

RTMF Children's Competition Guidelines

Video Entries by 14th June 2021



Rothbury Traditional Music Festival has a long history of encouraging new and emerging talent and every year runs informal competitions for young musicians, vocalists and dialect poets. We are passionate about keeping traditional music alive and the children's competitions are open to all children aged 4-13, wherever you live and whatever your standard. They are free to enter and **this year we are running the competitions online via video performance entry.**

If you fancy joining in, **record yourself playing or singing a traditional tune or song, or reciting some dialect poetry and send it in to us by the 14th of June** - all details of how to do this are later in this document. Our experienced judges will watch all the performances, provide feedback for every performer and pick the winners. Winners will be announced on the day of the Festival - 10th July 2021 - and winning performances will be shared via the Festival's social and other media outlets on that day - as well as receiving a festival T-shirt and medal in the post.

This year there are competition classes for **music** and **dialect poetry** with two age groups in the music classes as follows:

Solo (Vocal or Instrumental)

May be accompanied by an adult, by someone aged 14+ or by a backing track.

Age 4-8

Age 9-13

Duet or Group Performance (Vocal, Instrumental or Any Combination Thereof)

Please adhere to all government guidelines at time of recording.

Age 4-8 (age of oldest member determines entry category)

Age 9-13 (age of oldest member determines entry category)

Dialect Poetry

Performers may recite their own work or that of another poet - but please state which.

Ages 4-13

Soloists may be accompanied by an adult or child aged 14+ on piano or other instrument, or by a backing track if preferred. Where the accompanist is 13 or under then the entry would count as a duet. Where a duet or group consists of children in both age categories, the age of the oldest competitor will determine the entry

category. For dialect poets there will be one entry class; Age 4-13. Poets may recite their own composition or that of someone else but should state if that is the case.

Performances should be no more than 3 minutes long!!!

Judging Process

The Age 4-8 musical competitions will be judged by **Heather Ferrier**, an accordionist and clog dancer based in the North East (www.heatherferriermusic.com).

The Age 9-13 musical competitions will be judged by **Margaret Watchorn**, Northumbrian multi-instrumentalist and one half of the Andy and Margaret Watchorn pipes and fiddle duo (www.pipesandfiddle.co.uk).

Poetry entries will be judged by Festival Chairman John Pringle.

Entries will be managed by Festival committee members Aifionn Evans and Judith Ness. All videos will be anonymised before forwarding to the judges (ie file names changed to Performer 1, Performer 2 etc), judges will not have access to the Parental Consent or Competition Registration Forms associated with the videos and will have view-only access to the video files The Festival has a GDPR policy in place which can be viewed on the website: www.rothburymusicfestival.co.uk

Keep reading below for detailed info on how to submit a video entry to the competition.....



Rothbury Traditional Music Festival would like to thank Music Partnership North and particularly Fiona Johnstone for invaluable support and advice in setting up these competitions.

To find out more go to

www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Music-Service

Step by Step Guide to Entering a Video Performance

Step 1 - Choose a Performance Piece

Choose a piece of trad music or dialect poetry to perform - **your performance should be no more than 3 minutes long**. You may already be learning a suitable piece with your music teacher and you could ask for their help in choosing a piece that suits you and your sound.

Check out this web resource for LOADS of free traditional sheet music arranged for various instruments and abilities:

<http://breakfastfolk.co.uk/sheet-music/>

Step 2 - Practise, Practise, Practise

With your teacher/tutor/parent's help (or completely on your own!), learn and practise singing/playing the piece until you can perform it confidently in front of camera.

Step 3 - Set Up Your Recording Studio

Follow a few **simple but IMPORTANT rules** to film yourself like a pro!

Get a Good Sound

To get the best sound recording, choose a **medium to large room with lots of soft stuff in it** - think cushions, curtains, sofas, carpets and rugs etc. You can make it sound even more pro by hanging throws, blankets and duvets over doors, furniture or drying racks and cover up any bare expanses of wall. The echoes in rooms like kitchens, bathrooms, conservatories and tiled rooms are very bad for capturing a pleasant sound in your phone's microphone (even though they may sound lovely in real life!) so please avoid those if you can. Make sure there isn't other noise getting into the room so close doors and windowsand finally **tune your instrument carefully** so it sounds really good before you start filming.

Make it Look Nice

Firstly... **Film in LANDSCAPE**...like this with your phone sideways! And make sure your phone is on a **steady surface**, not held by hand. Try to fill the picture with you and your instrument without chopping off any of your head and make sure the **camera is at a similar height to your face** so we aren't looking up your nose. We ideally don't want to see your music stand either!



Lighting

Your phone/laptop camera works really great provided there is enough light - **natural light from a window at 45 degrees to you is best**. Where that's not possible you could try pointing a load of lamps all on one side of the room and **bounce light off the wall**, it will make the video quality look brilliant. **Don't shine lights straight at yourself** - that makes the video look like a halloween movie!

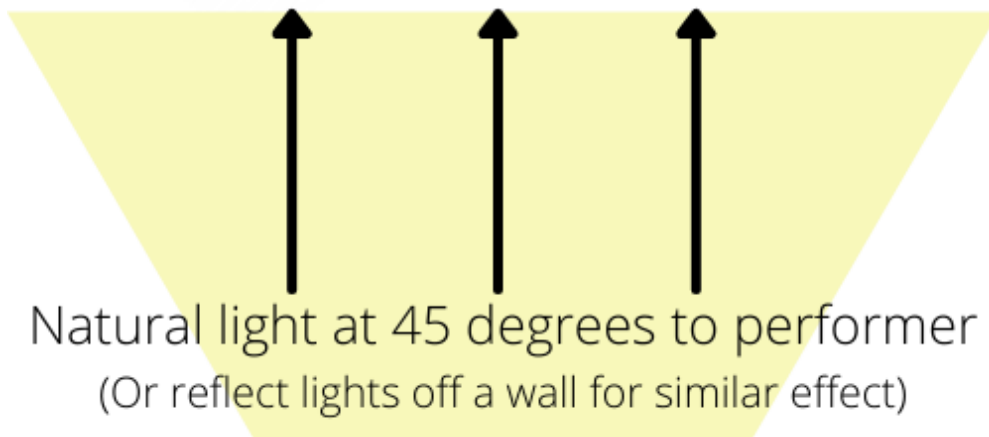
The diagram below shows the ideal set up for us getting a really good view of your performance. The judges won't just be listening out for the sound of your piece but also the performance value....so it helps if they can **see your face and posture as well as all of your instrument too**.....and it's a good idea to make sure the background isn't too distracting.



Camera recording in landscape format, at head height on a steady surface



This performer hasn't forgotten to smile!



Natural light at 45 degrees to performer
(Or reflect lights off a wall for similar effect)

If you can't quite manage this exact set up in your chosen room don't worry - just do your best!

Step 4 Make a Recording!

Record yourself performing the piece using your phone, tablet, camera, laptop, whatever. Try to have the recording device propped up on a **steady surface such as a tripod or music stand** rather than held by hand. At the beginning of the video, **introduce your performance** by saying I will be playing/singing/reciting "...name of your tune/song/poem...". **You don't have to say your name.**

Smile!

Don't forget to smile and look like you're having fun - it makes the music or poem sound even better!

You may have to make a couple of attempts and make sure you watch the video back to check everything sounds and looks the way you want - remember the **performance should be no longer than 3 minutes** - the video can be slightly longer. If it sounds very distorted/scratchy, you could do a test video to see if that improves by being further away from the camera or changing something else. It is particularly important to check this if you play a loud instrument!.

Step 5 Name your Video File

Once you have a recording you are happy with then name your video file like this:
NameofPerformer_AgeofPiece e.g. JoanWhite_10_SkyeBoatSong

If you are a duet or group then name the file like this:
NameofGroup_AgeofOldestPerformer_NameofPiece eg
TheWhiteSisters_12_SkyeBoatSong

It is really important that we are able to match your entry form with your video file so we can send it to the right judge. Please double check that the name of your video file follows the format set out above and that the name of the performer/group and piece of music match each other on the file and form.

VIDEO FILE NAMES WILL BE ANONYMISED BEFORE SENDING TO THE JUDGES - IF YOU WANT TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS YOU MUST NOT MENTION YOUR NAME IN THE VIDEO ITSELF.

Step 6 GET YOUR PARENT/CARER TO DO 3 THINGS THIS BIT IS SUPER-IMPORTANT!!!!

1. Fill in the **online registration form** for the competition - make sure **your name (or the name of your duet or group) on the form matches your video file name**. Online entry forms are available at www.rothburymusicfestival.co.uk and on the festival Facebook page too - there are separate forms for solo entries and duet/group entries so make sure to fill in the right one.
2. **Use WeTransfer.com to send your video file to rtmf.kidscomps@gmail.com**. We Transfer is free to use and does not require sign up..... it makes sending and receiving large video files super-easy. Unfortunately the Festival won't be able to accept entries via any other means. Make sure the video is named according to the guidelines above.
3. **Fill in and RETURN the Parental Consent Form** available at www.rothburymusicfestival.co.uk This is super-important - **without this completed form we can't send your video to the judges**. Again make sure your name on this form matches the name on your registration form and on your video file too.

**MAKE SURE WE HAVE A COMPLETED PARENTAL CONSENT FORM!!!
WITHOUT IT WE CAN'T SEND YOUR VIDEO TO THE JUDGES**

GOOD LUCK!!!