



**NATIONAL
CHILDREN'S
ORCHESTRAS**
OF GREAT BRITAIN

Auditioned Activity 2026: Key facts

Who can audition for NCO?

All young musicians who:

- are aged 8-13 as of 31st August 2025,
- play an orchestral instrument
- are British citizens or live/study in the UK

We use grades as a guide to help us know roughly what standard children may be playing at, **but you do not need to have taken any formal grade exams**. A list of instruments and expected plying levels is available in our [Auditions Handbook](#). We accept auditions on cornet, drum kit, tenoroon/mini bassoon and treble clef reading brass for orchestras who meet for non-residential weekends.

What happens in NCO?

We have over 650 young musicians a year who come together to take part in one of seven auditioned orchestras for amazing music-making experiences. You can find out more in our films below.

(We also have non-auditioned orchestral activities – please ask us about these on the e-mail below.)

Our **auditioned** opportunities include:

- 3 orchestras for children from across the UK aged 11-14, who meet for 2 residential weeks during their membership year.
- 4 orchestras for children in different regions aged 8-14, who meet for 2 non-residential weekends during their membership year, in the North West or the Midlands or London.
- an online programme of webinars, orchestra meet-ups and resources.

Young musicians audition to take part in **Orchestral Weeks** or **Orchestral Weekends** or be considered for both.

Discover Orchestral Weeks:



Discover Orchestral Weekends:



How do you audition?

Auditioning is free by online form and video audition submission.

For full information, please visit NCO's website at [Auditioning for NCO | The National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain](#). Our Audition Handbook has a very helpful step by step guide of how to make a video. You don't need any fancy kit, just your phone camera will be fine!

Auditions are open from **Wed 14th May - 9am Thu 31st July 2025**

How much does it cost?

Our aim is that money doesn't create a barrier to a child hoping to take part in our activities. We want any young musician, no matter their background or circumstance, to have the opportunity to accept their offer of a place in NCO. **It is possible to have all or part of the fees paid for by our [Financial Support programme](#).**

Membership fees to take part in **two orchestral weekends** in 2026: £400

Membership fees to take part in **two orchestral weeks** in 2026:

Under 12 & Under 13 Orchestras £2100 / Under 14 Orchestra £2300

We are here for any questions you may have by emailing auditions@nco.org.uk