



Ripon Cathedral and Ripon Grammar School

Sixth Form Organ Scholarship

September 2026

The Sixth Form Organ Scholarship is provided by **Ripon Cathedral** through its partnership with **Ripon Grammar School** and offers a unique opportunity to be trained as a cathedral organist while at the same time securing fee-assistance to board and study at one of the UK's leading state boarding grammar schools. **The successful applicant would take part in, and contribute to, the rich and varied musical life of both Ripon Cathedral and Ripon Grammar School.**

1. OPPORTUNITIES

Ripon Cathedral

- Use of the four-manual T. C. Lewis/Harrison & Harrison organ at Ripon Cathedral (1878, 1912, IV/59, newly refurbished in 2013), as well as the cathedral's two digital organs.
- Individually tailored course of organ lessons (one per week during term-time), including repertoire, improvisation, hymn-playing and cathedral-style accompaniment of the Anglican repertoire.
- Mentoring offered for university organ scholarship applications (Oxbridge etc).
- Bursary for organ lessons with one of the Cathedral Organists: ten 60-minute lessons per term (£60 per lesson): £1,800 per annum.
- Free choral conducting masterclasses, together with regular observation opportunities of Cathedral chorister rehearsals.
- Assistance with preparation for ABRSCM or RCO organ examination.
- As a member of the Cathedral Music Department, the organ scholar will be given opportunities to play and conduct in services, as part of their professional development.
- Assistance in preparing and organising an organ recital at a British cathedral.

Ripon Grammar School

- Tuition at an exceptional grammar school where educational outcomes are consistently strong.
- Study of either 3 or 4 A Levels from a broad list of subjects alongside RGS' innovative +1 programme.
- Membership of RGS' boarding community - either weekly or full boarding is provided. The Dean and Chapter of Ripon Cathedral offer successful candidates a Boarding Bursary of £2500 per annum. Fees and terms and conditions of boarding can be accessed here [Boarding Fees at Ripon Grammar School, North Yorkshire](#)
- Pastoral support within a supportive sixth form community
- Excellent careers programme and support with UCAS applications, including Oxbridge etc.

2. DUTIES

Precise duties and opportunities will vary depending on the Scholar's strengths and interests, but in general the Organ Scholar can expect to be heavily involved in the musical life of the School and the Cathedral.

Duties will normally include:

Ripon Cathedral

- Playing occasional organ voluntaries for services in the Cathedral.
- Accompanying the Cathedral Choir at services.
- Gaining experience by singing regularly with the Cathedral Choir.
- Observing and turning pages for the staff organists at the Cathedral.
- Assisting with Probationer/Chorister training (if needed).

Ripon Grammar School

- Being a music leader in the department.
- Commitment to Man Choir or Senior Girls Choir (Friday lunchtime) and Chamber Choir (Thursday 4pm-5pm).
- Accompanying groups where necessary and appropriate to skill level.
- Performing in at least one assembly per term.
- Supporting/assisting at open evenings and school events.

3. SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING CRITERIA

Academic and boarding criteria for entry to Ripon Grammar School

- Successful candidates will be expected to fulfil the normal entry criteria for RGS Sixth Form. This is a minimum 6 GCSEs at Grade 6 or 48 points from the candidate's best 8 GCSEs and at least Grade 4 in English and Mathematics GCSE [or equivalent qualifications for those not undertaking a GCSE curriculum] based on predicted grades and confirmed by GCSE results in August 2026.
- Boarders are assessed as 'suitable for boarding' through an interview and reference process and must fulfil UK residency or citizenship requirements to board at a UK state boarding school.

Musical criteria

- Successful candidates should be at ABRSM Grade 5 Level or above at the time of application and have achieved ABRSM Grade 7 or above on the piano. Previous choral experience as a singer or accompanist is advantageous.

4. HOW TO APPLY

Applications can be made by completing the Sixth Form Application and Suitability for Boarding forms which can be accessed here:

[Sixth Form - Ripon Grammar School](#)

The application deadline for entry in September 2026 is Friday 6th February 2026.

Once we have received the application form auditions and interviews will be arranged with candidates at a suitable time comprising:

Audition at Ripon Cathedral comprising the following elements:

- Performance of two prepared organ pieces of their choice, one by JS Bach, and on contrasting work, both of which should be at approximately Grade 5 standard.
- Sight reading tests [of approximately Grade 5/6 standard]
- Keyboard skills exercises, such as score reading and transposition. These are designed to test a candidate's potential and do not assume prior experience of these disciplines.
- Interview with the Cathedral's Director of Music and Assistant Director of Music and Ripon Grammar School's Director of Music.

Suitability for boarding interview

This will be an online interview with the Assistant Head of Boarding.

The successful applicant will be informed of their offer on or after 6th February 2026 and confirmed subject to fulfilling the school academic criteria in August 2026.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

We warmly invite parents of potential applicants to discuss all aspects of the Organ Scholarship with the Directors of Music of both the Cathedral and the Grammar School.

Ripon Cathedral – Music department
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+44 (0)1765603496300

Ripon Grammar – Music Department
Mr Michael Barker
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General enquiries about studying and boarding at Ripon Grammar School can be made by contacting Mrs Drummond, Admissions Officer. Tours can also be arranged by appointment.
admissions@ripongrammar.com
+44 (0)1765602647

Further information about boarding at RGS and boarding fees is available by visiting:
[Boarding at Ripon Grammar School](#)