



**Singer and Family
Handbook**

2009-10

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When does the season begin/end?	Early September thru early May.
What if my child has to miss a rehearsal?	Please e-mail their choir director or call the CBCC Office at 614-315-6312 to report your child's absence.
How will CBCC communicate with me?	We communicate to parents via e-mail. Information and an updated Calendar are posted on our web site at www.conbrio.cc .
What can I do while my child is rehearsing?	There are tables set up in the cafeteria for parents that want to stay during their child's rehearsal time. Due to limited space in most rehearsal areas, we respectfully ask that parents not observe. Parents are welcome to drop off and pick up their children. Shopping areas and restaurants can be found close by on Campus View Boulevard and on Polaris Parkway.
What if the weather is bad?	The CBCC will report all cancellations to major television stations. We will also send a mass e-mail to all families. Rehearsals are not automatically canceled when schools are closed.
Tuition Related Questions	See page 9
Is financial assistance available?	Yes! (See page 10)
What are you payment plan options?	See page 10
Are we obligated to do fundraising?	No! (See <i>Touring, Touring Accounts and Fundraising</i> , pages 12-13)
Can we volunteer?	Absolutely! (See page 13)

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Con Brio Children's Choir! The purpose of the handbook is to provide you with basic information about our program. Please feel free to contact our office or e-mail if you don't find the information you need.

The Con Brio Children's Choir (CBCC) is a music performance and education program for children and youth that emphasizes the development of musical skills and understanding. Singing is the major focus of the musical experience, and it is a powerfully personal means of musical expression. We hope this experience will form the foundation of a lifelong relationship with music for the singers and their families.

MEMBERSHIP

The CBCC is meant to be a positive learning experience for the singers—one that they will carry with them throughout their lifetime. These young people will be sharing wonderful times together both musically and socially. The CBCC members are expected to understand and practice **commitment** and **responsibility**. We encourage all singers to take pride in their membership of this unique choir program. Every member is expected to remain active and committed to the program for the entire season of his/her enrollment, which begins in early September and concludes with a spring concert in early May.

BACKGROUND

The Con Brio Children's Choir is comprised of singers, ages four through seventeen, who attend various public and private schools throughout Central Ohio. Founded in 2004, by Artistic Director Emily DePaul Gil, Con Brio was granted 501 (c)(3) status in the fall of 2005 and currently has 180 singers enrolled in the program.

Admission to the choir is based on interest, enthusiasm and commitment. Our program is grounded in the philosophy that it is our job to help each chorister reach their fullest potential in musical understanding and performance through an enriching program with the highest musical, vocal and artistic goals. Each singer's individual abilities are taken into consideration when choosing literature, planning instruction as well as placing students strategically within the various ensembles to maximize the learning environment. No child with a passion for singing is ever turned away.

Con Brio was created with the family in mind. Our rehearsal and performance schedule is limited because we understand that children have varied interests. We strive to make participation in Con Brio manageable for students and

parents. For this reason, Con Brio rehearsals are carefully structured to maximize the use of our time, but always carried out with a sense of fun and spirit of joy.

In an effort to fulfill their mission of enhancing the cultural life of their communities through performance, the choirs perform annual concerts at Worthington United Methodist Church in Worthington, Ohio. The choirs have also been invited to sing at the Ohio State House Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, Worthington's Martin Luther King Day Celebration, the annual Columbus Parent Expos and the Ohio Choral Director's Association 2005 Professional Conference. Vivace choir has toured Washington DC and Philadelphia (2006) and to Chicago (2008). The Vivace Choir will travel to Toronto Canada the summer of 2010.

MISSION & GOALS

Mission

To provide a unique opportunity for Central Ohio children to have an enriching and joyous choral experience, while enhancing the cultural life of their communities through performance

Goals

- œ Develop and encourage life long learning, enjoyment, and love of music.

- œ Provide a choral music program of the highest standards that develops musicianship through music theory, sight-reading, ear training, vocal training, interpretation & performance.

- œ Develop and strengthen self-esteem in each chorister.

- œ Broaden each chorister's view and acceptance of the world's diversity through exposure to music from different cultures and historical periods.

- œ Develop, encourage, and strengthen community among choristers through singing, making music and interacting socially together.

- œ Provide opportunities for choristers to give service in the Central Ohio community through music.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The Con Brio Children's Choir offers a comprehensive education in music literacy, vocal pedagogy and artistic development. Our program provides opportunities for students to develop their musical potential and aesthetic understanding through singing in choral ensembles that cater to their individual development. Our curriculum includes the cultivation of a beautiful choral tone, aesthetic understanding, the ability to read music with fluency, the polishing of performance skills, teamwork, and responsible rehearsal habits. Singers hone their listening skills and their ability to analyze and critique music and music performances. Attention is also given to relating their music experiences to the time and culture of the pieces they study, as well as to contemporary society. [For a detailed listing of concepts and skills covered, please see the [Curriculum](#) page of our web site.]

ENSEMBLES

Prelude provides a creative and nurturing environment for our youngest singers (PK/KDG) to experience the joy and wonder of making music together. Immersed in a musical experience as fun and engaging, as it is educational, singers in Prelude will be guided to become TUNEFUL (to be better able to hold tunes in their heads and repeat them), BEATFUL (better able to feel and sustain a beat) and ARTFUL (more receptive to the ideas and feelings expressed in music). Each session students will explore the rich history of American folk music and rhymes through singing, playing, moving and creating.

Amabile Choir is a training level choir for our youngest students in grades one and two. The choristers in this group focus on developing a healthy unison sound, sight-reading skills, beginning part singing, and excellent rehearsal habits. Our goal at this stage is to instill a love of singing in a joyful, encouraging and energized environment.

Bel Canto Choir is an intermediate level choir for students in grades three through five. The choristers in this group continue to develop their music literacy skills, study unison/two part treble literature and develop a keen understanding of healthy vocal production. Our goal at this stage is to ensure that they have all the tools necessary to function autonomously and artistically in any choir setting.

Vivace Choir is an advanced concert choir for singers in grades five through twelve who exhibit excellent rehearsal habits, advanced literacy /vocal skills and display exceptional maturity. The choristers in this group enjoy the challenge of tackling high quality unison, two, three and four part treble repertoire. Vivace Choir tours every other summer (even years).

Bella Voce is a mixed voice chamber ensemble, consisting of 32 young men and women that desire the opportunity to tackle sophisticated mixed voice literature in an intimate choral setting. All female voices invited to sing in Bella Voce are required to sing with the Vivace Choir. Attendance is critical as a chamber group. Therefore, no singer can miss more than four rehearsals per year.

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Prelude

Rehearsal Time: Thursday, 6:10 to 7:00 PM

Rehearsal Location: Library, Slate Hill Elementary School

Director: Lori Gustina

Amabile Choir

Rehearsal Time: Thursday, 6:10 to 7:00 PM

Rehearsal Location: Music Room, Slate Hill Elementary School

Director: Emily DePaul Gil

Assistant: Emily Belcher

Accompanist: Jenny Bowman

Bella Voce Choir

Rehearsal Time: Thursday, 6:15 to 7:15 PM

Rehearsal Location: Cafeteria, Slate Hill Elementary School

Director: Alyson Bates

Accompanist: Cheryl Wilson

Bel Canto Choir

Rehearsal Time: Thursday, 7:15 to 8:15 PM

Rehearsal Location: Music Room, Slate Hill Elementary School

Director: Emily Adams Belcher

Accompanist: Jenny Bowman

Vivace Choir

Rehearsal Time: Thursday, 7:20 to 8:40 PM

Rehearsal Location: Cafeteria, Slate Hill Elementary School

Director: Emily DePaul Gil

Accompanist: Cheryl Wilson

REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE AND PROCEDURES

Attendance Policy

The success of the choir is largely dependent on consistent attendance by choristers. Con Brio strives for 100% attendance by choristers at all scheduled rehearsals. Excessive absences inhibit the progress of the individual student as well as the entire choir. We recognize that special, non-routine events may arise that result in an occasional missed rehearsal by choristers. We request that parents call our office at 614-315-6312 or e-mail their director (see page 15) in advance of the absence.

Illness and a family emergency will excuse choristers from choir rehearsals. In case of an illness or family emergency, parents should call or e-mail in advance to report the reason for the missed rehearsal or performance.

Choristers may be removed from Con Brio for excessive absences and/or tardy arrivals to rehearsals and/or performances.

Rehearsal Procedures

- a. Always wear your rehearsal shirt and bring your water bottle, music bag, music, and two sharpened pencils to rehearsal.
- b. Please arrive no more than 10 minutes before the designated rehearsal time; go directly to the attendance table to check-in, pick up/put on your name tag and report to the rehearsal room.
- c. Singers should not leave the room unless there is an emergency. Please use the restroom and get drinks before you sign in.
- d. Give attendance notes, tuition payments, etc. to Administrative Assistant, Barb White at the attendance table.
- e. Please do not roam around the building at any time. Students should only be in the designated rehearsal area.

f. Please do not bring food into the rehearsal area. Water bottles only. Eat a nutritious meal before you arrive.

g. Show respect for each other, directors, staff and the facility at all times. Do not behave in a manner, which is disruptive to the rehearsal or distracting to the students, directors or accompanists, or which prohibits a positive and successful rehearsal.

h. Running, yelling and/or rowdy behavior is not permitted in the building.

i. Any singer caught with drugs, drug paraphernalia, or any type of weapon (including pocketknives) will be immediately suspended from the choir.

PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE AND PROCEDURES

Attendance is expected at all scheduled performances. Please let your child's director know of any conflicts as soon as they arise.

a. Singers should always eat a nutritious meal and get plenty of rest before a concert.

b. Be sure the singer has used the restroom prior to arrival at concert site.

c. Singers should arrive ten minutes before the performance call time and report directly to the designated area

d. Tardiness at a performance may exclude a singer from participation at that performance.

e. All performers must arrive attired in proper concert dress. Failure to wear proper concert dress may result in non-participation in the concert.

TUITION

Annual Tuition

Tuition is \$350 for students singing in one choir and \$450.00 for students singing in two choirs. The tuition covers one concert season, which runs September through May. [See Appendix 1 for a current tuition schedule.] Choristers who join in January will pay 1/2 tuition.

Registration Fee

There is a one-time registration fee of \$31.00 for new members, which covers the cost of the rehearsal shirt and music bag. The registration fee does not apply towards annual tuition or uniform cost.

Sibling Discount

Families with more than one child in the CBCC pay full tuition for the first child and receive a 50% tuition discount for additional children.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance is currently available for families qualifying for free or reduced lunch programs in their public schools. Families in need not currently receiving free or reduced lunches or home schooling their children are eligible to apply for financial aid as long as they qualify under the public school free and reduced lunch program terms and conditions.

Payment Options

1. One time, lump sum tuition payment, due in September
2. Three installments due in September, October and November
3. Monthly installments due each month, September thru April

Payments should be made in person at the check in table on rehearsal nights.

Con Brio Children's Choir *Tuition Payment Information

Tuition type	Tuition 2009-10	8 payments Sept.-April	3 payments Sept.-Nov.
1 child-1 choir	\$350.00	\$43.75	\$125-125-100
2 children- 1 choir	\$525.00	\$65.63	\$175-175-175
1 child- 2 choirs	\$450.00	\$56.25	\$150-150-150
2 children-2/1 choir(s)	\$625.00	\$78.13	\$225-200-200
2 children- 2 choirs	\$675.00	\$84.38	\$225-225-225
Bella Voce Only (Baritones)	\$200.00	\$25.00	\$75-75-50

Reduced Lunch Participants: \$100 off tuition for the year

Free Lunch Participants: \$200 off tuition for the year

* Tuition totals do not include a one-time Registration fee of \$31.00 due in the Fall.

NOTE: All payments are due by the end of the month. Payments that are not made by the last day of the month are subject to a \$5.00 late fee.

MUSIC

The CBCC Music Library is one of our greatest assets. Great care should be taken to keep the music in good condition. At the start of each concert season all choristers will also be issued music that is the property of CBCC. Each chorister is responsible for his or her music for the year. Choristers who lose or misplace music will be assessed a replacement fee of \$2.00 per lost piece and \$7.00 for lost sight-singing books.

Handling and Care of Music

1. Music must be kept in your CBCC Music Bag.
2. Music must be brought to all rehearsals unless you are notified otherwise.
3. Never fold or roll music.
4. Never write on music without the permission of the director. Any markings should be done **lightly**, in **pencil**, and **only** at the direction of the music director. A sharpened pencil should be brought to each rehearsal. *Do not deface any piece of music.* Blank pages or portions of the music are NOT for drawing pictures, writing personal notes, etc. Photocopied music is done with permission and should be treated the same as an octavo.
5. If for any reason a piece of music is in need of repair, please do so properly with clear tape OR bring it to the attention of your director.

CONCERT UNIFORMS AND GROOMING

Uniforms

The School Closet has put together a unique and flattering uniform for our choristers to wear for performances (Cost range: \$65 to \$75.00). The choristers are fitted for their uniform at a rehearsal in September and payment is traditionally due upon delivery in October. Any singers that misses a fitting dates and/or pick up date is required to go to The School Closet (2497 East Main Street Columbus, Ohio 43209, Phone: 614-237-0088) to be fitted and/or pick up their uniform.

Used Uniforms

CBCC will hold a used uniform sale at the beginning of each concert year. This should provide some financial relief to new, old and "growing" choristers.

Uniform Description

Girls: A pleated, navy skirt, embroidered oxford shirt and a navy blue tie.
Singers are responsible to purchase black flats and nude hose to complete the uniform.

Boys: Navy blue pants, and embroidered oxford shirt and a navy tie.
Singers are responsible to purchase black shoes and black socks to complete the uniform.

Grooming

Just as the ensemble's sound is important, so is the ensemble's appearance. A well-groomed, neatly uniformed ensemble is essential for a truly professional and artistic experience. Good personal hygiene is a must for all singers. Shirts are to be tucked in. Clean teeth and clean, combed hair are always expected of each singer whenever a specific concert dress is required. Hair should be neatly groomed away from the face and may be fastened with natural (matching hair color) barrettes. No unusual colored hair dye, obvious make-up or cosmetics are permitted. No jewelry, except for small stud earrings.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Choristers will be suspended or removed from Con Brio for the following:

- ✎ Excessive instances of uncooperative behavior while performing, representing the CBCC, or at rehearsals
- ✎ Using tobacco, alcohol, or drugs at any time during the choir year whether or not associated with CBCC activities

COMMUNICATION

The CBCC calendar is posted on our web site, www.conbrio.cc. In an effort to maintain effective communication with families, all communication with families will be done via e-mail. Please notify us immediately if your e-mail address changes.

TOURING, TOURING ACCOUNTS & FUNDRAISING

Opportunities are available for Vivace singers to participate in tours to various locales both foreign and domestic. CBCC maintains a separate "touring" account for singers at all levels. If a child chooses to participate in CBCC sponsored fundraising opportunities, all the profits from his/her individual sales are designated by the CBCC Board of Directors to be held in escrow in the singer's personal touring account.

The credits held in escrow are available to help pay for any future tour expenses which the singer might incur. They are not available to pay any other CBCC related fees, such as tuition, uniforms, etc.

The escrowed funds are owned by the CBCC and are not eligible for cash withdrawal by the singer.

You may also request a statement for your singer's touring account at any time, and parents are encouraged on occasion to review the account activity and accuracy of the information shown.

Any balance remaining in the touring account at the time of graduation or withdrawal from the CBCC reverts to the CBCC general touring fund. This fund is used to provide financial assistance and pay general touring costs not covered by touring fees charged to participants. Upon request, any balance remaining in a graduating singer's touring fund can be transferred into an sibling's touring fund.

PLACEMENT INTERVIEWS

Our initial placement interviews are an excellent avenue for gathering data about each child's vocal development, auditory ability and their current level of music literacy. No preparation is necessary as we carefully guide them through this simple process, which is also crafted to build their self-esteem. At the conclusion of every concert season each chorister's yearly growth is celebrated during their individual placement interviews and their progress is documented in their personal, ongoing choral portfolio.

Placement Interviews for the Con Brio Children's Choir are held in the spring for children who are just completing grades KDG through eleven.

VOLUNTEERS

As a not-for-profit organization, the Con Brio Children's Choir depends on volunteers. Volunteer opportunities are numerous and diverse, from choir managers to special projects. CBCC welcomes all interested parents to help keep the choir going and growing. Contact Beth Gasior (bgasior@columbus.rr.com), Board President and Volunteer Coordinator if you are interested.

COMMITMENT TO SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAMS

The success of the Con Brio Children's Choir is dependent on the support of the music teachers in Central Ohio. Con Brio singers should be leaders in their

school music ensembles. It is mandatory for every Con Brio singer to be an active participant in his or her school choir if one is available. The only exceptions would be where the student must choose between instrumental and vocal music or an irreconcilable schedule conflict.

CHORISTER RESIGNATION

We expect each singer who has made a commitment to sing for the entire season to live up to that commitment. If, however, an extremely unusual circumstance occurs which would prohibit a singer from honoring that commitment, a personal conference between the Director and parents will be required before submitting a letter of resignation. If a student resigns, the parent is still responsible for the entire tuition fee.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (CBCC SOCIETY)

The Con Brio Children's Choir is supported in their endeavors through the hard work and dedication of volunteers in the Con Brio Children's Choir Society who generously offer their assistance and leadership to the choir. The Con Brio Children's Choir Society is comprised of parents and community members who share in implementing the vision of this unique choral program. The Society provides enrichment opportunities through it's fundraising endeavors and leadership to support the choir in it's varied activities. The Con Brio Children's Choir Society is an educational, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

The Con Brio Children's Choir Society makes vital contributions by:

- Helping to implement the choir's mission and goals.
- Initiating community and corporate fundraising to maintain reasonable tuition prices and supplement finances for performances, financial aid, community outreach and future choir tours.
- Fostering a team spirit as well as working to build the choir's reputation throughout central Ohio

2009-10 Board of Directors, Con Brio Children's Choir Society

Beth Gasior, President & Volunteer Coordinator

Mindy Marfurt, Secretary & Tour Coordinator

Luis G. Gil, Treasurer

Trish Perger, Fundraising Account Manager

Emily DePaul Gil, Artistic Director

CONTACT INFORMATION

Con Brio Children's Choir Office

614-315-6312

Administrative Staff

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Barb White, Administrative Assistant

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Artistic Staff

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Alyson Bates, *Director - Bella Voce Choir*

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Emily Belcher, *Director - Bel Canto Choir*

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Jenny Bowman, *Accompanist - Amabile & Bel Canto Choirs*

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Lori Gustina, *Director - Prelude*

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Jill Matthews, Social Chair

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Trish Perger, Fundraising Account Manager

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