



The
Yehudi
Menuhin
School

“I can only think of music as something inherent in every human being - a birthright. Music coordinates mind, body and spirit.”

- Yehudi Menuhin



Welcome

A message from the Headmaster and Director of Music

We hope that this short introduction will encourage you to visit the School for yourself, to see and hear the special community that lives on in our Founder's vision.

We are proud to nurture and mould some of the world's most talented musicians, and we aim to send out into the community young people who are confident, sensitive, innovative and creative, who will feel artistically and emotionally ready for life as musical ambassadors.

We instil in our pupils a sense of community and duty to support their peers in a non-competitive environment, and also to embrace opportunities to share the advantages of their education here with the wider community.

Thank you for your interest in this very special school.



Ben Gudgeon
Headmaster



Ashley Wass
Director of Music





Mission and Values

The celebrated violinist Yehudi Menuhin founded his school in 1963 to provide a place for musically gifted children from around the world to develop their talents to the highest level within a nurturing and stimulating academic environment, regardless of their economic background.

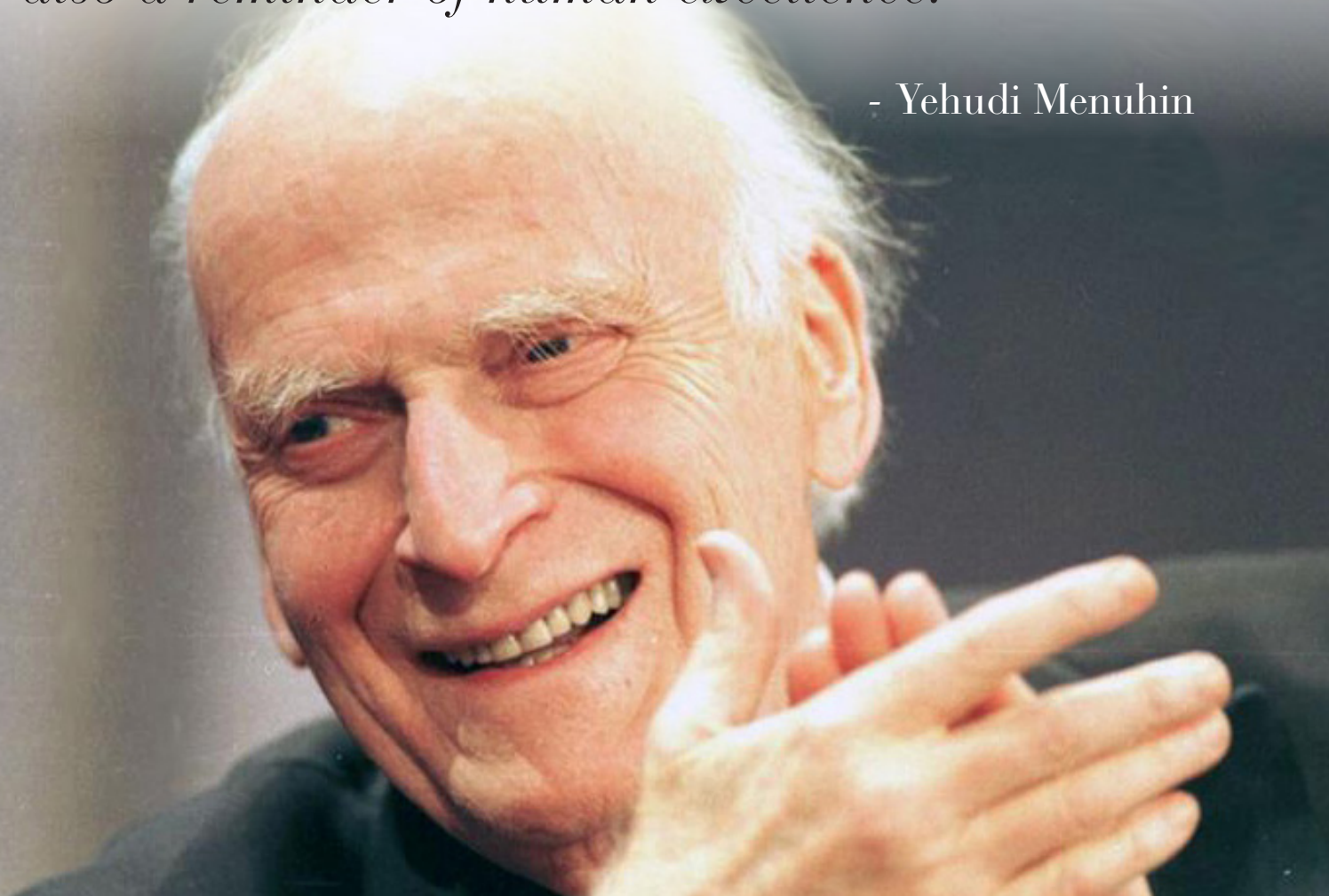
Today's school provides a holistic education for around 85 exceptional young musicians aged from 8 to 19, with specialist tuition on the stringed instruments, piano and classical guitar. Each pupil has a personalised timetable, and splits their time between academic and musical studies.

There are many opportunities to perform in front of an audience, with concerts taking place regularly in our own award-winning Menuhin Hall, but also in local schools, care homes and churches, carrying on Menuhin's belief in the importance of giving back to the community.

Many of our alumni have achieved great success as soloists, chamber musicians, orchestral players and teachers. It is a testament to our ethos that many of our alumni, including Nicola Benedetti, Alina Ibragimova, Melvyn Tan and Tasmin Little return regularly to the School to perform and teach masterclasses.

“I still look to music to heal and bind; I still think the musician can be a trusted object offering his fellow man solace but also a reminder of human excellence.”

- Yehudi Menuhin



Musical Studies



At YMS, our focus is not just on producing musicians with outstanding technique, but also on nurturing the creative spirit of each child, helping them to find their own place in the world of music, whatever that may be. Our small size means that pupils are provided with a supportive learning environment and a bespoke timetable that maximises the individual attention they receive from their teachers. They are also given a multitude of opportunities to perform in front of enthusiastic audiences, not only in our own award-winning concert hall but also locally, in London, around the UK and overseas. Through these experiences they learn who they are as musicians, while our commitment to outreach instils in each pupil the importance of sharing their gifts with the wider community.

Collaboration is a big part of musical life at YMS. All pupils, regardless of age, participate in chamber music, and they regularly perform as part of the school orchestra and choir. To further enrich their musical knowledge, they also take classes in composition, improvisation and general musicianship, Alexander Technique, yoga and singing.

Many of our esteemed Music staff are actively performing musicians, appearing at some of the world's most legendary concert halls. This allows our pupils to draw on their talent and reservoir of experience, and provides a direct link to life as a professional musician today.

Pupils receive two lessons per week from their Principal teacher, as well as time with an Assistant teacher. They also participate in a weekly class lesson, giving them the chance to inspire and engage with their musical peers. In addition to their principal instrument, most pupils undertake a second study, with all string players learning the piano. Baroque, harp and jazz are also available.



Academic Studies

As with our musical studies, academics at YMS focus not only on high standards, but also on creativity and personal growth. Small class sizes foster excellent relationships between pupils and teachers, and allow for a level of personal attention not possible at larger schools.

The curriculum is rich, but concentrated in order to achieve balance and do justice to both the musical and general education of each pupil. An individual timetable is created for each child to make the best use of the school day, providing sufficient time for learning, practising, private study and relaxation.

The academic achievements of our pupils are as impressive as their musical ones. In 2019, YMS was ranked third for A-level results and eighth for GCSEs against other small independent schools in the country. In 2020, 50% of A-level grades were A*, while 81% were A* or A. At GCSE, 65% were at grade A* or A, with 44% being grade A*. These excellent results gained alongside incredible musical achievements are a testament both to the discipline of our pupils and the hard work of our dedicated teachers.

But life at YMS is not only about music and academics – there is also a range of sporting activities, including football, tennis, badminton, swimming, table tennis, dance and yoga. Pupils can also participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme, gaining valuable skills outside of the classroom, building confidence and creating lifelong memories of outdoor adventures with their peers.





“Genuinely a very caring community, like a big family with lots of brothers and sisters.”

- Tasmin Little
alumna and Co-President

Boarding

All but a handful of the School's pupils are boarders: boarding has always been at the heart of Yehudi Menuhin's holistic vision for the School and at the centre of our family ethos. Our pupils are hugely dedicated to their learning, and opportunities to perform and rehearse stretch into the evenings; days can therefore be long and full of activity but with time allowed during the day for practice and relaxation. Many of the younger pupils board on a weekly basis and go home for the weekend. The majority of older students are full boarders, but those with family nearby are also free to go home each weekend after musical activities on Saturday mornings. Though they may not be with us all the time, day pupils are fully integrated into our houses, and are included in all day-to-day house activities. They share use of the boarding spaces and also have their own additional Common Room.

On Saturday afternoons and Sundays, boarders are free to relax as they would at home. However, many choose to take advantage of opportunities to participate in group activities arranged by the Houseparents, visit local towns and play outside in the grounds of the School. Older pupils sometimes take the train into London for concerts, shopping and to visit friends.

We have two boarding houses: Music House (girls) and Harris House (boys). Pupils in both houses are supported by a team of resident staff, led by Houseparents. Staff are on hand 24 hours a day during term time to offer help and support. Most rooms are double rooms, and pupils have use of the kitchens and laundry room. The Common Rooms are the heart of the houses, where pupils gather together to play games, chat with each other, make snacks and relax. Befitting the nature of the School, there are pianos in many rooms where space allows.

Both houses open onto large fields and pupils make the most of our beautiful 18-acre site, going for walks, playing sports and eating meals outside when the weather allows. During warm weather, some academic, yoga and guitar lessons also take place outside.

Admissions Process



Selection is by a series of auditions which seek to assess musical ability and identify outstanding potential.

In general, we ask for completed applications with digital recordings to be submitted during the Autumn term. These are assessed by the Director of Music, and all full auditions will have been offered by the end of January. We aim to complete these by mid-March, with places for the following September being offered by the end of the Spring term. This is, however, just a guide, and applications outside of this timeframe may be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

At the full audition during a three-day stay at the School, applicants are asked to play two contrasting pieces from different stylistic periods and undertake sight reading and aural tests. They are also expected to perform one piece on their second instrument, if possible. Applicants and their parents are interviewed by the Headmaster, Director of Music and members of senior staff.

During this time, applicants experience a taste of life at YMS, following a full school timetable. Places are offered on the assessment of musical potential, the candidate's desire to undertake a specialised course, and the appropriate fit with the School's environment and ethos.

Fees and Bursaries

In keeping with the School's aim to provide world-class musical education on a needs-blind basis, financial assistance towards the cost of fees is available from the Department for Education (DfE) under the Music and Dance Scheme (MDS) for children who have been resident in the UK for at least two calendar years. This assistance is currently measured according to a sliding scale linked to family income.

The School is fortunate in having a significant number of benefactors whose generosity has enabled us to award our own means-tested bursaries to successful applicants for whom no government-aided place is available, or who are not yet eligible for the Scheme under the residency rule.

All applicants are encouraged to investigate additional support from their own governments, individual sponsors, or other charitable sources.



We look forward to welcoming you
to this exceptional school.



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