

# VOICE *for* LIFE

One of the RSCM's three core educational programmes, Voice for Life exists to support and promote singing in churches, schools and other communities.

Voice for Life provides a range of training materials, repertoire, courses and training choirs that will enable you to encourage and develop a singing culture in your community; whether a church, school or in the wider community.

Programme Co-Directors: Esther Jones & Leah-Perona-Wright

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## TRAINING & AWARDS FOR SINGERS

### The Voice for Life training scheme

Training a choir is both a challenge and a joy. The Voice for Life training scheme provides a framework for choral singers to develop their vocal skills, musical understanding and knowledge of repertoire. The scheme offers advice on the practicalities of running a choir and comes with a range of teaching material and supporting resources. It is intended to enable choir trainers and teachers to train their choir or group more effectively, and to help singers grow as people as well as musicians. Many singing teachers also find it a useful basis for teaching pupils as individuals or in groups.

### Bronze, Silver & Gold Awards

In order to support the choir trainer and affirm the levels achieved within the choir while working on the Voice for Life training scheme, the RSCM provides a parallel system of awards designed to be assessed through a formal examination: these are called the Bronze, Silver & Gold awards. (In some local RSCM Areas the Bronze and Silver Awards are called Dean's and Bishop's Awards.)

Each award has its own syllabus and regulations. These come complete with guidelines to fully prepare the candidate and the choir trainer for the standard expected during the examination.

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## REPERTOIRE FOR SINGERS

### Song books

It is vitally important, if you want to engage the singers in a choir, to choose the right repertoire. A range of repertoire is being developed in line with the Voice for Life philosophy to give singers the opportunity to:

- Enjoy singing
- Learn to use their voices well
- Experience a range of musical styles
- Sing both accompanied and a cappella
- Develop their musical skills and understanding

Our range of repertoire includes:

Voice for Life Songbook

Voice for Life Festival services

Voice for Life Repertoire for awards

For more information about the songbooks available in the Voice for Life range, go to: [www.rscm.com](http://www.rscm.com) and follow the Voice for Life links.

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## COURSES & TRAINING CHOIRS FOR SINGERS

### Courses

At the RSCM we believe that everyone can benefit from singing, and we offer courses that reflect this. Our courses are open to everyone and are staffed by knowledgeable, enthusiastic and encouraging musicians. No previous experience is required, and no minimum standard is expected – just come along and give it a try! Singing courses are available for young people and for adults.

### Training choirs

As part of our work in promoting singing for people of all ages, the RSCM runs a number of training and chamber choirs in the UK:

RSCM Cathedral Singers sing services and other events to a high musical standard in cathedrals, churches and other venues throughout England. There are groups for boys and girls as well as adults.

RSCM Millennium Youth Choir, the RSCM's flagship choir, is a chamber choir, founded in 2000 at the suggestion of the Archbishop of Canterbury. It offers special opportunities to 36 young singers to sing the widest and most exciting range of sacred music to the highest standards.

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## THE TRAINING SCHEME IN DETAIL

There are four levels in the *Voice for Life* scheme providing training for beginners through to advanced singers. These four levels are designed for use by singers of any age. A child may start at the first level and gradually work through all four levels. An adult singer would work through exactly the same levels.

Starting at the first level (for beginners) the *Voice for Life* levels are as follows:

1. Light Blue
2. Dark Blue
3. Red
4. Yellow

Each level of the scheme provides training in the following areas:

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## THE TRAINING SCHEME IN DETAIL

### **The Choir Trainer's Book**

The choir trainer's book is an invaluable resource for choir trainers and teachers to provide the appropriate training for each level of the scheme. It contains all the teaching material and practical advice needed to train and assess your singers with confidence. Its easy to follow layout has been designed to be completely user-friendly. Supplementary resources are available from the RSCM website.

### **Singer's workbooks**

There are four workbooks – one for each level of *Voice for Life*. Each workbook is designed for use by singers of any age and contains interactive questions, exercises and puzzles. The workbooks complement the Choir Trainer's Book, allowing singers to work at their own pace. At the end of each workbook is a space for the choir trainer or teacher to sign and date each target as it is achieved, showing the progress of the singer through that level.

### **Assessing and progressing**

Each level of the *Voice for Life* has graded targets which are assessed informally by the teacher or choir trainer. Once a singer has completed the necessary training for that level, reached the targets and finished their workbook they can be awarded their badge and/or ribbon & medal. The singer then moves onto the next level. To enable choir trainers and teachers to train and assess their singers with confidence, each level of *Voice for Life* comes complete with:

**Clear targets** which state exactly what a singer should have achieved/be able to demonstrate in order to be awarded their next level.

**Ribbons & medals/lapel badges** to award singers on completion of each level. These are appropriately coloured to mark the progress of each singer.

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## BRONZE, SILVER & GOLD AWARDS IN DETAIL

The Voice for Life training scheme and the Bronze, Silver and Gold awards are designed

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Voice for Life materials are available from:

RSCM Music Direct

T +44 845 021 7726

F: +44 845 021 8826

E [musicdirect@rscm.com](mailto:musicdirect@rscm.com)