



Assistant Director of Music

Information for Applicants

September 2026



Independent boarding and day school for boys aged 4 - 13 years.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Summer Fields is one of the premier boys' prep and pre-prep schools in the country, situated in 70 acres of superb grounds in North Oxford. The school has an excellent academic and musical reputation and is extremely well resourced.

We are seeking to appoint an Assistant Director of Music to join a vibrant and thriving department. The successful candidate will be a qualified musician who will be happy to teach academic music from Reception to Year 8, as well as support all the extra-curricular music-making within the Department and all the pupils who undertake individual music lessons.

The Department has its own well-equipped building and continues to thrive. Over 100 boys take external music exams (mainly ABRSM) each term, with most achieving Distinctions or Merits. Exams range from Grade 1 to post Grade 8, with some boys reaching Diploma level. Each year, senior boys apply for music awards to senior schools; this year, two boys received Music Scholarships to Eton College.

Music-making is extensive at Summer Fields, with two orchestras, a wind/jazz band, and numerous smaller ensembles, and three choirs. One of the choirs is an outstanding four-part Chapel Choir that sings at all the major services throughout the school year, performs in Oxford Colleges, at charity concerts, and has toured Europe and New York. Pupils perform regularly in weekly assemblies and a wide variety of concerts throughout the year, from intimate events like the Guitar Concert to large-scale productions such as the League Music Competition and the Battle of the Bands. More than 75% of the boys learn at least one instrument, with many learning two or three. We offer a wide range of individual lessons, from tuned percussion and organ to harp and bassoon, taught by a team of over 20 visiting peripatetic staff.

The successful candidate will work alongside the Director of Music and will contribute fully to the life of a busy boarding school, including duties, games, activities and pastoral responsibilities. They must have fine keyboard skills and be confident accompanying boys in performances ranging from beginner to expert level. Ideally, they would also be a confident organist able to accompany our Chapel services and on occasions when the Chapel Choir are singing outside school.

This is an ideal opportunity to work in a prestigious independent school in a beautiful location in Summertown. Benefits include a generous flexible pension scheme with salary exchange options, life assurance and income protection. There is also access to an Employee Assistance Programme, an annual flu vaccination, a contributory private healthcare scheme; lunch during term-time, onsite parking, and discount on holiday activity clubs run on site.

Please apply by submitting a fully completed application form with a cover letter addressed to Mr David Faber, Headmaster. To satisfy the requirements for safer recruitment, we need to ask you for your full employment record. Details of any gaps between jobs or between finishing education and employment must be provided. If you have a CV you wish to send, please do so, however a completed application form with full employment history must still be provided. Applications should be saved as Word or PDF files and emailed to recruitment@summerfields.com by the closing date of Sunday 10th May 2026.

Summer Fields is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we expect all staff to share this commitment. All staff must adhere to, and ensure compliance with, the school's safeguarding policies and procedures in the context of their role. Successful applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER, DAVID FABER MA

Thank you for your interest in Summer Fields and, in particular, in the role of Assistant Director of Music. I am delighted that you are considering our school and I hope that you will wish to apply for this position once you have found out more about us.

Summer Fields was founded in 1864 by Archibald and Gertrude Maclaren at their home in north Oxford. Mrs Maclaren was a gifted classical scholar and Mr Maclaren was a fencing master and owner of an Oxford gymnasium, with a passionate belief in the importance of physical fitness. It is from these roots that our school motto was born: *Mens sana in corpore sano*, A healthy mind in a healthy body. The Maclarens established the importance of a breadth of education inside and outside the classroom, values which remain central to the education we offer today.

Summer Fields is a full-boarding and day school for boys aged 4 to 13. There are currently approximately 310 boys on the roll and the school. We offer excellent teaching, traditional values and exceptional pastoral care. We continue to build on a strong academic legacy with an individual focus on strengthening each boy's confidence and abilities.



Summer Fields is a special place and pastoral care is very strong. The school is a vibrant, extended family of staff and boys, living side-by-side in a busy, caring and friendly boarding community. We aim to ensure that each boy is happy, academically challenged and is taking full advantage of life at Summer Fields, with its many possibilities and opportunities. Our most recent ISI inspection, in June 2025, was glowing in all respects and is easily available online.

Summer Fields celebrated its 160th birthday in 2024 and recent years have seen the redevelopment of various areas of the school. The Salata Pavilion provides sports changing and other facilities, and what was New Room now provides a state-of-the-art new school library, including an archive room, a periodicals room and associated teaching rooms in what is the oldest and largest teaching space in the school. The £2.5m project, completed during lockdown, included a major refurbishment of the school Chapel, as well as the DT and Learning Support areas.

The school is thriving at all levels and in 2018 we entered an exciting new phase in our history with the opening of a brand-new Summer Fields Pre-prep school, catering for boys from Reception to Year 3. The school is housed in a stand-alone building, Newton, one of the oldest and most historic buildings on the school's 70-acre site. The building underwent a complete re-development, including the addition of a striking, modernist new extension; it now provides purpose-built facilities for up to 80 boys aged 4 to 8.

I recognise that a great deal of thought and time goes into preparing such an application and I assure you that I will, in turn, give your application serious consideration.

ACADEMIC RECORD

Academic standards and outcomes are high. The principal entry point to the prep school is in Year 4, although a few boys join in Years 5, 6 and 7 depending on places being available. Some 20 boys will join the prep school from the Pre-prep each year, in addition to those joining directly, both boarders and day boys, in Year 4. Admission is by selection. The aspirations of boys and parents are high and the school prides itself on the outstanding exam results achieved by our leavers. The school's greatest academic strength is excellent teaching at all levels and we are proud of the academic achievements of boys of all abilities. Each year boys pass Common Entrance and regularly win scholarships to the top public schools in the country.

BOARDING

The boarding structure is horizontal, according to age, in six lodges (boarding houses), where the boys are usually looked after by a husband-and-wife team. Every boy has a personal tutor, responsible for overseeing all aspects of his life at school and with whom he meets regularly, one-to-one. In addition, a boy can seek help from lodge parents, form takers, the Head Sister, and, of course, the Headmaster.

The school is set within 70 acres of grounds and is extremely well resourced with many outstanding and modern facilities, which are continually enhanced. In addition to the academic curriculum, sport plays an important part in the life of the school, as does music, art, design and technology and drama; recent results in music scholarship exams, in particular, have been outstanding. All these activities, and many others, are extremely well provided for. The Chapel is at the heart of the school, both literally and figuratively.



TEACHING AT SUMMER FIELDS

The school recognises that its teachers are its most valuable asset and seeks to recruit and retain the very best qualified and most enthusiastic academic staff, who can communicate their knowledge and passion for a subject to the boys. Our teachers' primary aim is to develop the boys' intellectual curiosity, interest and enjoyment in an atmosphere of mutual respect and discipline. The supportive boarding community is particularly conducive to developing these qualities.



All members of staff are expected to show a willingness to play a full part in the life of a busy boarding and day school and to assist with, and contribute to, games, the boarding routine and other duties and activities within the wider school community.

The school has its own salary scheme and the salary offered will depend on ability and experience. Members of staff who have children attending the school will be eligible to receive a significant discount on the fees. Other benefits include a generous flexible pension scheme with salary exchange options, life assurance and income protection. There are also extensive continuing professional development opportunities, access to an Employee Assistance Programme, annual flu vaccination, a contributory private healthcare scheme; onsite parking, and discount on holiday activity clubs run on site.

THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Pupils of all ages and abilities participate in a wide variety of music groups, choirs, orchestras and several instrumental ensembles. This includes the chapel choir, which sings regularly at many Oxford Colleges in addition to other major venues which have, in the past, included Westminster Cathedral and St George's Chapel.

Approximately over 75% of the boys learn an instrument at Summer Fields. With over 260 individual lessons taught every week, and with ensembles ranging from full orchestras to rock bands and string quartets, there is a huge amount of music-making to get involved in and enjoy.

Music is taught as a regular timetabled lesson, with focus on history, performance, musical appreciation and theoretical awareness. All boys gain experience on the violin, recorder, ukulele and keyboards, with senior year groups extending their studies into extended pieces of composition. We encourage the boys to perform as much as possible. A beginner may start with a short piece in front of his peers in an assembly and be part of a larger group in our League music competition. Later, they may take part in one of our many Coffee Concerts; or perform solo in the Summer Concert or in external music competitions.

Our two choirs are perhaps the pinnacle of our music making. They perform in chapel services, and in many other locations throughout the year. Their repertoire is ambitious and wide-ranging, and they enjoy a reputation approaching that of dedicated UK choir schools. Many pupils have exceptional ability and are encouraged to enter for a Music Scholarship to their senior school. Summer Fields has an impressive track record here, gaining scholarships and exhibitions to many top schools.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The school is fully committed to the principles of equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion. Summer Fields does not discriminate on the grounds of race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability. Applications are welcome from a diverse range of backgrounds.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Assistant Director of Music

Reporting to: Director of Music, Deputy Headmaster, Headmaster

Purpose of the Job

To assist the Director of Music with the running of the music department and the musical life of the school.

The successful candidate will join a close-knit team and help manage a highly successful and dynamic department. This will include working with the pupils regardless of ability, striving to help them reach their full musical potential. Each year awards are gained to leading public schools including two recent full music scholarships to Eton. Equally importantly, many other boys have taken tuition and have been able to reach a level which reflects their ability, even if that is only Grade 2 standard. Our ABRSM average mark is a high Merit and we enter over 100 pupils a year for examinations ranging from Prep Test to Grade 8 and ARSM on everything from piano to organ and tuned percussion to harp.

The department is supported by over 20 instrument-specific visiting peripatetic staff. The successful candidate will assist the Director of Music in making them feel welcomed, helping to manage their teaching and the regular appraisal of them as teachers. The successful candidate may also be required to teach some individual tuition as part of their timetable. Currently there is a vacancy for an organ teacher and this may be part of the role for the successful candidate if they are interested in teaching this instrument.

Main duties

The precise responsibilities of the successful candidate are subject to any particular strengths he/she might have. However, the general responsibilities will include:

- Teach music lessons to all year groups both in the Pre-prep
- and the main Prep School (currently this covers Reception up to Year 8) including working alongside several instrumental specialist teachers in class group instrumental tuition.
- Help to prepare pupils for formal and informal concerts held throughout the academic year.
- Assist the Director of Music with the management of a team of visiting music specialists.
- Assist the Director of Music in appointing new members of peripatetic staff to the department.
- Assist the Director of Music with the induction and training of new peripatetic staff if required.
- Work with the pupils in preparation for public examinations (ABRSM, Trinity, etc.) and music competitions.
- Support the Director of Music in preparing boys for public school Scholarships.
- Assist the Director of Music with the administration of the department including areas such as the supervision of individual practise sessions and music ordering.
- Assist with orchestral rehearsals and the many chamber groups which take place each week. Many of these are overseen by the peripatetic staff, although assistance is required from time to time. The successful candidate would train and conduct the Second Orchestra with help from the Director of Music.
- Help with musical performances at weekly school assemblies.
- Train the Treble Choir for regular performances in Chapel and outside the school.
- Assist the Director of Music and the School Chaplain in preparing music for all Chapel services.

- Assist with regular musical productions as and when required.
- Play the organ in Chapel (if the successful candidate is an organist) accompany the Chapel Choir (the senior, four-part choir made up of boys and staff) on the organ.
- Assist with taking responsibility for the upkeep of books, instruments, and other resources.
- Follow all the school and departmental policies on assessment, recording and marking.
- Read notices displayed in the staff room, especially the “24-hour board”.
- Follow the Report Procedure and make sure that reports are written to a high standard.
- Carry out any additional responsibility which the Director of Music may reasonably request from time to time.

All Teachers are also expected to:

- Undertake supervisory duties as required by the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Head of Boarding, as they may reasonably direct.
- Undertake at least one evening duty in a boarding Lodge each week.
- Participate in all relevant meetings in the school.
- Support school functions and activities whenever possible.
- When necessary, supervise boys and cover for absent colleagues as directed.
- Attend school before the start of term and after the end of term (up to three days before or after) to make necessary preparations as required by the Head of Department, Deputy Headmaster and the Headmaster.
- Attend school lunch and help promote good manners and civilised behaviour in the dining room.
- Enforce all school rules (which may be summarised as “Do as you would be done by”).
- Attend weekday Chapel or Assembly and also the Sunday Service.
- Regularly contribute to the school’s programme of extra-curricular activities.
- Be responsible for the promoting and safeguarding the welfare of pupils.

General Requirements

- Summer Fields is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we expect all staff to share this commitment. All staff must adhere to, and ensure compliance with, the school’s safeguarding policies and procedures in the context of their role.
- Comply with all aspects of the school’s Staff Code of Conduct.
- Maintain high professional standards of attendance, punctuality, appearance and conduct.
- Maintain positive, courteous relations with students, parents and colleagues.
- Regularly contribute to the school’s programme of extra-curricular activities.
- Maintain good order and discipline among pupils and to support and contribute to the school’s responsibility for safeguarding their students.
- Attend major school events.
- Support and promote the ethos of the school.
- Adhere to school policies and procedures.
- Comply with all health and safety procedures as required by the school, including the completion of Risk Assessments as and when required.
- Carry out any other task or duty as reasonably required by the by the Headmaster or Deputy Headmaster.

APPLICATION AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS GUIDANCE NOTES

Summer Fields is committed to ensuring the best possible environment for the children and young people in its care. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is our highest priority. The school aims to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

APPLICATION

- Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the relevant Application Form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms but are permitted to be submitted alongside a completed Application Form.
- Candidates should be aware that all posts in the school involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. Please see the job description for the post. If you are invited to attend a formal interview your suitability to work with children will be assessed.
- As the job for which you are applying involves substantial opportunity for access to children, it is important that you provide us with legally accurate answers.
- The successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure Form from the Disclosure and Barring Service (“DBS”) for the post and, where appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS will be made. Any offers of appointment will be made conditional on obtaining such satisfactory checks. Additionally, successful applicants should be aware that they are required to notify the school immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children.
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 apply to those providing early years childcare or later years childcare, including before school and after school clubs, to children who have not attained the age of 8 and to those who are directly concerned in the management of that childcare.
- The school takes its responsibility to safeguard children very seriously and any staff member and/or successful candidate who is aware of anything that may affect his/her suitability to work with children must notify the school/their manager immediately. This will include notification of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings he/she may receive.
- Staff and/or successful candidates who are disqualified from childcare or registration may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification. Such individuals may not be employed in the areas from which they are disqualified, or involved in the management of those settings, unless and until such waiver is confirmed. Please speak to the HR Manager for more details.
- The school has a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’. This is known as the Prevent duty. Schools are required to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Accordingly, as part of the recruitment process, when an offer is made the offer will be subject to a Prevent duty risk assessment.
- If you are currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether you have been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. Any information about past disciplinary action or substantiated allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual.

- If you are not currently working with children but have done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues. Where neither your current nor previous employment has involved working with children, your current employer will still be asked about your suitability to work with children. Where you have no previous employment history, we may request character references which may include references from your school or university.
- You should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if you have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and/or DBS.

CONDITIONAL OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon the following criteria:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received), including for internal appointments. All references should be provided by a senior person with appropriate authority, subject to the satisfaction of the school. All referees will be asked if the candidate is suitable to work with children. The school will compare any information provided by the referee with that provided by the candidate on the application form. Any inconsistencies will be discussed with the candidate.
- Verification of identity and qualifications including evidence of the right to work in the UK.
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS check and if appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS.
- For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the historic General Teaching Council for England before its abolition in March 2012.
- Verification of professional qualifications, including, where applicable, any award of Qualified Teacher Status.
- Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas, such checks and confirmations as the school may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. This shall include the candidate providing the school with proof of his/her past conduct as a teacher in the form of a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which he/she has worked.
- Verification of medical fitness for the role in accordance with DfE Circular 4/99 Physical and Mental Fitness to Teach.
- Where the role involves providing care for pupils under eight, receipt of a signed Self-Declaration form showing the candidate is not disqualified from providing childcare as set out in the statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (July 2018)".
- For a candidate to be employed into a senior management position as set out within the School's Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy and Procedure, receipt of a signed "senior charity manager positions: automatic disqualification declaration" confirming that the candidate is not disqualified from acting in a senior management position for a charity in accordance with the automatic disqualification rules for charities;
- If you are undertaking a management role, a check that you have not been prohibited from participating in the management of independent schools.

It is the school's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the school in strictest confidence and used as set out in the school's Staff Privacy Notice and Staff Information Security Policy. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed workload, extra-curricular activities, and layout of the school. The school is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.