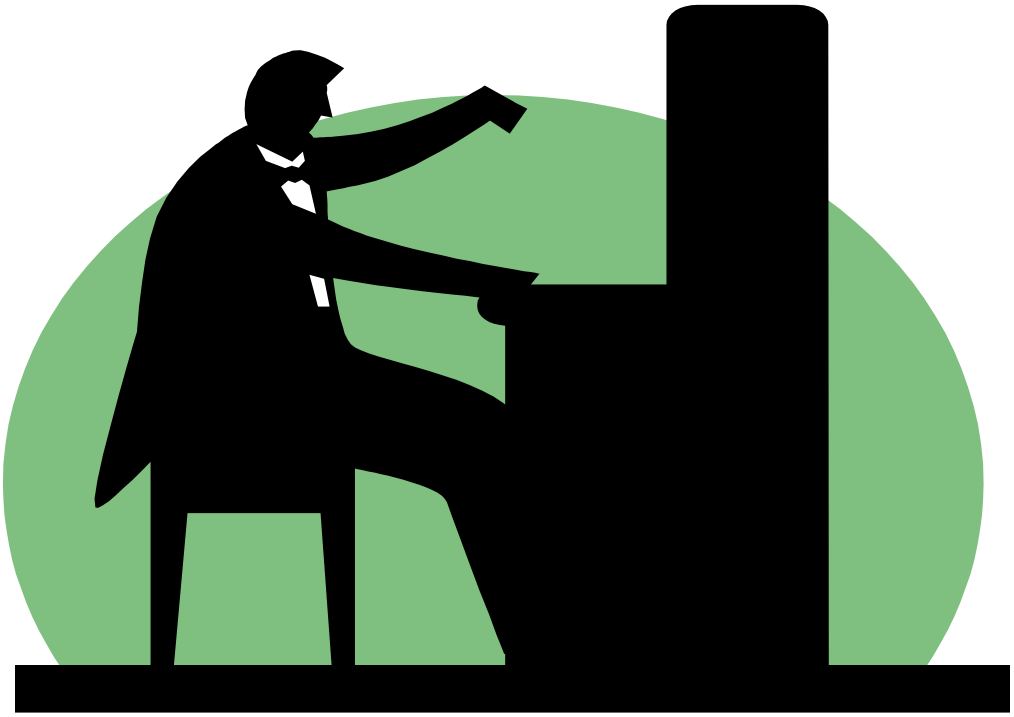
Bolton School Boys' Division

Young Musician of the Year

THE FINAL - 2026



Tuesday 3rd March

Adjudicator: Alistair MacKenzie
(Former Director of Music, Bolton School Girls' Division)

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

1 Introduction
2 Junior Musician Final
3 Senior Musician Final
4 Interval
5 Junior Composer
6 Senior Composer
7 Most Promising Performer
8 Adjudication
9 Presentation of Prizes and Cups

The Finalists

CATEGORY	***JUNIOR*** (Years 7 – 9)	***SENIOR*** (Years 10 – 13)
Brass	Thomas Andrews 7a	Mateo Sprott 10c
Guitar	Oliver Hill 9d	Jamie Chen 11b
Percussion	Max Knight 8a	Nishan Sharma 12a
Piano/Organ	Jayden Huang 7b	Charlie Simpson 11d
Strings	Aaron Pierson 8d	Jayden Cheung 13b
Vocal	William Maher 9f	Zak McAlister 13a
Woodwind	Rhys Parry 9a	Tejas Neelam 10d

Welcome to our 22nd 'Young Musician of the Year' Final. Tonight's event is the culmination of a superb period of competitive music making.

Heats: Our Young Musician of the Year competition began with two full days of Heats on Tuesday 13th and Wednesday 14th January, adjudicated by Foundation Director of Instrumental Music, Mr Forgrieve.

Semi-Final: 62 semi-finalists were selected from across each of the seven instrumental categories. The Semi-Final was held on Friday 6th February and lasted the entire day. Alistair MacKenzie was invited to be our adjudicator and he had the unenviable task of choosing one Junior and one Senior finalist from each of the seven categories.

Final: This means that you will hear 14 finalists tonight. Each finalist should be proud that they are the winners of their particular instrumental category, and all the finalists will take a trophy home with them.

Alistair will announce two overall winners at the end of this evening. Both the Junior Young Musician of the Year and the Senior Young Musician of the Year will win a cash prize of £100, take the winners' trophies home and have their names engraved on the Young Musician of the Year plaques which are on permanent display in the Music Department.

Young Composer of the Year

Our pupils have also been set the challenge of composing their own music to compete for the two Young Composer of the Year awards. The quality, creativity and diversity of style is always impressive.

Junior Composer of the Year Winner 2026

Taran Guduru 9c

Senior Composer of the Year Winner 2026

Joseph Robertson 13e

Most Promising Performer

Each year we award a trophy for the 'Most Promising Performer'. This is an award given to recognise an outstanding performance in the Semi-Finals which was perhaps deserving of a place in the Final, but didn't quite make it.

Most Promising Performer 2026

Thomas Humphreys 13d – Piano

The Prizes

We are very grateful to Mr & Mrs Hilton for their generous contribution of the cash prizes. Mr & Mrs Hilton are the parents of Alexander Hilton who left Bolton School 22 years ago. Alex is a superb musician who excelled in vocal performance - indeed he achieved 100% in his A Level singing performance. Mr & Mrs Hilton provide this prize money each year as the 'Walker-Hilton Music Prizes' in memory of Alex's grandmother. Many thanks to them for their continuing generosity.

Thank you

Sincere thanks are due to our adjudicator, Alistair MacKenzie, our accompanists, Ms Lien and Mrs Whitmore, Mr Lovatt for his technical support, Mr Ford for presenting the prizes, and Mr Limb, Miss Woodhead and Miss Bird for their assistance.

Finally, our thanks to all the boys and their individual music teachers for their hard work. They have provided us with a wealth of wonderful music.

Previous Winners

	Senior Musician	**Junior Musician**	**Senior Composer**	**Junior Composer**	**Most Promising**
2005	Andrew Lockett	Ben Smith	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006	Chetan Dongre	David Leigh	Joe Hodgson	Oscar Devargas	n/a
2007	Sam Pickard	Tom Mottershead	Ben Smith	Toby Cowling	n/a
2008	Jeremy Peel	Toby Cowling	Peter Noall	Thomas Mottershead	Jack Eckersley
2009	Jack Eckersley	Tom Fines	James Redgate & Daniel Keenan	n/a	Nick Harper
2010	Ben Smith	Daniel Anderson	Ben Smith	Joe Keegan & Sam Critchlow	Myles Blackwell
2011	Ben Dilworth	Joe Keegan	Adam Wan & Toby Cowling	Tom Fines & 'Revolution'	Harry Ofield
2012	Toby Cowling	Daniel Anderson	Jonathan Kent	Hassaan Hussain	Aman Kumar
2013	Alex Deakin	Matthew Kay	Toby Cowling	Adam Critchlow	George Morgan
2014	Cameron Jones-Humphrey	Adam Whitmore	Arran Ireland	George Morgan	Oliver Shaw
2015	Tom Fines	Victor Chow	Parallel Oreos	Owen Critchlow	Alex Moriarty
2016	Niall Woodward	Adam Whitmore	Matthew Kay	Matthew Settle	Tom Paterson
2017	Matthew Kay	Tyler Titley	Matthew Kay/Jay Harland	Matthew Settle	Adam Whitmore
2018	Henry Webb	William Miles	Jean-Paul Asumu	George Seddon	Thomas Yates
2019	Victor Chow	Xuan Wang	Adam Whitmore	Rishi Narla	Jean-Paul Asumu
2020	Jamie Gregson	Akshat Kamath	Adam Whitmore	Zach Tyrer-Hall	Thomas Higham
2021	Jude Ashcroft	Antoine Jodeau	Matthew Settle	Advaith Govindu	Charlie Middleton
2022	Harry Adams	Jamie Chen	Harry Adams	Advaith Govindu	Xuan Wang
2023	Laurence Britton	Matthew Yeung	Rishi Narla	Charlie Feng	Freddie Audley
2024	Tom Williamson	Thomas Sibley	Tom Williamson	Krishnan Velayutham	Dylan Lincoln
2025	Charlie Simpson	Max Knight	Tanmay Gokul	Aashrith Govindu	Justin Lin

Forthcoming Musical Events

Spring Term

Wednesday 11th March	Joint Spring Concert
Tuesday 17th March	ABRSM Exams
Wednesday 25th - Friday 27th March	Joint Senior Musical – 'Guys & Dolls'
Monday 30th March	Musical Evening
Monday 30th - Tuesday 31st March	Park Road Music Festival

Summer Term

Wednesday 29th April	Park Road 'Spring' Concert
Tuesday 9th June	Year 4 Concert
Wednesday 17th June	Year 3 Concert
Monday 22nd June	Lower School Musical Evening