



ST ANDREW'S  
CATHEDRAL  
SCHOOL  
FOUNDED 1885



# Chorister scholarships

Since 1885, hundreds of Cathedral choristers  
have been educated at St Andrew's –  
be part of our history

[www.sacs.nsw.edu.au](http://www.sacs.nsw.edu.au)

Sydney Square, Sydney



heart  
mind  
life



## History and opportunity

*"They're singing some of the most amazing music that has ever been written and taking part in something very moving"*

*Mr Ross Cobb, Director of Music at St Andrew's Cathedral*

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### An incredible tradition

St Andrew's Cathedral School is a place where venerated tradition meets modern innovation. Our choristers are at the forefront of this dualism – part of a heritage older than the school itself, learning in a rich school community that grows in vibrancy each year.

The Cathedral Choir is the oldest musical institution in the Southern Hemisphere. Today's choristers are a tight-knit group of students, whose involvement in the programme reaps huge personal benefit, both in musicianship training, self-worth, teamwork skills and interpersonal communication.

Students become comfortable interacting with all age levels and upon completion, join a strong community of former choristers, scattered around the world.

### Unparalleled opportunities

*"One of my favourite things was performing at the Papua New Guinea service every year at Martin Place. Oh, and I got to be in an opera!"*

*David Bleakley, former chorister*

Not only do choristers perform weekly in the sonorous, stained-glass interior of Australia's oldest cathedral, St Andrew's – they receive a wealth of opportunities to take



part in highly professional performances. Our choristers sing at official state and national events and in television and radio broadcasts, frequently for the ABC. Further, many work with the Australian Opera, alongside seasoned experts.

International chorister tours are typically run every two years. The illustrious trips have seen our students perform at services in some of Europe's most historically significant buildings, from Venice's Basilica of San Marco, to Notre Dame Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and Windsor Castle.

## Fostering leadership skills

As with the greater school community at SACS, there are several formal leadership positions available to choristers.

These include:

- Head Choristers
- Senior Choristers
- Headmaster's Chorister.

Many choristers also excel academically and in sport and are frequently found in the school's leadership lists and honour boards.

All choristers receive training from the Royal School of Church Music's international programme, Voices For Life. Taught by Mr Cobb and externally moderated, the course teaches basic music reading skills, notation and timing, as well as how to use and protect the voice.

It is not unusual for these young musicians to excel internationally in music post-school. An example is opera singer Stuart Skelton, who was named Male Singer of the Year at the 2014 International Opera Awards. The tenor has performed in major opera houses around the world and frequently returns to Australia to perform here.

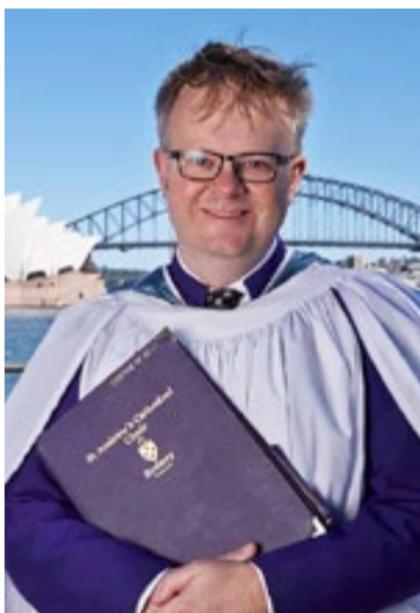
Many former choristers achieve success in a range of fields outside music and have credited their discipline and dedication to their early days in the choir.

## In profile: Mr Ross Cobb

As Director of Music at St Andrew's Cathedral, and Chair of the Royal School of Church Music in NSW, Mr Ross Cobb is well equipped to lead the choristers at SACS.

A classically trained organist and conductor, he lives and breathes choral music. Mr Cobb was professionally trained at several London-based institutions – Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the Royal Academy of Music and Kings College London.

Prior to working with St Andrew's, he was Director of Music at some of the UK's largest churches. When asked to pick what he loves most about his job, he has trouble deciding: "Everything! I love that sense of the team contributing to something bigger, the team ownership of Christian singing. And a lot of the time, it's just really good fun."



*Choir rehearsals and performances in St Andrew's Cathedral.*



## Q&A: Callum Knox

**What do you like about being part of the Cathedral Choir?**

Since starting to sing in Year 3, I have always enjoyed music and performing. I also really like playing the oboe, piano and the organ. There are so many great opportunities to perform with the choir, and we get to meet amazing people too. We put in a lot of hours rehearsing, and it's a big commitment but I really enjoy it and it all pays off as we perform at many concerts. We are all really close and we have a lot of fun together.

**Describe your role as Head Chorister:**

I became Head Chorister in 2016 after being in the choir for two years. As a Head Chorister, I help out Mr Cobb organising the music and encouraging the younger choristers when I can.

**What is your greatest memory or performance so far?**

The Easter performance of 2014 is very memorable as we performed for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, and I got to meet and chat briefly with Prince William. That was pretty exciting.

**Are you keen to have a career in music?**

When I finish at SACS (in 2019), I hope to go and study at the Conservatorium of Music, and then see where that leads.



*Cathedral choir students meet the Duchess of Cambridge (top) and in the Opera Australia production of The Magic Flute.*



*"Being a chorister gives you great preparation for life, for university and for whatever profession you choose afterward. The first thing they learn is self-discipline; they have a routine and are expected to perform with professionals to a professional standard"*

*Mr Ross Cobb*

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## Rehearsal schedule

Monday	7.30 - 8.25am
Tuesday	7.30 - 8.25am
Wednesday	7.30 - 8.25am
Thursday	7.30 - 8.25am, 4.30-7.15pm
Sunday	9.30am - 12pm

## Service performance

Monday	5.15pm
Thursday	5.15pm
Sunday	10.30am

## Who can become a chorister?

A Cathedral chorister must be a student at St Andrew's. Choristers range in age levels, starting in Year 3 and moving up until Year 8 or 9. After Year 9 they are able to return as choral scholars, continue in (less intensive) training and sing with the men of the choir.

Approximately 18-22 students are involved as Cathedral choristers.

## Do choristers need to be Christian?

We welcome choristers from all faiths and belief systems, however, an understanding and respect for the Christian faith is expected. Choristers are required to perform regularly in Cathedral services and families are encouraged to come and watch their children perform whenever they can.

## Do choristers receive discounted school fees?

Yes. After a probationary period, successfully selected choristers are granted a scholarship in return for singing at Cathedral services. Choristers' scholarships are currently worth 50 per cent of school fees and probationers' scholarships are worth 25 per cent.

## What happens after the Chorister programme?

When a student has reached the end of their time as a Chorister, they are very welcome to continue their involvement as part of the Cathedral Choir. Furthermore, there are a wealth of opportunities for musical development at SACS, with more than 40 instrumental and vocal ensembles.

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*Auditions are currently open for chorister scholarships for boys in Year 3 to Year 6.*

**Contact Mrs Wendy Bannister for more information:**

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# St Andrew's:

St Andrew's Cathedral School is a coeducational K-12 Anglican school, located in the heart of Sydney's CBD.

St Andrew's Cathedral School

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