



National Youth  
Brass Band  
Championships  
of Great Britain



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

# Pre-Entry Information, Aims and Rules

Dean Close School,  
Cheltenham  
23 March 2024



# Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Our principles .....	4
3. Additional aims .....	4
4. Sections and rules.....	5
5. General rules .....	8
6. Entry fees .....	9
7. Contest timeline.....	9
8. Provisional timings.....	10
9. Draw Method.....	10
10. Adjudication .....	10
11. Facilities .....	11
12. Entry and tickets .....	12
13. Safeguarding requirements.....	13
14. Additional notes .....	14

While every care has been exercised in the compilation and publishing of this document to ensure the validity of the information provided at the time of publication, BBE accepts no liability or responsibility for the accuracy of content or for any errors or omissions. May 2023.

# 1. Introduction

This document serves to establish the purpose of the National Youth Brass Band Championships of Great Britain [Youth Champs or NYBBCGB].

By making clear what we aim to achieve from the Championships, we are able to set the rules accordingly and ensure that they align with the overall spirit of the event. Establishing a set of aims from the outset means that we can assess to what degree these have been met each year and implement any necessary changes for future events. These aims will serve as the basis for decision making and will be shared with all stakeholders and participants to ensure transparency.

The event will be run in accordance with Arts Council England's four 'Investment Principles':

- Ambition & Quality
- Dynamism
- Environmental responsibility
- Inclusivity & Relevance

These Principles will inform how we plan and review the event and will ensure that it is ambitious, dynamic, environmentally focused and inclusive.



Image credit: Dan Johnson

## 2. Our principles

- The Youth Champs will be a high-quality National event, which promotes a standard of excellence and innovation at all levels.
- The Youth Champs will remain true to the brass banding tradition.
- The Youth Champs will be exciting, inspiring and engaging to young people.
- The Youth Champs will maintain a positive and inclusive environment, rejecting discrimination in any form.
- The Youth Champs will promote brass banding to children and young people as widely as possible.
- The Youth Champs will encourage personal progression (both musically and generally) within a youth banding environment.
- The Youth Champs will foster a sense of belonging and ownership in young musicians.

## 3. Additional aims

- The Youth Champs will aid player creation to ensure future resilience of brass banding at adult level.
- The Youth Champs will encourage participation and reward progress and excellence.
- The Youth Champs will be held in an inspiring venue with facilities of the highest standard available.
- The Youth Champs will engage with its venue's local population, both within and outside of the brass band community.
- The Youth Champs will be run to the highest possible professional standards.
- The Youth Champs will be run without bias.
- A sense of achievement should be the main prize for all competitors.
- The Youth Champs will promote the sharing of best practice between youth band leaders.
- The Youth Champs will encourage communication and collaboration between children and young people.
- Young people will be given a voice and an opportunity to feedback and shape the event.

## 4. Sections and rules

### **Besson Prodige Showcase Section (18 and under)**

The Besson Prodige Showcase Section is the Youth Champs' non-competitive section, offering an opportunity to take part and contribute a great performance without the pressure of competition. Bands of all standards are welcome to play, even if they've performed at the contest previously. All competitors in this section should have a positive experience to encourage them to continue to progress on their instrument. Bands can perform for a maximum of ten minutes but may be able to play for 15 minutes if requested in advance. Bands also opting to play in competitive sections will have this facilitated for them to avoid a scheduling clash between sections. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal school education system **may** be permitted to take part in the event\*. Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to [youthchamps@bbe.org.uk](mailto:youthchamps@bbe.org.uk)

1. This section will be open to all performers who have not reached their 19th birthday on or before 31 August in the year of the contest (in the case of 2024, players born on or after 1 September 2005).
2. Bands are required to play an own-choice programme not exceeding their playing time of ten minutes, unless permission has been granted in advance to perform for up to 15 minutes.
3. There is no set test-piece.
4. Players and bands may play in this section as many years in succession as they wish, age restrictions permitting.
5. Up to four adult (playing or non-playing) helpers will be allowed, in non-principal positions, to assist the young musicians during their performance.
6. There will be no awards given. It is intended that each child will receive a token for taking part in the event (such as a sticker or a certificate).
7. Each band will receive constructive public comments from an adjudicator at the end of the section, along with a set of written notes.
8. Non-standard 'brass band instruments' (i.e. trumpets, French horns and plastic instruments) will be allowed, but all instruments must be from the brass or percussion families. Singing is permitted.
9. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal school education system may be permitted to take part in the event. \* Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to [youthchamps@bbe.org.uk](mailto:youthchamps@bbe.org.uk)

## Performance Section (18 and under)

The principal aim of this section is to give young people an introductory experience of competitive performance. Participating bands will be given the freedom to select their own choice of music to promote flexible teaching and suitable repertoire for performance at this level. This section also aims to introduce young people to the concept of assessment with original brass band music, in preparation for advancement to performing more adventurous pieces in future years. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal school education system **may** be permitted to take part in the event\*. Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to [youthchamps@bbe.org.uk](mailto:youthchamps@bbe.org.uk).

1. This section will be open to all performers who have not reached their 19th birthday on or before 31 August in the year of the contest (in the case of 2024, players born on or after 1 September 2005).
2. All bands will be awarded a Certificate of Achievement (Gold, Silver, Bronze or Merit) to indicate their level of playing within the section.
3. Bands will perform an own-choice programme not exceeding 15 minutes, which must include at least one original brass band work\*\*.
4. There is no set test-piece.
5. Up to two adult helpers (playing or non-playing) will be allowed, in non-principal positions, to assist the young musicians during their performance.
6. Prizes will be awarded as follows:
  - 1st Place: The BBE Chairman's Cup (to be returned for 2025 event), and trophy to be retained
  - 2nd Place: Trophy to be retained
  - 3rd Place: Trophy to be retained
  - Best Soloist: Trophy to be retained
7. Non-standard 'brass band instruments' (i.e. trumpets, French horns and plastic instruments) will be allowed, but all instruments must be from the brass or percussion families of instruments. Singing is permitted.
8. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal school education system may be permitted to take part in the event.\* Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to [youthchamps@bbe.org.uk](mailto:youthchamps@bbe.org.uk)

## Championship Section (18 and under)

The aim of this section is for young people to perform together at a high standard and provide the final step through the doorway to student or adult banding. All the players in this section will be young people still in formal education. The principles established earlier mean that it is not appropriate for those over the age of 18, who have left the education system or who are studying in tertiary education, to still be taking part in youth contesting. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal school education system **may** be permitted to take part in the event\*. Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to [youthchamps@bbe.org.uk](mailto:youthchamps@bbe.org.uk).

1. This section will be open to all performers who have not reached their 19th birthday on or before 31 August in the year of the contest (in the case of 2024, players born on or after 1 September 2005).
2. All bands will be awarded a Certificate of Achievement (Gold, Silver, Bronze or Merit) to indicate their level of playing within the section.
3. Bands will perform an own-choice programme not exceeding 20 minutes, which must include at least eight minutes of original brass band music\*\*.
4. There is no set test-piece.
5. Prizes will be awarded as follows:
  - 1st Place: The BBE President's Cup (trophy to be returned for 2025 event) and trophy to be retained
  - 2nd Place: Trophy to be retained
  - 3rd Place: Trophy to be retained
  - Best Soloist: Trophy to be retained
6. Those who are over 18 years of age but who are still studying within the formal school education system **may** be permitted to take part in the event.\* Where this is the case please apply in writing for confirmation to [youthchamps@bbe.org.uk](mailto:youthchamps@bbe.org.uk)
7. 'Non-standard' brass band instruments (i.e. trumpets, French horns and plastic instruments) will be allowed, but all instruments must be from the brass or percussion families. Singing is permitted.
8. The highest placed English band in this section will be eligible to represent England in the Development Section of the 2025 European Youth Brass Band Contest [EYBBC].<sup>†</sup>

\* When referring to the formal school education system, this is subjected to young people still in college or sixth form, NOT those who have already started university. Those who have entered university level education will not be able to participate in the Youth Champs, unless they are one of the four adult helpers in the Showcase section, or two adult helpers allowed in the Performance Section. For those who have moved into work, please contact [info@bbe.org.uk](mailto:info@bbe.org.uk) for help supporting them as they transition to their next stage. For those at university, The UniBrass foundation can offer support and can be contacted on [contact@unibass.co.uk](mailto:contact@unibass.co.uk).

\*\* 'Original' in this context refers to a piece of music originally written for brass band. This does not mean that the piece must be a new composition, although competitors are free to commission and perform new works if they choose. This could be a test-piece, march, concert piece, solo or anything else originally written for brass band.

N.B. In order to maintain a high level of inclusivity in all sections, special circumstances will be taken into consideration, at the discretion of Brass Bands England – i.e. an additional adult helper to assist with a specific physical or learning disability. Please discuss any specific requirements with a member of BBE staff by contacting [youthchamps@bbe.org.uk](mailto:youthchamps@bbe.org.uk).

## 5. General rules

- The location of the Youth Champs will change regularly in order to ensure that the distance that participants and spectators need to travel will not constantly benefit one area over another. Over the average time that young musicians take part in the Youth Champs, we expect that the event will take place in at least two different parts of the UK. It is not intended that the event will take place in the same location for more than two years consecutively.
- No cash prizes will be awarded (see Additional Note No. 3).
- Entry fees will reflect the size of the ensembles taking part.
- Bands in all sections will be limited to a maximum of 55 players, including percussion, and a minimum of 5.
- Bands can enter from anywhere in the UK. Bands from outside the UK may be permitted but should contact [youthchamps@bbe.org.uk](mailto:youthchamps@bbe.org.uk) to check availability.

It is the responsibility of band leaders to ensure compliance with the contest rules. If any bands are found to have broken these rules, they may, at the discretion of Brass Bands England, be subject to penalty or disqualification and could be refused entry to some future events. Brass Bands England reserves the right to investigate any alleged rule breaches and may request information (such as proof of age or education status) at any time. Such actions may be taken retrospectively and could, potentially, affect bands' eligibility to represent England in other events including the European Youth Brass Band Contest. BBE will not accept responsibility for any consequential losses under such circumstances.



## 6. Entry fees

### **Championship, Performance and Besson Prodiges Showcase Sections**

£100 (£50 for BBE member bands) plus £2 per player

Any band wishing to play in both a competitive and non-competitive section may be able to do so (depending upon entry levels) but will require two separate entries at the full entry fee rate.

Due to limitations on the number of bands competing it may not be possible for your application to be accepted but be assured that applications will be dealt with on a 'first come first served' basis. If we are not able to provide a performance slot for your band then a full refund will be given.

## 7. Contest timeline

Wednesday 7 June 2023	● Applications open Band entry fee only is required on application along with provisional participant numbers.
Monday 18 September	● Audience tickets on sale
Tuesday 3 October 2023	● Info drop-in session
Wednesday 6 December 2023	● Info drop-in session
Sunday 31 December 2023	● Applications close
Friday 19 January 2024	● Live draw and drop-in session
Wednesday 31 January 2024	● Deadline for confirmed participant numbers and band information.
Tuesday 13 February 2024	● Deadline for Band Ticket Sales Deadline for individual player fees (£2 per player).
Tuesday 5 March 2024	● Info drop-in session
Monday 11 March 2024	● Deadline for scores and compere notes
Saturday 23 March 2023	● Contest Day

## 8. Provisional timings

We are providing provisional timings based on previous entries to assist participating bands in their planning, but it is very important to note that these are subject to change and will be confirmed at the time of the draw. They represent the earliest likely start times for the contest, but will be dependent on the number of bands that enter. Bands should plan to be able to arrive at these times as, in the interests of fair competition, requests to play later will only be considered under exceptional circumstances.

### Saturday 23 March 2024

#### **Besson Prodiges Showcase Section**

First band performs at 09:30 (arrival 08:30)

#### **Performance Section**

First band performs 11:00 (arrival 10:00)

#### **Championship Section**

First band performs 13:40 (arrival 12:30)

## 9. Draw Method

The order of play for the morning sessions will be drawn bearing in mind bands' geographical distance to the contest venue. To avoid very early starts for morning sections, bands within 50 miles of the contest will be drawn in the first group, those within 50-100 miles will be drawn next and anyone over 100 miles will be drawn in the final part of the contest. For afternoon sessions the process will be reversed.

Requests for an early draw will be accepted, but requests to play later will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

## 10. Adjudication

- A digital copy of the score of each band's own choice pieces must be provided for the adjudicators.
- All adjudication will be open.
- Points will not be awarded.
- The adjudicators' decisions are final.

# 11. Facilities

## **Holding area**

From your band's stated arrival time (tbc once the draw has taken place), you will be allocated a bay within the Holding Area to leave coats, bags and cases whilst you are in the contest system. All belongings must be collected and taken from this space after you have played. Items cannot be stored here before you enter or after you leave the contest system. Due to child safeguarding, this cannot be used as a changing area. Please arrive in uniform ready to perform. Only your designated chaperones will be allowed access to the holding area - parents dropping off or collecting their children from the venue must not enter this space, but should pre-arrange to meet a chaperone who will then escort the young person into the contest system.

## **Warm up areas**

Dedicated warm up areas are available to all participating bands/groups before they go on stage. All items you require for your performance (music, additional percussion etc) need to be taken to the warm-up room with you.

## **Toilets**

Separate toilet facilities for performers and audience members will be provided and clearly signposted.

## **Parking**

Coach parking is limited on site, and is designated for coach drop-off and pick-up only - they cannot park on site throughout the day. A local coach park address will be provided for all bands travelling via coach.

Car parking is limited on site, but plenty of residential parking is available within walking distance to the venue.

## **Catering**

Catering will be provided via Dean Close School, which accepts both cash and card payments.

## **Other facilities**

A room will be available on site for groups to socialise together throughout the day, although we encourage all participants and spectators to listen to as many of the other participating bands as possible. In the event of nice weather, there are plenty of outside facilities to enjoy within the grounds.

## 12. Entry and tickets

### Wristbands

Wristbands for players, the conductor and up to four helpers will be given to the official of each band upon arrival. These wristbands will provide access to the backstage area prior to and during the performance, and into the auditoriums for the duration of the day.

### Tickets

Tickets will be available from the BBE website from 19 September: [bbe.org.uk](https://bbe.org.uk) or visit [youthchamps.uk/tickets](https://youthchamps.uk/tickets)

#### Advance tickets

Adults: £13  
Children: £5  
Under 5: Free

#### Day tickets

Adults: £16  
Children: £8  
Under 5: Free

### Ticket sales scheme

Participating bands will be able to buy tickets at a discounted rate from BBE and sell them to supporters at the advanced sales rate. The scheme will allow bands to buy up to 50 tickets at a £2 reduction meaning they can earn back the BBE members' rate cost of entry. Bands will be able to buy as many tickets in advance as they like, but the maximum discount available is £50 per band per section (N.B. if the band enters two sections the limit will rise to £100 and equally if an organisation has two bands playing the limit will also be £100).

Bands will be given an order form on application to purchase the discounted tickets. After returning this form an online sales invoice will be sent to the band to pay after which the tickets will be sent to the bands in advance of the event. Tickets must be ordered by 13 February 2024.

## 13. Safeguarding requirements

In order to comply with current legislation regarding child performance licensing, Brass Bands England holds a Body of Persons Approved (BOPA) from the Secretary of State for Education. In order to comply with this BOPA, and as a condition of entry, you must complete the following.

1. Each participant group must ensure that the appropriate number of supervising adults are employed to care for their children. The organisation will ensure that children are supervised at all times. The supervising adults must have a DBS carried out or update service status checked in the last three years and that the DBS has been seen by the organisation. If the supervising adult has information on their DBS then the organisation must undertake the risk assessment before allowing them to take care of children, this might include consultation with Brass Bands England. The maximum number of children a supervising adult can be responsible for is 12 but we recommend working on the basis of 1:12 plus one additional adult in case of emergencies.
2. The organisation will ensure they sign in and out at contest control.
3. The organisation will ensure that the band has permission, photographic consent, emergency medical information and contact details available for all child performers at the place of performance. An example BOPA safeguarding consent form can be downloaded [here](#). Please feel free to use this form within your band; alternatively, a form of your own design is equally acceptable, provided it contains the appropriate information.
4. No child must receive payment for their part in the performance (except for defraying expenses).
5. The organisation must ensure that suitable arrangements are made to get the child home or to any other destination after the last performance or rehearsal, on the conclusion of any activity on any day.

## 14. Additional notes

Brass Bands England will endeavour to hold the Youth Champs at a set date each year i.e. the last weekend of March, as to avoid school Easter Holidays. There will occasionally be a need (as in 2024) to adjust this to avoid clashing directly with the Easter weekend.

BBE will endeavour to announce information regarding dates, venues and any set test-pieces at least one year in advance.

Additional prizes may be sponsored by external partners or donors. It is not envisaged that cash prizes will be awarded. However, prizes from instrument manufacturers or publishers etc. may have a cash value.

Bands qualifying to represent England at the European Youth Brass Band Contest may be eligible to receive support from Brass Bands England, including free access (for member bands only) to fundraising, logistical and marketing resources. The level of support offered may vary from year to year and will be solely at the discretion of Brass Bands England.



Brass Bands England. Unit 12 Maple  
Estate, Stocks Lane, Barnsley S75 2BL.  
Registered Charity No. 114833.



**T** 01226 771015  
**E** [info@bbe.org.uk](mailto:info@bbe.org.uk)  
**W** [bbe.org.uk](http://bbe.org.uk)



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

**f** Brass Bands England  
**t** @BrassBandsEng  
**i** brassbandsengland  
**y** @BrassBandsEngland

