

The Kids Sing A Guide for Participants 2025



NZCF receives major funding from



ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND TOI AOTEAROA

ABOUT THE KIDS SING

The Kids Sing is a choral festival for primary and intermediate/full primary school choirs, aimed at developing performance skills and offering the option of constructive feedback from an NZCF adjudicator.

AIMS OF THE KIDS SING

- To foster participation in and the enjoyment of choral singing
- To encourage healthy vocal production and sound choral techniques
- To provide an opportunity for children and conductors to perform in a professional yet supportive environment, with the option of constructive feedback
- To provide professional development for leaders of children's choirs.



GENERAL INFORMATION

1. OPEN ENTRY

The Kids Sing is a festival of choral music open to schools and community choirs for young people at primary and intermediate age levels (up to, and including, year 8 students).

2. LEVELS OF ENTRY

There are three levels of entry:

a) Participation only – no feedback

Choirs can take part in The Kids Sing without receiving feedback and will receive a Participation Certificate.

b) Performance with feedback

Choirs who wish to perform with constructive feedback will be critiqued and provided with a written report (without grading), which may include comments on:

- **Intonation:** accuracy of pitch; overall tuning
- **Tone and Blend:** evenness of tone; overall blend of voices
- **Vocal Technique:** breath support; posture
- **Diction:** clarity of consonants; uniformity of vowels
- **Interpretation:** phrasing and expression; integrity to text; observance of performance markings (articulation, tempo, dynamics etc.)
- **Staging and Presentation:** visual impact; choral discipline; stage presence

A Performance Certificate will be provided.

c) Graded performance

These choirs will receive a critique on their performance (as for 2b) and also be graded. These choirs are eligible for Gold, Silver or Bronze awards and will be given an appropriate certificate.

For adjudication purposes, there are two categories of choirs:

- Primary (CP): up to, and including Year 6 students only
- Full Primary (FP)/Intermediate: up to and including Year 8 students

Full Primary (FP) choirs will be assessed at a slightly higher standard to the Contributing Primary (CP) choirs, reflecting their different stages of development.

	FP Grade	CP Grade
Gold	85% or more	80% or more
Silver	75-84%	70-79%
Bronze	65-74%	60-69%

3. ENTRY FEES

- a) The cost per singer in 2025 is \$2.00 to \$3.00 per singer, with a maximum of \$200.00 per school, as follows:

Number of singers Fee

Up to 20 singers	\$60
21-30 singers	\$75
31-40 singers	\$95
41-50 singers	\$125
51-60 singers	\$150
61-70 singers	\$180
Over 70	\$200

- b) Entry fees are not refundable in the event of withdrawal within three weeks of the Regional Event.
- c) Choirs withdrawing earlier than three weeks before the event are entitled to a refund of their fee, less an administration fee of \$40.00.
- d) Notice of withdrawal should be sent to the Regional Coordinator and the NZCF National Office. Completed entries must be received by NZCF no later than the regional festival's closing date (advised on our website).
- e) After this date, entries may still be accepted at the discretion of the Regional Coordinator but will incur a \$40.00 late entry fee.
- f) Schools are not permitted to participate in the festival if the entry fee has not been received by the date of the event.

4. FESTIVAL SONG

In some regions, a selection panel, comprising a Regional Committee member, the Regional Coordinator and the Adjudicator, will select an appropriate festival song (as a test or general participatory piece) and advise the participants about where to obtain scores.

5. HOW TO ENTER

Choirs should register online at <https://nzcf.org.nz/events/nzcf-events/kids-sing>.

6. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

Choirs are responsible for making their own travel and accommodation arrangements.

7. PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOS

Choirs may be photographed or videoed for NZCF publicity purposes. Schools that do not wish their children to be photographed or videoed must indicate this on the registration form.

8. CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

For all choirs

- a) A school may enter as many choirs as it wishes, and more than one school may combine to form a choir. Community children's choirs may also participate. All members of competing choirs must be involved in that choir's performance, although some solo or ensemble work is also permitted.
- b) A competing choir should have at least 12 singers, with no maximum number.
- c) Conductors, accompanists and backing musicians may be adults or students.
- d) Audio backing may be used where appropriate.
- e) Microphones may be used if appropriate to the musical style, e.g. vocal jazz.
- f) Choir directors and accompanying adults are responsible for the supervision of their choir/s at all times.

- g) Schools may photocopy up to five copies of each original piece of music for use with the school choirs as long as the school holds a current OneMusic licence - See section I) below.
- h) We encourage all choirs to learn the festival song (in regions where this applies) and/or one work by a New Zealand composer, although non-competing choirs are welcome to choose any repertoire.
- i) During the event there may be photographers taking photos. Please inform your students that there may be photos taken which may be used at a later date for publicity and seek permission from their parents if this is in accordance with your school policy.
- j) Schools and parents may record or photograph their own choir's performance but no flash photography is to be used.
- k) Choir directors will be requested to provide the Regional Coordinator with one published or clear manuscript copy (or words where no written music exists) of each piece to be sung. This is not required for choirs giving 'performance only without feedback' (category 2a).
- l) The school must hold a current OneMusic licence. <https://www.onemusicnz.com/music-licences/schools/> to apply for a licence, call 0800 663 486.
- m) Some regions may offer sound checks, determined by time constraints within the schedule. Whatever decision is made by the organising committee for that region will be applied to all choirs entered for that region's event, irrespective of choice of accompaniment.

For choirs giving a graded performance

Each choir must present a varied programme of three pieces of up to ten minutes total aggregate performance time, which includes a composition/arrangement by a New Zealand composer, and the festival song selected by the region in consultation with the adjudicator.

- a) Primary (CP) competing choirs should perform at least one piece in parts, or with a descant.
- b) Full Primary/Intermediate (FP) competing choirs should include at least two pieces sung in parts.

9. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

School choirs and their conductors are encouraged to participate in the NZCF Association of Choral Directors' professional development programmes. Information is available on our website <https://nzcf.org.nz/events/nzcf-events/giving-direction-and-singing-matters>

10. FREE ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP OF NEW ZEALAND CHORAL FEDERATION

Schools entering The Kids Sing (TKS) automatically receive associate membership of NZCF as part of their entry fee.

This entitles the school to:

- Associate membership of the largest choral network in New Zealand, with the NZCF representing the interests of some 21,000 members, drawn from approximately 230 chamber/community choirs, 320 school choirs and 400 individuals
- Subscription to eBreve - the NZCF monthly newsletter filled with useful information
- Invitations to attend educational events, such as choral workshops and courses on singing and conducting, run by top New Zealand and internationally-recognised choral practitioners

11. FREE MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CHORAL DIRECTORS

The school's conductor is entitled to complimentary membership of the Association of Choral Directors for the year of entry. This can be applied for during the registration process.

- complimentary access to [Musica International's virtual library](#)*
- access to NZCF's repertoire database*
- access to ACD's video channel *
- access to ACD advisors to work with conductors and choirs

- invitations to choral conducting workshops, conventions and other events
- preferential acceptance to NZCF and ACD workshops where numbers are limited
- a reduction (greater than that of personal members) on the entry fee to NZCF events
- the opportunity to network with other conductors
- a dedicated 'Conducting' section on the NZCF website with access to 'members only' educational resources
- monthly *eBreve*
- discounts on NZCF publications
- voting rights at NZCF elections and other meetings.

* access through Username and Password, provided on payment of the annual subscription

12. OPTIONAL: FULL CHOIR MEMBERSHIP OF NZCF

Choirs that enter The Kids Sing are able to take out full choir membership of NZCF at an annual cost of \$5.50 per singer (maximum \$105 per school).

Full choir membership benefits include:

- free website listing of the choir's profile and ability to list concert details/events free of charge on our home page.
- a Onemusic performing rights license
- optional assets and public liability insurance at a very low premium
- access to educational articles on singing and conducting on the NZCF website
- monthly NZCF *eBreve*
- invitations to attend educational events, such as choral workshops and courses on singing or conducting, run by top New Zealand and internationally-recognised choral practitioners
- acceptance at NZCF regional and nationally-organised events at discounted member rates
- opportunities to network and combine with other choral singers and conductors, for encouragement and sharing of information/resources
- advertising of vacancies etc. in *eBreve* and on our website at member rates
- voting rights at elections

For all membership enquiries, contact:

Ann Gibbard (NZCF Finance and Membership Manager)

Email: ann.gibbard@nzcf.org.nz

New Zealand Choral Federation, PO Box 188, Wellington 6140