



ORTHODOX SYRIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION OF THE EAST
UK & Ireland Region (OSSAE-UK & I)
DIOCESE OF UK-EUROPE & AFRICA

Circular No: 01/2020
OSSAE-UK&I/ Talent Competitions 2020

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Version History

| Version | Date | Author | Details |
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| 1.0 | 15-Dec-2019 | S Chacko | First draft version of the circular |
| 1.1 | 14-Jan-2020 | S Daniel | Second amended version of the Circular |

Preface

Dear brothers and sisters,

We thank our Merciful God for nurturing our talents over the last few years, and we earnestly think the talent competitions from 2013 were blessed experiences.

OSSAE-UK aims to recognise beloved children through organising Talent Competitions in Co-curricular / Arts & Sports category at Unit, District and Diocese levels. It would offer wider opportunities to our Sunday school children for further nurturing their talents. This would also hope to create more fellowship, sense of oneness and belonging and cater healthy relationship amongst children, teachers and parents.

We once again aim to promote talents of our children in 2020 for the common good and hope that this opportunity would not give way for unhealthy arguments or disputes. However, if any grievances or disputes arise, it is advised to discuss with the Head Teacher and Vicar in order to assure transparency in all the proceedings and assessment and allow us to continuous improvement as we progress through years.

It would be expected of all the supervisors, participants and supporters that they would take care and attention in keeping the harmony among everyone. The competition is not meant to cater unhealthy behaviour or expressions which would destroy the goal. We need to keep the relationship as the beloved children of God and the determination for unity and fellowship would help everyone to keep themselves bound to the Church , Sunday School, Teachers, Friends and Parents in perfect love. We may be reminded all the time that every participant, by dedicating their talents, wins over idleness and complacency and becomes tool for the Glory of God. We emphasize the point that participation is more important than winning! Hope the talent meets would bring us closer to God and may we together, in Divine Love, praise and glorify His Holy Name for ever!!!

Please refer to the *Appendix II* for topics/syllabus for competition for different age group

Good luck to all participants!

Rev. Fr. Anoop Malayil Abraham

Vice President, OSSAE-UK

Simon Chacko

Director, OSSAE-UK

Rules and Guidelines for Talent Competition 2020

1. **Age groups** (Age calculated as on 1st January 2020)

| Group | Birthday Range [Including these dates] | Remarks |
|--------------|---|-----------------------|
| Infants | 01-Jan-2015 – 31-Dec-2015 | Regular students only |
| Sub juniors | 01-Jan-2012 – 31-Dec-2014 | Regular students only |
| Juniors | 01-Jan-2009 – 31-Dec-2011 | Regular students only |
| Intermediate | 01-Jan-2006 – 31-Dec-2008 | Regular students only |
| Seniors | 01-Jan-2001 – 31-Dec-2005 | Regular students only |

Infant Category

As agreed in 2017 Teachers Conference, Sub Juniors age category is now split into two; Infants and Sub-juniors. Age 4 students will be grouped under Infant category and can only participate in unit level competitions. Age 5 to 7 students will come under Sub junior category and can participate in further levels of competition. Elocution topics and group song choices will be common for both categories.

Note: Head teachers to carefully place students in their respective age groups based on their age and this should be strictly adhered.

2. **Common Rules**

- ⚠ Marks will be reduced if exceed or not achieved the allotted time (0.50 marks for every 30 seconds).
- ⚠ written manuscripts, electronic, visual aids/devices of any kind will not be permitted.
- ⚠ Prompting (action, guidance) will not be permitted.
- ⚠ Audio or video recording of any kind will not be permitted.
- ⚠ Participants should ensure word clarity in all the events.

Events for Centralized Competition 2020

Solo song

Song: Christian devotional songs

Language: English/ Malayalam

Time: 2 - 3 minutes (No warning bell will be given in the event of exceeding the allotted time limit) **Marks:** 30 (tune: 10, rhythm: 10, voice: 10)

Note:

- ⚠ Same song could be sung in different languages or tone. However, different songs should not be mixed together
- ⚠ Avoid pop music albums, **Classical style (Indian or Western)** for Solo Song events. Only Christian devotional songs/hymns are allowed.

Group Song

With a view to encourage smaller children to learn the basic hymns before going to a wider range, we have tried to restrict the selection of hymns for each category as follows:

| Group | Hymns |
|-----------------------|---|
| Infants & Sub juniors | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any hymn from MOC Holy Qurbanakramam 2015 and newer editions |
| Juniors | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any hymn from MOC Holy Qurbanakramam 2015 and newer editionsHoly BaptismEldoFuneral Service of Men |
| Intermediate | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any hymn from MOC Holy Qurbanakramam 2015 and newer editionsPerunnal Sushrushakramam (Aandu Taksa)Funeral of Women |
| Seniors | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any hymn from MOC Holy Qurbanakramam 2015 and newer editionsPassions week songs (Passions Monday to Holy Saturday)Shema NamaskaramFuneral service of priests |

Language: English/ Malayalam/ Syriac

Time: 2.00 - 3 minutes (No warning bell will be given in the event of exceeding the allotted time limit)

Marks: 30 (tune: 10, rhythm: 10, harmony: 10)

No. of participants: 3-5 (exceptional circumstances 2 but never no more than 5)

Please note the Introduction of song/hymn is not included in the time of the main song. Time starts with the actual song

Note:

▲ One member from the group should announce the reference of the song prior to singing.

▲ Tapping, stamping or verbal counting to start the song for rhythm should not be audible to judges and public.

▲ Same song could be sung in different languages or tone. However, different songs should not be mixed together

△ Exceptional Circumstances: When a particular Sunday school have only 2 children to participate for group song in an age group [Sub-juniors/Juniors/Intermediate/Seniors]. Further, this should be strictly certified and communicated via written means to the Sunday School Vice President and Director by the concerned Vicar and Head Teacher.

△ Selection of hymns for Group Song: All Sunday school units must select hymns for Group Song only after consulting their Vicar. If the validity of a hymn needs further clarity, please contact Sunday School Vice President and Director via written means by the concerned Vicar and Head Teacher

Elocution

Topic: As per guidelines/syllabus. For more details, please refer to the **Appendix II**

Language: English/Malayalam

Time: 3-5 minutes (No warning bell will be given in the event of exceeding the allotted time)

Marks: 30 (subject /content) - 10, presentation (ability to convey message) - 10, language – 10
(language and communication skills)

Elocution Note:

1. One of the two elocution topics will be chosen randomly before the start of the competition.
2. Sub juniors will have only one subject from this year.

Quiz Competition Guidelines

Quiz competition is aimed at improving Sunday school children's knowledge on biblical, church history, faith and tradition aspects. In 2020, we aim to conduct quiz competitions at **unit level only** based on the guidelines given below with a view to promote children's general knowledge anchored on Sunday school education.

Group Guidelines

1. This quiz competition to be held between the ages of 8-18
2. A group shall consist of minimum 2 and maximum 4 students.
3. Wherever possible, there should be one student each off the following age groups 8-10, 11-14, and 15-18
4. If it is a team of only 2 students, the age group should be 8-12 and 13-18.
(Differentiated questions will be given to this group based on age)

Guidelines on Topics

1. Quiz competition questions to be prepared at unit level based on the following topic:
 - Joshua - 25 %
 - St Mark - 25%
 - Holy Baptism & Holy Qurbana - 25%
 - Church history & Tradition - 25%
- The decision of the quizmaster will be final and will not be subjected to any change.
- The participants shall not be allowed to use any books, manuscripts, mobile phones or other electronic instruments.
- Audience shall not give any hints or clues to the competitors.

Additional Quiz Guidelines

Following are some of the ideas could be implemented on a 5 round quiz competition.

1. Visual
2. Situations/ Locations
3. Holy Sacraments related
4. Choose your Question: Each team chooses their questions from a slide which has options like 2 marks, 5 marks, and 10 marks. This particular round carries negative marks there by avoiding a tie.
5. Sequencing: Put things in a logical order. Example: Tell the Books of Bible in the correct order and whichever team does it correctly in 1 minute gets the mark.

Competition Level, Qualifiers and Venue

Unit Level

Sunday school units should conduct talent competition on a Saturday / Sunday in February to April 2020 which suit the unit's convenience, but it should be conducted in consultation with vicar and teachers council, and by ensuring the presence of Vicar or a Priest authorised by the vicar at the venue of the competition. Sunday school units to conduct unit level competition well in advance in order to enable those children to prepare who are qualified to attend District level Competition before children break for summer holidays.

First and second prize winners only from each age group and events from unit level competitions will qualify for district level competition. Head teachers should send list of qualified first and second prize winners using the attached form (appendix 1) via email to their respective Sunday school District Inspector/coordinator on or before midnight of **24th May 2020**. Head Teachers should also include the final count of children and adults attending District Talent Competition from each unit. This will help the hosting parish to plan the resources.

Please note that **no results or amendments will be accepted after the declared deadline**

District Level:

North, Central, South and Ireland district co-ordinators are responsible to conduct district level competitions on **27th June 2020** at venues already identified. The district co-ordinators have the responsibility to inform Sunday school units within the district regarding the addresses of the venue. District co-ordinator should conduct the competitions in consultation with the vicars and head teachers of the respective venues and may seek advice from the Diocesan Talent Competition Co-ordinator as required. The district co-ordinators should send the list of qualified first and second prize winners to the Diocesan Talent Competition Co-ordinator, Sunday school Secretary and Sunday school Director on or before midnight of **19th July 2020**. As the holiday season will be starting then, please include draft count of children and adults attending Diocesan Talent Competition from each unit. This will help the hosting parish to plan the resources.

Identified Venues:

North: Sheffield, **Central:** Cambridge **South:** Crawley **Ireland:** Dublin

Diocese Level:

First and second prize winners from District level will qualify for Diocesan competition on **26th September 2020** this will be held between 09:00-17:30 hours

Venue: **Manchester**

General Rules & Guidelines

1. The unit, district and diocese level competitions should be conducted impartially and organizers must adhere to the competition rules and guidelines given in this Circular for the centralized competition events.
2. **Unit** level competitions should be organized and supervised by the Head Teacher only in consultation with teacher's council headed by the parish Vicar. In case of any inconvenience only his/her deputy or a senior teacher of the respective Sunday school should be authorized to conduct the competition. Competition should be conducted well in advance to help participants to prepare for the next higher level of competition. Judges for the competition should be selected as per guidelines provided. Head Teachers should notify the competition details to their respective Sunday school district coordinator.
3. **District** Sunday school Coordinators will be responsible for organizing the competition in their respective district; they should notify the details to the UK region Talent Competition Coordinator and Sunday school Director. Judges for the competition should be selected as per guidelines provided. First and second prize winners from school/unit level should qualify for the district level competition. Competitions should be conducted well in advance to help participants to prepare for the next higher level.
4. **Diocese**—(UK Region) level competition should be organized by the Talent Competition Coordinator, while Sunday school Director holds the overall responsibility and supervision of the competition, and he should act for the vice president and Diocesan Metropolitan. Judges for this level of competition should be selected by the Director and Vice President.
5. Taking picture and publishing children's participating the events without authorization is not acceptable. Flash photography is strictly restricted at all the times. Parents who wish to take picture or video of their children in the events are strictly advised to adhere to direction of the event organizer.
6. Only regular students are eligible to participate in talent competitions. Those students who do not have regular attendance, discontinued or disqualified students and private students (matured students who do not fall in the age category) are not eligible to participate in any levels of talent competitions.

7. All communications from OSSAE-UK & Ireland Office will be made to the head teacher only.
8. The rules for the competition, topics for the elocution, group song choices and number of participants will be as per this circular (Please refer to Appendix II). It will be the participant's responsibility to learn to manage time. Warning bells may be avoided to minimize distraction.
9. Sunday school units may continue to organize suitable Co-Curricular activities which include arts & sports and other events, such as Bible quiz, Bible reading, essay, and story writing, drawing and coloring for promoting various talents of our students.
10. The decision of the judges would be final at all level of competitions and any complaints arising from the competition should be directed to the head teacher of the respective Sunday school.
11. If more than one candidates win first, second or third prizes, first check for judges notes to see whether any clear indication of one person could get an advantage over other. If not, one person should be selected through a lot to qualify for the next higher level of competition.
12. The head teachers, district Inspector /coordinators should preserve the details of the competitions (score sheet, participant list etc.) for a year, and the Diocesan Talent coordinator should keep full details of diocesan competition in safe custody for at least a period of one year.

13. Competition Judgement and Panel of Judges

13.1 **Unit Level** competition: All the judges should not be from the respective parishes. Panel of three judges must at least include one from outside the parish. Competition should be conducted in the presence of parish Vicar who can be one of the judges. Under special circumstances of a parish/unit, judge/s may be selected from the same parish preferably among someone whose children are not directly involved in Sunday school activities of that parish. In such circumstances, Head teachers should notify their District Coordinators of the same. Under such circumstances, one member of the panel of judges should be one of our Priests. The Vicar, who is the chairman/president of the Sunday school unit, will be the final authority with regards the unit level competition judgement and announcement of the winners on the same day of competition. Head Teachers should notify the details of competition after the competition to their respective District Inspectors/coordinators within the deadline.

13.2 **District level** competition: Panel of three Judges for the District competition should be preferably from outside the district. However, under special circumstances, if it is not viable, District coordinators should consult the Sunday school Director for advice. Under any circumstances, one member of the panel of judges should be one of our church's Priests.

13.3 **Diocese level** competition: Judges should be selected by the Vice president and Director of the OSSAE-UK & Ireland. Vice president will be responsible for supervising the proceedings of the competition judgment.

13.4 Judges are advised to use decimal numbers at all three levels of competition to reduce risk of equal scoring by two or more participants. Judges should also sign wherever corrections are made in the mark/score sheet.

13.5. The participation sequence will be decided by drawing lots. Participants should be asked to pick a lot to get a chest number in random. Participants should then be sequenced in the ascending order of chest numbers. This method is highly recommended to decide the sequence of elocution competition.

13.6 District Inspectors and Diocesan officials to carefully choose the tabulation team and judges. They should be given a quick summary/advice about the rules and regulation before all competitions and remind to keep the confidentiality.

Appendix I

Appeal Procedure

The Appeal Committee consists of the following people:

- a. The Vice President
- b. Director
- c. Secretary
- d. Talent Competition Coordinator and
- e. Talent Competition Assistant Coordinator (if required)

General guidelines

1. In case of any concern regarding the Talent Competitions, the participant or their parents could raise an appeal in a written format duly signed. This should be forwarded by the respective Head Teacher's **only** after the approval by their parish Vicar.
2. The written appeal should be scanned and emailed to the OSSAE-UK Director and Secretary within 5 days after the competition. Appeals after this time period will not be considered under any circumstances.
3. A decision will be made on the appeals within two weeks and the same will be communicated by the Director to the concerned Head Teacher.
4. The scores given by the judges are final and will always be taken into consideration while handling an appeal.
5. Disqualification appeals will be dealt based on the OSSAE UK Talent Competition guidelines issued every year.
6. The decisions taken by the appeal committee will be final and there'll be no clause for further appeals.
7. The appeal committee can request respective district coordinators for the District Level score sheets in the event of a score verification and they must provide the score sheets in time.

Appendix II

List of Eligible Participants for the District Talent Competition, 2020

Name of the Sunday school Unit.....

District: Competition date.....

| Event | Category | Prize | Full Name/s | Date of Birth [dd/mm/yyyy] |
|------------|---------------|-------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Solo Song | Sub Juniors | I | | |
| | | II | | |
| | Juniors | I | | |
| | | II | | |
| | Intermediates | I | | |
| | | II | | |
| | Seniors | I | | |
| | | II | | |
| Elocution | Sub Juniors | I | | |
| | | II | | |
| | Juniors | I | | |
| | | II | | |
| | Intermediates | I | | |
| | | II | | |
| | Seniors | I | | |
| | | II | | |
| Group Song | Sub Juniors | I | 1) | |
| | | | 2) | |
| | | | 3) | |

| | | | | |
|--|----------------------|----|----|--|
| | | | 4) | |
| | | | 5) | |
| | | II | 1) | |
| | | | 2) | |
| | | | 3) | |
| | | | 4) | |
| | | | 5) | |
| | Juniors | I | 1) | |
| | | | 2) | |
| | | | 3) | |
| | | | 4) | |
| | | | 5) | |
| | | II | 1) | |
| | | | 2) | |
| | | | 3) | |
| | | | 4) | |
| | | | 5) | |
| | Intermediates | I | 1) | |
| | | | 2) | |
| | | | 3) | |
| | | | 4) | |
| | | | 5) | |
| | | II | 1) | |
| | | | 2) | |
| | | | 3) | |
| | | | 4) | |
| | | | 5) | |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|----|----|--|
| | | | 5) | |
| Group Song | Seniors | I | 1) | |
| | | | 2) | |
| | | | 3) | |
| | | | 4) | |
| | | | 5) | |
| | | II | 1) | |
| | | | 2) | |
| | | | 3) | |
| | | | 4) | |
| | | | 5) | |

Name /Sign of the Vicar


.....

.....

Name & Sign of the Head Teacher

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| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|
|  | <u>OSSAE-UK & I: Talent Competition Guideline Chart 2020</u> | | | | |
| Competition | Infants (01-01-15 – 31-12-15) & Sub-Juniors (01-01-12 – 31-12-14) | Juniors (01-01-2009 – 31-12-2011) | Intermediate (01-01-2006 – 31-12-2008) | Seniors (01-01-2001 – 31-12-2005) (Regular Students only) | Specific Instructions |
| Solo Song | Any suitable Christian song excluding pop music. | | | | A song in Malayalam/English languages only. |
| Group Song | Any hymn from MOC Holy Qurbanakramam 2015 and newer editions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any hymn from MOC Holy Qurbanakramam 2015 and newer editionsHoly BaptismEldoFuneral Service of Men | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any hymn from MOC Holy Qurbanakramam 2015 and newer editionsPerunnal Sushrushakram (Aandu Taksa)Funeral of Women | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any hymn from MOC Holy Qurbanakramam 2015 and newer editionsPassions week songs (Passions Monday to Holy Saturday)Shema NamaskaramFuneral service of priests | A hymn from the specified service in Malayalam/English/ Syriac languages only. |
| Elocution Topics | Story from old testament | Obedience is far better than sacrifice | Importance of St. Mary in Orthodox Church | My life as an orthodox Christian in the 21st century | In Malayalam or English only Use of any kind of written information, use of manuscripts or any supporting devices are not permitted. |
| | | "In everything set them an example by doing what is good" Titus 2:7 | "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you" 1 Corinthians 6:19 | "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." 1 Peter 4:10 | |
| <div>➤ Elocution topic will be randomly selected from the two topics prior to the actual competition.</div> <div>➤ First and second prize winners of each category from unit level competitions will qualify for district level competition.</div> <div>➤ First and second prize winners from District level to qualify for Diocesan competition on 26th September 2020 at Manchester.</div> <div>➤ Deadline to notify participant list and guest count for District level competition: by the midnight of 24th May 2020</div> <div>➤ Deadline to notify participant list and draft guest count for Diocesan level competition: by the midnight of 19th July 2020.</div> | | | | | |