

Kent Music

# Summer School

2026

Residential courses for  
musicians aged 8 - 19

9th - 27th July 2026  
Benenden School, Cranbrook



# Contents

- 4 [Welcome](#)
- 5 [Course Timetable](#)
- 6 [Wind Band](#)
- 8 [Music Explorers](#)
- 10 [Symphony Orchestra](#)
- 12 [Orchestra Experience Day](#)
- 14 [Musical Theatre](#)
- 16 [Piano](#)



- 18 [Music Technology Explorers](#)
- 20 [Summer Strings](#)
- 22 [Jazz](#)
- 24 [Song Writing](#)
- 26 [Summer Singing](#)
- 28 [Timetable](#)
- 29 [County Groups](#)
- 30 [FAQs](#)
- 34 [How to Apply](#)

# Welcome

Since joining Kent Music last year, I've met many people who tell me about attending Kent Music Summer School (KMSS) as a child. For all of them, it's clear how much this educational experience has shaped their musical journeys, from childhood and beyond.

At KMSS, I am struck by how much progress students make in such a short space of time. Specialist teaching, the chance to learn alongside other young people who love music, and the immersive environment all play a part. Together, they create a place where young musicians can truly flourish.

This year, the impact of KMSS will extend even further. For the first time, we're welcoming schools from across Kent and Medway to join us for dedicated visits during the school week. This will give more children the chance to experience large-scale music-making and specialist teaching.

I look forward to welcoming you to Kent Music Summer School in 2026 to celebrate music, incredible teaching, and the achievements of young musicians together.

## Gerry Sterling Chief Executive, Kent Music



# 2026 Course Timetable

# Wind Band

The Wind Band course is for woodwind, brass and percussion players with some experience who want to take their playing further as part of a large group.

You'll rehearse and perform with other young musicians, supported by experienced wind band tutors in sectional and full rehearsals.

On the course, you'll work on a wide range of music, from familiar favourites to traditional wind band repertoire. Along the way, you'll build confidence, improve your technique and strengthen your ensemble skills.

This course is ideal if you enjoy making music with others and want to experience the sound, scale and focus of playing in a large ensemble.

It's a great step towards Symphony Orchestra or Kent Music's advanced county ensembles like Kent Youth Wind Orchestra and Kent County Youth Orchestra.

- 📅 Thursday 9th - Tuesday 14th July
- 📍 Grades 2+
- 👤 Ages 8 - 19
- 💷 £450

(Financial Assistance available)

Final Performance:  
Tuesday 14th July

**Click here to apply today!**

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-windband](https://tinyurl.com/kmss26-windband)

**“Just wanted to say, wow, what a concert last night! Great standard and so enjoyable to watch and listen!”**



# Music Explorers

Music Explorers is for young instrumentalists at the very start of their musical journey.

If you've taken part in whole-class instrumental lessons at school, or have been learning an instrument for a few months and are ready to try playing with others.

You'll make music as part of a multi-instrument ensemble, learning alongside other young players of a similar age and experience. Through shared rehearsals, you'll build confidence and listening skills. The course is a great foundation for future courses like Summer Strings, Wind Band, Piano, Symphony Orchestra and Jazz.

Please contact [kmss@kent-music.com](mailto:kmss@kent-music.com) when you make your application if you would like us to provide an instrument.

- 📅 Saturday 11th - Sunday 12th July
- 🎸 Beginner to Grade 2
- 👤 Ages 8 - 13
- 💷 £150  
(Financial Assistance available)

Final Performance:  
Sunday  
12th July

**Click here to apply today!**

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-explorers](https://tinyurl.com/kmss26-explorers)

*Well organised, responsive to questions or requests, great facilities and fabulous teaching, fun. Concert was exciting for the children and a joy for the parents.*



# Symphony Orchestra

This course is for more advanced musicians who are ready to play as part of a full symphony orchestra.

You'll rehearse and perform with other young musicians, guided by professional orchestral tutors on core symphonic repertoire and explore a wider range of styles, including music from films and shows. Rehearsals focus on technique, interpretation and learning how to listen and respond as part of a large ensemble.

The course ends with a performance in the impressive Centenary Hall.

This course can be a great step towards Kent Music's highest-level orchestral ensemble, Kent County Youth Orchestra.

- 📅 Thursday 16th - Tuesday 21st July
- 📍 Grades 5+
- 👤 Ages 8 - 19
- 💷 £450

(Financial Assistance available)

Final Performance:  
Tuesday 21st July

[\*\*Click here to apply today!\*\*](#)

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-symphony](https://tinyurl.com/kmss26-symphony)

*“We couldn't believe how wonderful the standard was and how much repertoire was covered. It was incredible! The children played with a professional vigour and understanding of the music.*



# Symphony Orchestra Experience Day

This experience day is for orchestral players who want to explore what the next stage of their musical journey could look like.

You'll play alongside members of the Symphony Orchestra and work with the course conductor and specialist tutors.

Across the day, you'll rehearse as part of a full symphony orchestra. You'll build ensemble skills, confidence and musical awareness in a supportive and encouraging setting.

This day is suited to players of: Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Bassoon, French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba and Orchestral Percussion.

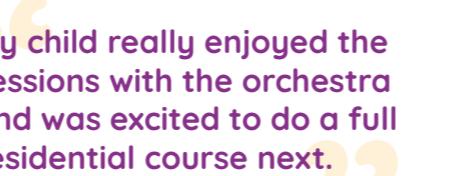
This is a non-residential course, but you'll still experience the Benenden School environment, including lunch. Places are limited, so early booking is recommended.

-  Saturday 18th July
-  Grades 4 - 6
-  Ages 11 - 19
-  £20

Lunch and  
refreshments  
provided

[Click here to apply today!](#)

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-symph-exp](http://tinyurl.com/kmss26-symph-exp)

 My child really enjoyed the sessions with the orchestra and was excited to do a full residential course next.



# Musical Theatre

This five-day course is for young performers who want to build their skills in singing, acting and movement.

During the course, you'll take part in an intensive musical theatre experience with dedicated tutors and explore a wide range of repertoire and performance styles. This includes contemporary, concept musicals, rock opera, jukebox and light opera.

Practical workshops include physical theatre, improvisation and audition technique. You'll build confidence and performance skills while working closely with others in a collaborative group.

The course ends with a performance in the Benenden School Theatre.

For singers who want to take things further, this course can support moving into Kent Youth Choir.

- 📅 Thursday 16th - Monday 20th July
- 📍 No experience needed
- 👤 School years 7+
- 💷 £375

(Financial Assistance available)

Final Performance:  
Monday 20th July

[Click here to apply today!](#)

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-theatre](http://tinyurl.com/kmss26-theatre)

*We were amazed at how much the students had learnt in such a short space of time and the wide variety of musical theatre styles they encountered. What an energetic, feel good performance!*



# Piano

This course is for pianists who want to develop their playing and share music with others.

You'll work in a supportive group setting and have time to focus on your own playing, take part in group workshops, guided sessions and individual practice time.

The course focuses on technique, performance skills and musical interpretation. You'll also have time to share your progress, learn from others and pick up new ideas for your own practice.

You're encouraged to bring a piece you're currently working on, especially one that's nearly ready to perform. The course ends with an informal performance where you'll share what you've learned. Places are limited, so early booking is recommended.

For some pianists, this course can lead on to creative courses such as Jazz or Song Writing.

- 📅 Saturday 18th - Sunday 19th July
- 📍 Grades 4 - 6
- 👤 School years 7+
- 💷 £150  
(Financial Assistance available)

Final Performance:  
Sunday  
19th July

[Click here to apply today!](#)

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-piano](https://tinyurl.com/kmss26-piano)

*The course gave our son the opportunity to develop his confidence and work on some of his grade material in more detail. He loved having access to great pianos.*



# Music Tech Explorers

Music Tech Explorers is for young people who are curious about how music is made using technology.

Whether you're completely new to music tech or already experimenting with sounds and software, you'll be supported to compose and produce your own original track.

Across the course, you'll explore building rhythms and audio loops, shaping musical ideas, and changing instrument sounds using samplers and built-in synthesisers. You'll work step by step, developing your ideas through composition and production. The course is guided by a dedicated tutor throughout.

At the end of the course, your finished music will be exported as an MP3 for you to keep and share at home. All equipment is provided.

- 📅 Saturday 18th - Sunday 19th July**
- 📍 No experience needed**
- 👤 Ages 10 -12**
- 💷 £150**  
(Financial Assistance available)

Take your finished music home with you!

**Click here to apply today!**

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-tech](https://tinyurl.com/kmss26-tech)

**“**  
Brand new for Kent Music Summer School 2026! Explore and produce your own original music with tech.  
**”**



# Summer Strings

Summer Strings is for violin, viola, cello and double bass players who want to play music with others and build confidence as part of a group.

Rehearse in one of two string orchestras, matched to your experience, and work closely with experienced tutors. You'll take part in sectional and full rehearsals, helping you improve your technique and understand how your part fits into the wider music.

Everyone on the course also sings together as a choir, supporting listening skills and musical teamwork.

The course ends with a performance in the impressive Centenary Hall.

This course can lead on to the Symphony Orchestra course, or Kent County Youth Orchestra.

**Click here to apply today!**

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-strings](https://tinyurl.com/kmss26-strings)

Scan the QR code or visit:  
[tinyurl.com/kmss26-strings](https://tinyurl.com/kmss26-strings)

- 📅 Wednesday 22nd - Friday 24th July
- 📍 Grades 1 - 5
- 👤 Ages 8 - 19
- 💷 £225

(Financial Assistance available)

Final Performance:  
Friday 24th July

**“**  
The teachers were first class keeping the kids so focus and engaged and happy! And the results were amazing. My daughters came out buzzing.

**Want to push your skills even further?**

You might enjoy the Symphony Orchestra Experience Day (page 12) alongside this course.



# Jazz

This course gives you the chance to explore a range of jazz styles in both small groups and larger ensembles.

Play with other musicians and learn how jazz works through listening, playing and experimenting together. You'll get involved creatively and try out improvisation, with support from professional jazz musicians throughout the course.

Explore ideas, take risks and develop your confidence as a jazz player. The course ends with a performance for family and friends.

All instruments are welcome if you're at the right level, though the course is particularly suited to brass, wind and rhythm section instruments. Some instrument places are limited, especially rhythm section, so early booking is recommended.

This course can support progression into Wind Band, Symphony Orchestra, Song Writing, or advanced groups like Kent Youth Wind Orchestra and Kent County Youth Orchestra.

Wednesday 22nd - Friday 24th July

Grades 2+

Ages 8 - 19

£225

(Financial Assistance available)

Final Performance:  
Friday 24th July

[Click here to apply today!](#)

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-jazz](http://tinyurl.com/kmss26-jazz)

**“**Jazz turned out to be 'the best time ever', for my daughter... she had a fantastic few days, making wonderful music and lots of new friends. **”**



# Song Writing

This course is for anyone who wants to explore songwriting and develop their own ideas.

You'll work both on your own and with others, with support from experienced tutors throughout, looking at how contemporary songs are put together, from structure and lyrics to arrangement.

Experiment, try things out and develop your ideas in a supportive space.

You don't need to play an instrument to take part, but live instruments will be used where helpful. The course ends with a concert for family and friends.

This course can support progression into Jazz, Wind Band, Symphony Orchestra and all County Groups.

- 📅 Wednesday 22nd - Friday 24th July
- 📍 No experience needed
- 👤 School year 7+
- ⌚ £225  
(Financial Assistance available)

Final Performance:  
Friday 24th July

[Click here to apply today!](#)

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-song-writing](http://tinyurl.com/kmss26-song-writing)

“  
It built my child's confidence and encouraged creativity...gave him a new experience. Impressive performance at the end.



# Summer Singing

This course is for young singers who want to develop their singing and enjoy making music with others.

You'll sing alongside like-minded young people from across the county in a friendly and supportive setting, with experienced tutors who are skilled at working with this age group.

Together, you'll sing a wide range of accessible and engaging music, developing good vocal habits and musical skills. This includes singing in unison and in parts, as well as rounds. You'll explore different styles, from pop and gospel to choral music and more.

For some singers, Summer Singing can be a step towards Musical Theatre, Song Writing, or Kent Youth Choir.

■ Saturday 25th - Monday 27th July

■ No experience needed

■ Ages 8 - 13

■ £225

(Financial Assistance available)

Final Performance:  
Monday 27th July

**Click here to apply today!**

Or visit: [tinyurl.com/kmss26-singing](https://tinyurl.com/kmss26-singing)

**“**My daughter gave the course 10/10. Fun, friendly teachers and a busy itinerary along with amazing food made this a very enjoyable experience all round.





# A day at KMSS

## Example of a typical day:

- 08:15 Breakfast
- 09:00 Daily Messages (short meeting for students and staff)
- 09:15 First Music session
- 11:00 Refreshments
- 11:30 Second Music session
- 13:00 Lunch
- 13:45 Third Music session
- 15:00 Organised social and sports activities and free time
- 16:00 Refreshments
- 16:30 Fourth Music Session
- 18:00 Dinner
- 18:45 Fifth Music Session
- 19:45 Refreshments
- 20:00 Organised social and sports activities and free time
- 21:00 - Bedtime (times vary by age)
- 22:00

Course timetables will be issued when you arrive.

During free time, the students can choose to join organised activities, play music in smaller groups they have arranged themselves or simply relax on their own or with friends.

Students can relax in the grounds or in the boarding house common room where a TV and board games are also available to use.



## County Groups

Kent Music Summer School isn't the only music-making happening at Benenden during the summer.

Alongside KMSS, Kent Music's three County Groups also run their annual summer courses.

**Kent Youth Wind Orchestra (KYWO):** woodwind, brass and percussion players.

**Kent Youth Choir (KYC)** singers of all voice types.

**Kent County Youth Orchestra (KCYO)** orchestral players.

County Groups bring together young musicians from across Kent & Medway. You'll rehearse at a high level, work with professional tutors and conductors, and perform in concerts through the year. They are auditioned groups, and we welcome interest from a wide range of young people.

For many students, the journey starts at Summer School. Wind Band can take you to KYWO, Symphony Orchestra to KCYO, Summer Singing can lead to KYC, and more. From there you can reach amazing places!



Learn more about County Groups, including how to audition:

🌐 [www.kent-music.com/county-groups](http://www.kent-music.com/county-groups)

✉️ [countygroups@kent-music.com](mailto:countygroups@kent-music.com)

▶ [www.youtube.com/@KentMusicUK](http://www.youtube.com/@KentMusicUK)



# FAQs

## Are auditions required?

Auditions are not required. Placement in groups will be made after careful consideration of the standard and experience of the student as indicated on the booking form together with the need to ensure instrumental and vocal balance. Experience and grades for courses indicate the level of ability required. It is not necessary to have taken grade exams but students must be studying at the level given.

## My child has special educational needs or a disability - can they still attend?

We aim to make courses accessible for all to attend. Please contact Kent Music to discuss your child's requirements before completing the application.

## What is included in the fee?

Here is a list of some items covered by the fee: Tuition, music, music stands, accommodation, bedding, towels, food and drink (breakfast/lunch/dinner/three refreshment sessions per full day), pastoral team, nurse, student welfare officer, use of leisure facilities, sports team, free access to end of course performances. All courses are partially subsidised by Kent County Council and Arts Council England, helping make KMSS accessible to as many young musicians as possible.

## What time do courses start?

Registration on the first day is between 08:30am and 10am. We will let you know of your specific registration time in advance.

## What if school is still in session on the course dates?

Kent Music Summer School is an approved music education programme.

While families should always follow their school's attendance policies, the Department for Education does not classify attending our courses as missing school, as it is an approved educational activity.

If your chosen course takes place during term time, please discuss this with your school as soon as possible to confirm and follow their processes.

Where helpful, Kent Music is happy to provide information about the educational value of Summer School, or to speak directly with schools.

For more detail, including a template letter for your school and further guidance, see the FAQs on our [Summer School webpage](#).

## Who are the staff?

The Music Team of conductors, tutors, accompanists, vocal and instrumental coaches are experts in their field. A qualified child safeguarding officer, nurse and a team of experienced pastoral staff are present throughout.

Our Pastoral Team are experienced in supporting young people during their stay ensuring their safety, comfort and well-being throughout. Pastoral team members stay in the same accommodation houses as the students so there is always someone on hand to help if needed.

We engage a Student Welfare Officer who remains on-site during all courses and is available should any student wish to talk with someone other than the music or pastoral team. All Kent Music Summer School and Benenden School staff members have Full Disclosure DBS certificates and are current with Child Safeguarding training. In addition to an on-site nurse, many of the team have first aid training.

## What if my child has another commitment during the course?

We understand sometimes there are existing commitments where you may need to arrive late or be off-site for a time during the course. Please ask for an off-site/late arrival request form from [kmss@kent-music.com](mailto:kmss@kent-music.com)

Please note that unfortunately students cannot miss the entire first day of courses. This will result in missing important practical information as well as initial rehearsals, both of which are vital to your Summer School experience.

## Can my child be non-residential?

It is our belief young musicians gain maximum benefit from being residential where they can join both the musical and social aspects of the course. If you prefer them not to stay overnight this can be arranged, however please bear in mind that you will need to drop-off at 8.45am and collect at 8.15pm each day except for the first morning and post-concert collection.

There is no reduction in fee for being non-residential. Please email [kmss@kent-music.com](mailto:kmss@kent-music.com) if you would like them to attend on a non-residential basis.

## Why can't a full refund be given for withdrawal?

We must employ staff and give expected course attendance numbers approx. 6 weeks before the start of KMSS. This means that by 1st June, Kent Music is committed to financial outlay on your behalf for the booked place on course. For this reason, it is essential you read and understand the cancellation and refund terms to know your entitlement.

In exceptional circumstances e.g., student illness or accident, where a doctor and/or hospital certificate is provided to support the withdrawal, we will only retain the £35 deposit.

## What do I need to bring with me?

You only need to bring your personal items for the length of your course. Bedding, food and towels will be provided. You will also need to bring your own instrument (if required for the course). If you already own instrument accessories, e.g. mute, please bring them with you. If you play a bowed string instrument, please bring spare strings. We do have access to a small allocation of instruments if you don't have your own.

Please contact [kmss@kent-music.com](mailto:kmss@kent-music.com) when you make your application if you need us to provide an instrument. Instrument hire will incur a small additional cost which will be a maximum of £20.00 (depending on length of hire and instrument type).

Instrument hire will be free of charge to students in receipt of financial assistance.

## Is the food provided suitable for children with allergies or specific dietary requirements?

A wide selection of food is available at each of the daily meals - breakfast, lunch and dinner. There are a variety of milks available including almond, soya and hazelnut as well as skimmed and semi skimmed dairy milks. There is a separate toaster provided for gluten-free bread and there are gluten-free and vegetarian options available at all mealtimes. Food served at the counter is nut-free.

If you require a different diet, e.g., vegan, this can be provided as long as we are given sufficient notice. When booking, you will have the opportunity to let us know your requirements.

## How do I access financial assistance?

We have a Financial Assistance scheme for those who need additional support to attend Kent Music activities, including lessons, groups, courses and Summer School. If you require financial assistance for Kent Music Summer School courses, please visit our Financial Assistance web page at [www.kent-music.com/financial-assistance/](http://www.kent-music.com/financial-assistance/). You will need to download a form specifically for County Groups and Summer School activities and return it to our team - full instructions for this are on the web page.

For further information or if you find you do not automatically qualify for KM financial assistance, please contact Leanne Hardy, County Programmes Lead, at [lhardy@kent-music.com](mailto:lhardy@kent-music.com). If you are unable to secure financial assistance for KMSS, a full refund of any associated fees paid will be given.

## What is the accommodation like?

Benenden School is in a beautiful 240-acre parkland site in the heart of the Kent countryside and the school facilities are exceptional. Accommodation is mainly individual rooms with shared bathroom facilities. Catering is of the standard you would expect from this prestigious school. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are provided each full day as well as refreshments at the morning, afternoon and evening break times.

Leisure facilities include tennis courts and a varied range of indoor and outdoor supervised games and sports activities such as rounders, cricket and frisbee. There will also be a tuck shop available on site.



If you would like any further information or to discuss any FAQs, please get in touch at [kmss@kent-music.com](mailto:kmss@kent-music.com)

# How to apply

## Booking procedure

Each booking will be processed on receipt of an online application form. To apply please visit [www.kent-music.com/kmss](http://www.kent-music.com/kmss) or go directly to the application page of your chosen course through the links in this brochure.

Bookings will be acknowledged within 7 working days of receipt. Once your booking is confirmed you will be sent an invoice for the deposit payment. A non-refundable deposit of £35 is required within 5 working days of receiving your invoice to secure your place. **Please do not make a payment until you have received your confirmation email and invoice.** If you do not pay the deposit within 5 working days of receiving the invoice, your place will be released and you will need to reapply.

Early booking is strongly recommended to secure your place. If a course (or section of a course) is full, you will be advised that your booking is on a waiting list. You will be advised if a place becomes available. If Kent Music is unable to offer a place, all your related fees will be refunded.



## Payment procedure

You will receive an invoice for the non-refundable deposit with your booking confirmation, and we ask that this is paid on receipt to secure your place. The deposit makes up part of the total course fee.

An invoice for the remaining fee will be sent to you week beginning 27th April 2026. You will be able to pay this invoice in one lump sum or by instalments of your choice through your SpeedAdmin account. Course fees must be received in full no later than the 2nd July 2026.

If you would like to discuss an alternative payment plan, pay in instalments, or you are awaiting confirmation of financial assistance, please email [kmss@kent-music.com](mailto:kmss@kent-music.com)

## Terms and Conditions

Please visit our website at [www.kent-music.com/terms-and-conditions](http://www.kent-music.com/terms-and-conditions) for full Terms and Conditions. Summer School Terms and Conditions should be read in conjunction with Kent Music's General Terms and Conditions.

## Financial Assistance

We can offer up to a 75% discount for those meeting specific financial criteria. For more information please visit [www.kent-music.com/financial-assistance](http://www.kent-music.com/financial-assistance) or refer to the FAQs on page 32.

Please note that an application for Financial Assistance should be submitted at the same time as your Summer School course application.

## Joining Instructions

You will receive the course joining instructions no later than the end of June. These will give you final details on plans for the course, accessing the site, what to bring and more.

## Cancellation Procedure and Refunds

### Withdrawal by student

Notice to withdraw must be given in writing, either by letter or email to [kmss@kent-music.com](mailto:kmss@kent-music.com). The cancellation will be confirmed by email within 15 working days of receipt; the refund amount will be verified.

If a student is unable to attend a course the following refund policy will apply:

Withdrawal notification received by [kmss@kent-music.com](mailto:kmss@kent-music.com)

- On or before 31/05/26 = Full refund (minus non-refundable deposit)
- Between 01/06/26 & 17/06/26 = 50% of full course fee
- Between 18/06/26 & 30/06/26 = 25% of full course fee
- On or after 01/07/26 = No refund

**Please note:** The refund policy applies to all registered students regardless of their date of registration or when/if payments have been made.

### Withdrawal due to illness or accident

If a student is unable to attend due to illness or accident, we request you send us the doctor and/or hospital certificate to confirm. In this instance a refund, less £35.00 deposit will be processed. Please note, this applies to all medical conditions.

### Cancellation by Kent Music

Should Kent Music cancel any Kent Music Summer School courses, a full refund including the deposit will be processed.

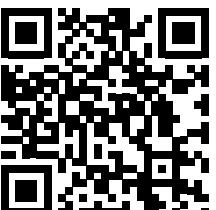


2026  
**Kent Music  
Summer School**

I loved the rehearsals, the tutors making every session really fun and interesting, the food was delicious, social activities helped me to make friends and have fun. I really liked the rooms, all the supervisors were really nice and the concert was so great to do.



Arts Council  
England



- ✉ [kmss@kent-music.com](mailto:kmss@kent-music.com)
- ☎ 01622 691 212
- 🌐 [www.kent-music.com/kmss](http://www.kent-music.com/kmss)
- ✉ [@kentmusicuk](https://www.instagram.com/kentmusicuk)
- ✉ [@ukkentmusic](https://www.facebook.com/ukkentmusic)
- ✉ [@KentMusicUK](https://www.twitter.com/KentMusicUK)