



IRISH INSTITUTE OF
MUSIC & SONG

Institiúid Ceoil & Amhránaíochta na hÉireann

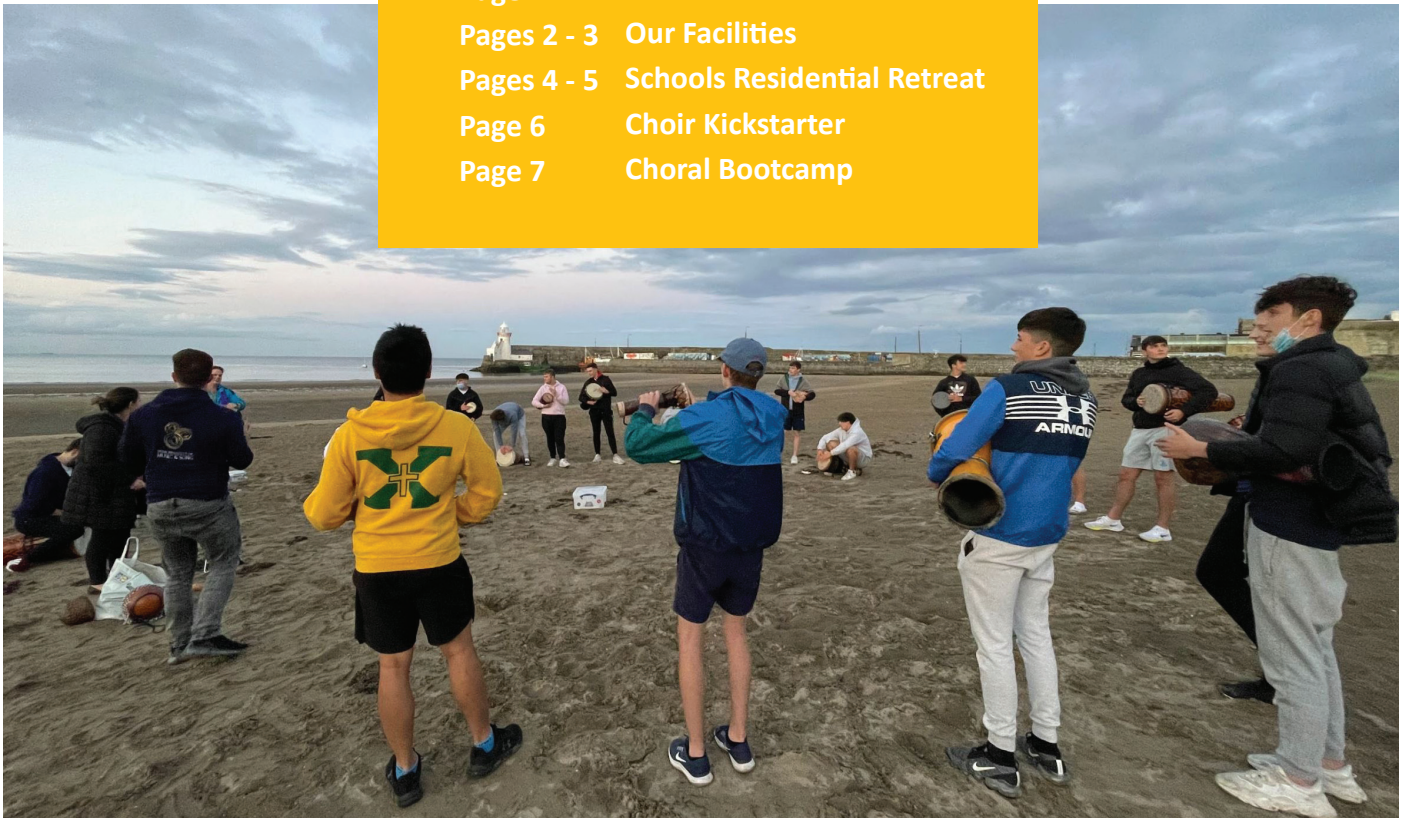
Schools
Residential
Retreat





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The Irish Institute of Music and Song (IIMS) is a world-facing music facility based in Balbriggan, County Dublin.

Our Mission is to see every student's self-confidence grow while developing an active understanding of music and song. Our teachers are internationally recognised educators and musicians with worldwide experience as performing and recording artists.

We are just 10 minutes from the M1 (Exits 5/6) or just a 5-minute walk from Balbriggan train station.



Our Facilities



Our campus is closely connected to local history since Bedford House is a Georgian home built in 1763 by the Hamilton family, who ran the local mills. Nowadays, it houses our **Luxury Accommodation**, where teachers, musicians and patrons stay during their time with us.



Our ultra modern **Japanese-style Accommodation** includes 36 pods, each with its own comfy mattress, locker, double plug and reading light. Each of the student pod rooms is named after a legendary Irish band.



The Lark Concert Hall is a 400-seater performance venue and entertainment hub, newly constructed on our campus. This project represents our vision for Balbriggan's future, acting as a cultural hub for the area and the island as a whole. The venue will allow us to increase our focus on live entertainment and cultural promotion, while also enabling us to offer new and exciting third-level courses at our campus.



The Square acts as our primary space for seminars, workshops, camps, lectures, masterclasses and recitals. Situated between Bedford and the Pods, it serves as the hub of our residential courses.



“An Crann Ceoil” (The Music Tree) is a newly-commissioned piece of art by world-class tree carver from Waterford, John Hayes. Designed in partnership with local music students, this incredible sculpture depicts the musical story of the IIMS.



The new **Amphitheatre** is a custom-built outdoor performance space. Every single rock and brick used in its construction was taken from the ground of the site. It now welcomes outdoor rehearsals, events and sunset recitals.



Roscarrig House will house the Session Room, the Folk Music Library, and the traditional coach house which has been turned into the LaLa Café and Restaurant. The adjacent Guitar Garden is home to the world’s largest guitar (unofficially). At 46 feet, it has to be seen to be believed.



Schools Residential Retreat

Our Residential Retreat is the ultimate immersive musical experience for post-primary groups in Ireland! From September to May, we host groups from around the country at our campus for 1, 2 or 3 days of high-quality music activities and workshops. With all food, accommodation and educational facilities on site, we've got you covered for the duration of your stay!

Vocal Warm-Ups - Start the day with full body exercises and workshops to train the voice.

Choral Masterclass - Masterclasses, workshops and bootcamps for established and newly established singing groups.

Ukulele Workshop - No previous experience required, guaranteed to learn a song in 1 lesson.

African Percussion Workshop - Learn african rhythms and percussion.

Bodhrán Building Workshop - Build a bodhrán from scratch with a custom design and learn to play it.

Music Production Seminar - Look behind the scenes of modern music production.

History of Pop Music - Learn how advances in technology have changed the face of modern pop and test your pop music knowledge in a fun music quiz.

Music as a Career - See the wide range of careers musicians can embark on.

Film Scoring - Work together to add sound to a silent film, or create sound effects for your favourite shows with the help of our instrument collection.

Music Literacy - Learn how to read and write music notation through interactive group exercises.

Irish Music Workshop - Learn how to identify different types of Irish tunes. Works great with the bodhrán course.

Open Mic Cabaret - Cabaret variety night in our performance venue with lights, tables and candles.

Special Courses - Our experienced faculty can create special courses on any topic you wish to cover. Just ask us!

Courses run Mon-Wed and Wed-Friday from September to May. The standard cost is based on a 30-student group and 2 teachers. Arrangements can be made for smaller groups on a case-by-case basis.

Single Day Retreats

Single Day Retreats are a fun and hands-on introduction to what we do at the IIMS. Since we're easily accessed by rail and public transport, the IIMS is the perfect venue for a quick day out no matter your group's experience.

Full Day Package - Vocal Masterclass, Percussion Workshop, Ukulele Workshop, Music Production Seminar, History of Pop Lecture, Pop Music Quiz.

Vocal Focus - Vocal Masterclass, Ukulele Workshop, Group Singing Workshop, Music Production Seminar.

Performance Sampler (~3 hours) - Vocal Masterclass, Percussion Workshop, Ukulele Workshop.

Traditional Music Day - Bodhrán Building Workshop, Irish Music Seminar, Group Singing Masterclass.

Large Group Special - Vocal Masterclass, Ukulele Workshop, History of Pop Lecture, Pop Music Quiz.

Some of our Faculty



Breda McCarthy
*Programmes &
Schools Coordinator*

Breda is a graduate of the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick, where she completed a Bachelor of Arts in Voice and Dance. Her time at UL allowed her to perform with many ensembles, including the Academy Gospel Choir, while also completing a semester of study abroad at Lund University, Sweden. She has a keen interest in arts management and music education and loves to teach vocals.



Hugh Clarke
*Head of Media
Lecturer in Music
Technology*

Hugh is a multi-instrumentalist who has toured the world with choirs and as a session musician. He has released his own music under the moniker *93 Acres*. Hugh works as a producer and mixing engineer who specialises in music technology education both here in the IIMS and in his YouTube channel, *93 Acres*.



John Nutekpor
*Lecturer &
Outreach Coordinator*

John is a multi-talented and interdisciplinary musician, dancer, scholar, educator, and performer. Born and steeped in the Ewe culture from Ghana, West Africa, his current research is focused on exploring Irish - Ghanaian cultural relationships with sustainable models of cultural integration. As a specialist in African percussion, traditional songs and dances, Nutekpor has presented and performed at festivals, concerts, and conferences nationally and internationally for the past fifteen years.



Choir Kickstarter

At the IIMS, we see singing and music participation as a way to build communities and promote a healthy way of life. Choirs are more than just musical groups; they are social outlets, embodiments of collaborative spirit and bearers of collective histories, traditions and shared experiences. We believe that where there are people, there should be choirs. So whether you're looking to kickstart some singing in your local community, or brush up on the latest addition to your repertoire, our Choir Retreats could be just the thing for you! Michael, Rebecca, Sorcha and the rest of the IIMS team will be here to afford you the time, support and rehearsal space needed to do great things.

For choirs still gaining experience, we'll get you up to speed on basic techniques and have you performing a new song by the end of the day! Our single-day Kickstarter Programme contains the following workshops:

Whole-Body Warmup - Learn new and engaging routines for stretching out vocal chords and bodies alike. Focus on pitch, diction, breath-control and embodied performance techniques.

Range Testing - Our in-house choral experts can find out what vocal ranges your choristers have and compile their results into a shared spreadsheet.

Sectional Rehearsals - We have the staff and spaces required to give each voice group the time they need to learn their parts. These intensive sessions will help the singers identify their parts before joining together with their colleagues.

History of Pop Music: Lecture and Quiz - Learn how advances in technology have helped form the pop music tunes we know and love today. Compete against your colleagues in a quiz that spans 70 years of pop music knowledge!

Group Singing Masterclass - Come together as a group to perform and end the day with a feeling of real accomplishment. Choir directors can avail of guided tuition or just sit back and enjoy!

Lunch at the LaLa Restaurant - Enjoy some lunch provided by our on-campus cooking staff. A great reward for a hard day's work.

Optional Instrumental Workshops - To add more variety to the day, why not dive into learning a new instrument? Choose from percussion, ukulele or a mix of both.

Choral Bootcamp

We can restructure our Kickstarters to suit more advanced groups at no extra cost, but groups who really want to immerse themselves in choral studies can book in for a residential course. This will include a selection of the previous workshops in addition to those that follow.

Vocal Masterclass - Study choral techniques in an environment that emphasises embodiment, group synchronisation and mental exercises.

Barbershop Masterclass - Try a new style of singing and hear what it's like when a chord really 'rings'.

Vocology Lecture - Learn the science behind your vocal chords and see how it can improve your singing.

We can facilitate any number of students on our campus. Groups who book in for a residential stay can avail of our performance facilities, accommodation and added restaurant meals. We have 36 Japanese pod-style beds and luxury accommodation onsite at Bedford House.

Some of our Faculty



Dr. Michael T. Dawson

*CEO, Lecturer,
Conductor*

Michael is an award-winning conductor, educator, co-founder and CEO of the Irish Institute of Music and Song. He returned to Ireland in 2019 from the University of Southern California where he was awarded a Fulbright scholarship and teaching assistantship to pursue a Doctorate in Musical Arts in Choral Music. Prior to moving to the U.S., he taught at the National University of Ireland Maynooth where he established the Maynooth University Chamber Choir as one of the top performing ensembles in Ireland. In 2022 Michael was nominated to the World Choir Council.



Rebecca Gilbert

*Head of Early Years
Music, Conductor*

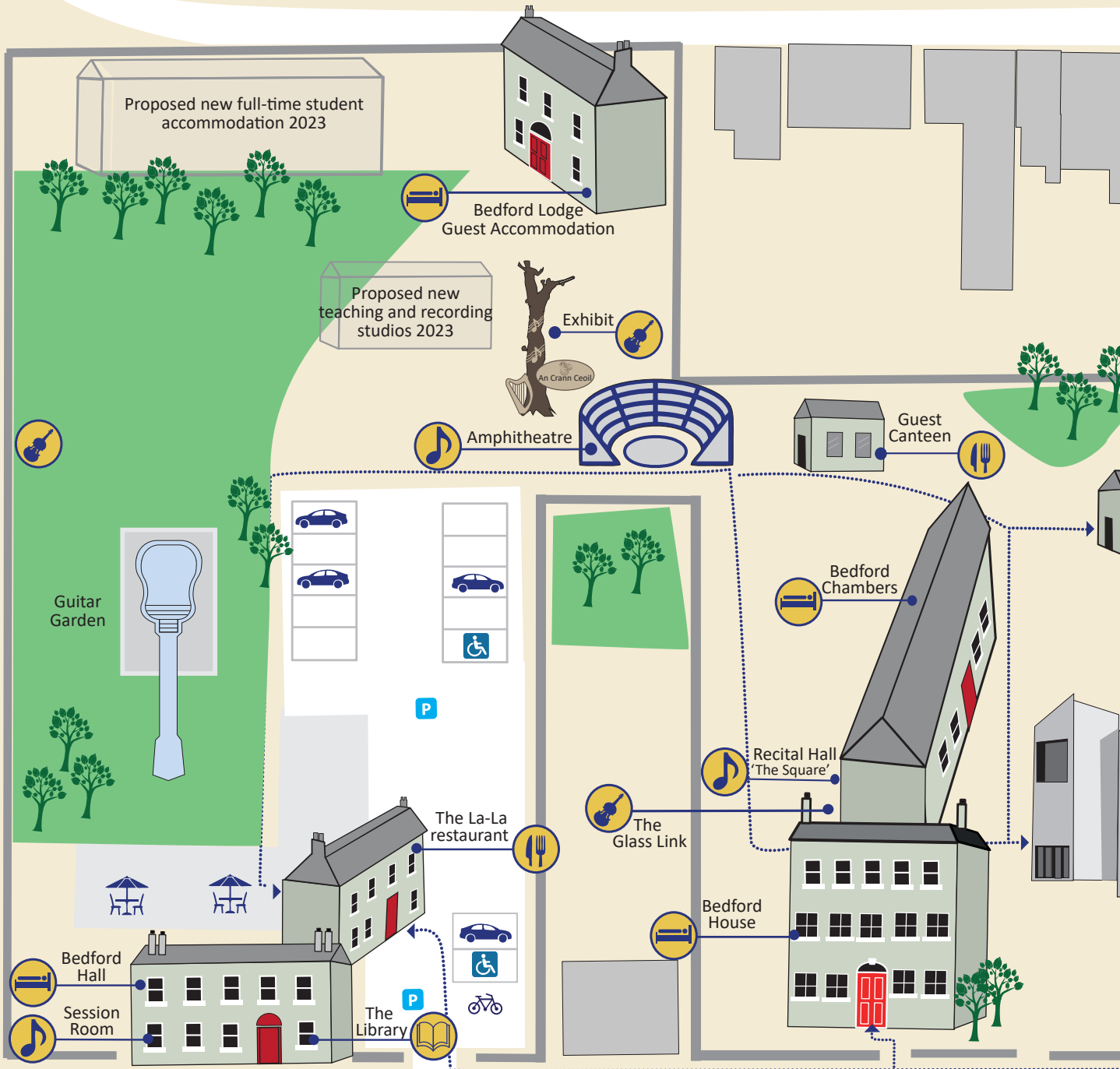
Rebecca is an award-winning singer, conductor and multi-instrumentalist with a special interest in Barbershop music. She is a passionate advocate of the positive health benefits of music, especially group singing, and directs four choirs to share this philosophy. Rebecca is the head of the Early Years Music program at the Irish Institute of Music, helping children begin their musical journey in a fun and friendly way.



Sorcha Fenlon

*IIMS Manager
Voice & Piano Teacher*

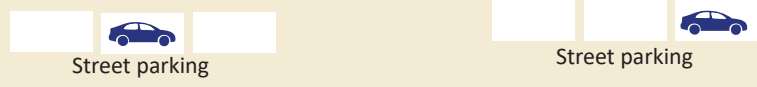
Sorcha is a graduate of The Irish College of Musical Theatre and the Royal Irish Academy of Music/Trinity College Dublin. Sorcha currently sings with vocal ensemble ANÚNA. Some of her recent theatre credits include Carrie in Big Shot the Musical (RAVE Theatre Festival, New York and The Helix, Dublin), Maria in West Side Story (Leixlip Musical and Variety Group AIMS Best Overall Show Winner 2018) and was a featured soloist for Taylor's Irish Cabaret Taylors Three Rock (2018) and Celtic Nights.



To Balbriggan Beach,
Harbour and
Train Station

Vehicle Access

Church St.



Street parking

Hampton Pl.

To Skerries

To Ardgillan
Castle & Gardens (3km)



Campus Map

Hampton St.



Performance



Accommodation



Learning



Exhibits



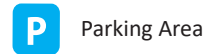
Restaurant



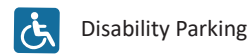
Offices



Parking Space



Parking Area



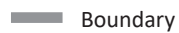
Disability Parking



Bicycle Parking

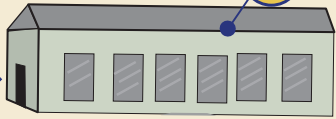


Walkway

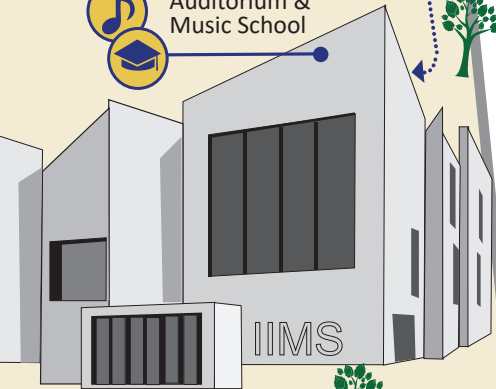


Boundary

Teaching Studios
& Offices



Auditorium &
Music School



Main access
to the
Auditorium

To Balbriggan
Town Centre



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