46	Years 7-9	6 mins	£13
M47	Years 10-11	6 mins	£13
M48	Years 12-13	6 mins	£13

VOCAL SOLO – FOLK SONG ACCOMPANIED / UNACCOMPANIED – Own choice

M53	Years 1-6	3 mins	£8
M54	Years 7-9	4 mins	£10
M55	Years 10-11	4 mins	£10
M56	Years 12-13	4 mins	£10

VOCAL SOLO – FOREIGN SONG OF EUROPEAN ORIGIN (Including Russian) – Own choice

(must be sung in the original language)

M49 Years 1-6	3 mins	£8
M50 Years 7-9	4 mins	£8
M51 Years 10-11	5 mins	£10
M52 Years 12-13	5 mins	£10

VOCAL SOLO – FOREIGN SONG OF NON-EUROPEAN ORIGIN – Own choice

(must be sung in the original language – not an English translation)

M57 Years 1-6	3 mins	£8
M58 Years 7-9	4 mins	£8
M59 Years 10-11	5 mins	£10
M60 Years 12-13	5 mins	£10

CONTEMPORARY POP SONG SOLO - Own choice and any era – backing tracks should not include backing vocals and the content should be audience appropriate.

M75 Years 1-6	3 mins	£8
M76 Years 7-13	4 mins	£8

JUNIOR VOCAL RECITAL – All ages and voices, including adults – Own choice

A selection of contrasting songs by different composers.

M61 Age group 14-18 years	15 mins	£16
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VOCAL SOLO – NON-COMPETITIVE – All ages and voices, including adults

For entrants who wish to perform and receive constructive comments and advice from the adjudicator. You will receive a performance certificate and hand-written feedback but no medal placing.

M62 Open to any age	8 mins	£11
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SCHOOLS CHOIRS

Classes M63-M66 will be held during the school day on Friday 15th May 2026 at The Deco Theatre

SCHOOL CHOIRS – COMPETITIVE – Two pieces of own choice

Your own pre-recorded accompaniment is permitted or please bring your own accompanist.

M63 Years 1-3	8 mins	£21
M64 Years 6 & Under	8 mins	£21
M65 Years 7-11	10 mins	£26
M66 Years 12-13	10 mins	£26

ADULT VOICE

Please refer to the notes on page 9. In each class, unless specified, you may perform to piano or backing track accompaniment.

VOCAL SOLO – ENGLISH ART SONG (Composers such as Sullivan / Ireland / Vaughan Williams / Butterworth / Finzi / Howells / Britten) – Own choice

AV76 Adult 5 mins £10

VOCAL SOLO – CLASSICAL SONG FROM OPERA, OPERETTA OR ORATORIO – Own choice

AV77 Adult 5 mins £10

VOCAL SOLO – MUSICAL THEATRE – Own choice

Can be performed to pre-recorded backing track or piano accompaniment but sung without a microphone

AV78 Adult 5 mins £10

CLASSICAL OR MUSICAL THEATRE DUETS AND TRIOS – up to two pieces of own choice

AV79 Adult 10 mins £16

VOCAL SOLO – FOLK SONG ACCOMPANIED / UNACCOMPANIED – Own choice

AV80 Adult 5 mins £10

VOCAL SOLO – FOREIGN SONG OF EUROPEAN ORIGIN (Including Russian) – Own choice

(must be sung in the original language – not an English translation)

AV81 Adult 5 mins £10

VOCAL SOLO – FOREIGN SONG OF NON-EUROPEAN ORIGIN – Own choice

(must be sung in the original language – not an English translation)

AV82 Adult 5 mins £10

CONTEMPORARY POP SONG SOLO - Own choice – from any era and sung to backing track or piano accompaniment

AV83 Adult 5 mins £10

ADULT VOCAL RECITAL – Own choice - A selection of contrasting songs by different composers

AV84 Adult 15 mins £16

FESTIVAL RULES OF ENTRY

Full information can be found by visiting our website

www.northamptonfestival.co.uk

ENTRIES

- All entries must be made either online via the website entry portal or using the official entry form by email to contact@northamptonfestival.co.uk, or by post and submitted as a paper entry reaching the Entries Secretary on or before the closing date as given in the syllabus.
- Late entries will not be accepted.
- Entry fees will only be returned as a decision of the committee.
- The committee reserves the right to refuse any entry.
- Each entrant must be in the appropriate school year group for each class. Group entries must belong to the specified year groupings. Class is determined by how old the pupil is on 31 August 2025.
- Performers in all ensemble classes must be bona fide members of the group concerned.
- Entrants may perform only once in each class except in duet, trio or ensemble classes where an entrant may perform more than once provided a different part is played.

GENERAL

- The Festival is for amateurs, which is defined as one who does not receive more than out-of-pocket expenses for services rendered in those branches of the arts with which the Festival is concerned. This rule does not apply to a conductor.
- The committee reserves the right to limit, cancel or subdivide any class.
- The committee reserves the right to substitute any adjudicator without notice.
- No photographs or recordings may be taken during any performance but may be taken after the performance with relevant permission.
- The Festival committee cannot accept responsibility for property left at the venues during the Festival.
- Class timings will be emailed to the entrant, parent or teacher who made the entry.

OWN CHOICE PIECES

13. A copy of Own Choice pieces (including choices from examination grades) must be provided for the adjudicator's use on the day and be marked with name and class number.
14. The festival does not provide an official accompanist. Electronic accompaniment (backing track) is permitted and must be provided on CD or via Bluetooth.
15. Time Limits apply to actual performance time, which does not include tuning time, setting of the stage or introduction. Time Limits will be strictly adhered to and if exceeded the performance may not be placed.

ASSESSMENT & AWARDS

16. Whilst performance in some classes has a competitive element, it is not an examination and the intention is to offer a performance opportunity in a supportive environment.
17. A category system as recommended by the British and International Federation of Festivals is used as a method of assessment and **the adjudicators decision is final.**
Outstanding; An exceptional performance technically and artistically
Distinction; An excellent performance technically and artistically
Commended; A convincing performance technically and artistically
Merit; A capable performance showing some artistically and technical ability
Moderate; A performance showing development of technique and/or communication
Fair; A performance limited in its communication at present
18. No entrant, teacher or interested party may discuss any aspect of the Festival with an Adjudicator before, during or after classes, except at the invitation of the Adjudicator.
19. Every entrant will receive a performance certificate and the adjudicator's comments. After adjudication, certificates and awards will be presented. Awards may be withheld if, in the opinion of the adjudicator, sufficient merit is not shown.
20. Trophies remain the property of the Northampton Festival and should be returned to the Trophies Secretary one month prior to the next Festival.

COPYRIGHT

21. It is the entrant's responsibility to follow the 1956 and 1988 Copyright Acts. The Music Publishers' Association has updated its Code of Practice for own-choice works taken from published volumes. If a piece is chosen from a book containing several works and is not available as a separate publication, one copy may be made for the adjudicator. This copy will be kept by the Festival and destroyed after the event. This permission does not apply to set works, nor to making copies for accompanists who must always be given an original copy from which to play. Single copies of items may not be photocopied without the prior permission of the copyright holder. For further information please visit the British & International Federation of Festivals website: [federation copyright details](#)
22. Our Speech and Drama section is pleased to announce that it has entered into an agreement with the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society. This means that performers do not have to seek Copyright permission for any poetry, prose or solo dramatic items performed to a limit of 10 minutes. Performers and teachers will be delighted to know that their participation in this Festival means that authors will be directly reimbursed as a consequence of their works being performed at this Festival.
23. Solo dramatic items must be announced with title and author at the time of performance to qualify for copyright indemnity, and the performer must not change the words or gender of the character.
24. Duologues and group dramatic activity are not covered by this agreement and copyright for these items should be sought by performers at time of entry.
25. Performers in Own Choice verse classes will be required to submit a copy to the Adjudicator's Steward stating TITLE – AUTHOR - PUBLISHER.

Child Protection Policy



The British and International Federation of Festivals for Music, Dance and Speech work for amateur festivals everywhere to help create thousands of educational performance opportunities for children and young people each year.

The Federation, and our member Festivals, are committed to ensuring safe environments for children and young people and believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to recommend best practice which protects them.

This policy applies to our Board of Trustees, paid staff, Adjudicator members, volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of the Federation and our member Festivals.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of the policy:

- to provide protection for the children and young people who participate in our festivals, including the children of festival members.
- to provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child, or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of harm.

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and safe working practice for staff and volunteers.
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and safe working practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT THE FESTIVAL?

SPONSORSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTION

We are a self-financing charitable organisation run by a team of dedicated volunteers. We need help financially, to enable the Festival - your Festival - to maintain a service of the highest quality and to plan future festivals with confidence.

FRIENDS & SPONSORS

Members of the public are invited to support the Festival financially by becoming Friends or Sponsors.

Friends are invited to subscribe a minimum of £20 per annum towards the Festival costs. Sponsors are invited to subscribe a minimum of £30 per annum of which this year, £20 will be used to purchase a voucher to be presented to the winner of a class selected by the Sponsor. These figures are subject to review at the discretion of the Committee. Class Sponsors have the opportunity to select the class for which their award will be made, subject to that class not already being sponsored. If the chosen class has insufficient entries to justify an award, the committee will decide to whom to award the sponsorship.

Sponsors are encouraged to present their own award where possible, but we ask that they make themselves known to the Adjudicator's Steward before the class commences. Further details may be obtained from the Secretary or the Treasurer

ENDOWMENT FUND

It has become increasingly difficult for the festival committee to administer the present system of trophies and to bear the insurance costs. It is therefore the Committee's aim to develop an Endowment Fund and to encourage future donors to support the Festival by contributing to the fund from which awards can be made, existing events encouraged, and new ones sponsored.

Because of this, the Committee has decided not to accept further gifts of any kind of trophy. If anyone wishes to make a donation, that generosity will be recorded in a list published in the festival programme. This may well be relevant to commemorate someone as a form of memorial.

If this is something which appeals to you, please get in touch with the Treasurer or the General Secretary who will be delighted to discuss the possibility with you.

Entries close 31st March 2026

Enter online via www.northamptonfestival.co.uk