Pioneering New Partnership Launched by Romsey Abbey and Hampshire Collegiate Prep School

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Media:













A new partnership – the first new choristership programme of its kind in the UK for decades – has been announced between Romsey Abbey and Hampshire Collegiate Prep School (HCPS). From September 2016, there will be three new Choral Scholarships per year giving unrivalled opportunities for children to experience the very best in education at HCPS and the very best in musical opportunities and tuition at Romsey Abbey.

Recordings, concerts, outings and tours are all in the pipeline for the Abbey Choir and this presents a wonderful opportunity for a combination of singing in one of the most beautiful and significant religious buildings in the country alongside learning in the wonderful surroundings of HCPS – set in the grounds of Embley Park, former home of Florence Nightingale.

George Richford, the Abbey's Director of Music said:

'There are many benefits to becoming a chorister. These include an increase in self-confidence and the development of social skills. It is also a life-enhancing and fun experience for those who embrace it.'

Rev Canon Tim Sledge, Vicar of Romsey said:

'Romsey Abbey and Hampshire Collegiate Prep School are two of the jewels in Romsey's crown. I am delighted and excited about this bold creative partnership between the school and the Abbey. I know it will greatly benefit and enhance the lives and experiences of the children and enrich the musical life of the Abbey and the school.'

Helen Donnelly, Head of HCPS said:

'We are delighted to be part of this unique partnership with Romsey Abbey. HCPS is a great school which enables our children to go beyond their expectations. This new partnership with the Abbey will enhance these experiences and will further strengthen our links with the wider community.'

Background from George Richford, Director of Music at Romsey Abbey:

'Many cathedrals across England have had historic relationships with their independent schools, offering healthy scholarships for talented young boys to sing in the choir. Here we have a unique partnership between HCPS and Romsey Abbey, a very large Parish Church in Hampshire. This is a completely new partnership between two thriving institutions. It is particularly important as we believe this to be one of the first new scholarship schemes to be setup between an independent school and a CofE Parish Church in recent memory. It demonstrates a commitment to singing and musical learning and the importance of a chorister education. It provides an opportunity to balance school, choir and home in a way which enriches the lives of the choristers and their families, affords high standards of performance and achievement but also gives the flexibility of weekends off, and time to pursue other things. This makes the HCPS-Romsey Abbey partnership both attractive and completely manageable for those parents perhaps anxious about the amount of commitment required from Cathedral choirs and is a perfect way to have the best of both worlds.'

BIOG: George Arthur (Richford): went to Durham University in 2004, where he held the position of Director of Music at St John's College for a period of six years. He is a prolific composer and has predominantly written for choir and organ, as well as music for chamber ensemble, several song cycles and solo instrumental works.

For details about the Choristership Programme contact: Hampshire Collegiate Prep School on 01794 515737 or via email: hcps@hampshirecs.org.uk

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About Romsey Abbey:

The Abbey remains the largest parish church in Hampshire and is home to a vibrant congregation drawn from the town and beyond. It is affiliated to the Greater Churches group, which includes Beverley Minster, Christchurch Priory, Leeds Parish Church and Sherborne Abbey. The Abbey Church of St Mary and St Ethelflaeda can trace its origins back to 907 AD, the year in which King Edward the Elder, son of the Saxon King Alfred the Great, first settled some nuns here under the charge of his daughter Elflaeda.

About Hampshire Collegiate School:

Hampshire Collegiate School, comprising Nursery, Prep School and Senior Schools, is an independent day and boarding school for boys and girls aged 2-18. The school is situated in a stunning 130 acre campus which was once the childhood home of Florence Nightingale. Both the historic Manor House and Woodland Gardens are Grade II listed.

Hampshire Collegiate School is situated in the heart of the Hampshire countryside, an hour by train from London, and close to the cities of Southampton, Winchester and Salisbury.















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