

10TH ANNIVERSARY



**junior
theatre**

Festival
'26

NEW ZEALAND

Registration + Info Pack

Fri 23 & Sat 24 October 2026

Victory Centre, Auckland

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WELCOME

WELCOME TO JUNIOR THEATRE FESTIVAL NEW ZEALAND – 10 YEARS OF JAZZ HANDS!

Hold onto your jazz hands, theatre kids and whānau – because JTFNZ is turning TEN, and this year we're going bigger, bolder, brighter, and louder than ever before.

What started a decade ago as a bold idea has grown into a full-blown annual musical theatre movement. Over the past ten years we've seen first-time performers become fearless storytellers, nervous ensembles turn into lifelong friendships, and stages across Aotearoa light up with pure joy.

Now? We're celebrating it all. JTFNZ26 will be our biggest festival yet. More groups. More performances. More workshops. More colour. More noise. More magic.

Expect a festival buzzing with energy – balloons in the air, colour everywhere, jazz hands flying, TikToks being filmed, and our bright pod T-shirts. From the moment you arrive, you'll feel it: this isn't just a festival, it's a celebration.

You'll dive into world-class workshops, electrifying performances, and unforgettable moments alongside an incredible community of young artists, creatives, and mentors. We're thrilled to once again welcome our friends from iTheatrics and MTI – Australasia, New York, and Europe, plus industry experts and judges who are as passionate about youth theatre as you are.

As always, each year brings exciting new twists, so be sure to read through this registration pack carefully – it's your guide to making the most of your Auckland JTFNZ adventure. So, take a moment to look back at how far we've come... Then, take a deep breath, throw your jazz hands in the air, and get ready to be part of JTFNZ history.

Here's to 10 years of music, memories, and magic – and to the next generation of stars stepping into the spotlight.

Let's celebrate. Let's create. Let's JTFNZ. ✨🎉🎭



Emma Bishop
Junior Theatre Festival New Zealand

WHAT HAPPENS AT JTFNZ?

Festival Pilot Programme

We are extremely excited to offer two pilots catering for up to 90 ākonga aged 11 – 18 from across the motu. Both pilots will be presented at the festival on Friday 23rd October at The Victory Centre, Auckland. Registered groups are able to initially nominate up to five students who get priority entry before registrations are opened to individuals (if there's spaces).

Adjudication

Student groups perform 15 minutes from a Broadway Junior Collection® musical (JR, KIDS or ONE ACT EDITIONS) for adjudication by leading theatre professionals. Groups are given feedback in the areas of music, acting, dance and overall performance. The adjudicators offer constructive feedback and feed forward for future performances to each group to encourage further learning.

Student and Teacher Workshops

Master teachers offer interactive workshops! Workshops are for both kaiako (teachers) and ākonga (students) in all aspects of musical theatre performance and technical theatre. The 2026 workshop leaders include members of the highly skilled iTheatrics team from New York as well as leading national practitioners. Teacher workshops start Friday 23rd October at 12pm

Outstanding Performances

Selected adjudications are chosen as Outstanding Performances. A number from these performances will be selected to be performed on stage in the Showcase Awards Ceremony. As an added bonus this group may be offered the opportunity to present a New Works Showcase performance in the following year.

All-Stars

Selected student performers are chosen as Festival All-Stars. All-Stars are given the opportunity to perform on stage in the Showcase Awards Ceremony.

New Works Showcase

Get a sneak peek at the newest shows soon to be released in the Broadway Junior Collection here in Aotearoa.



Awards Ceremony

The JTFNZ Awards Ceremony is a celebration of the day's accomplishments. The ceremony features Outstanding Adjudication pieces, awards that encourage excellence in musical Theatre performance and participation, the Festival AllStars and some special performances to top it all off.

Professional Development

Our *JTF Professional Development Track* is the ideal way to explore, experience, and empower yourself to produce a musical theatre production with your kids or simply come and see how it works before you, your school or theatre company try your own Broadway JR Show! You will immerse yourself in workshops, adjudications, and discussions while having fun with fellow teachers and directors. We promise to leave you inspired and energized with new strategies and resources. The Professional Development Programme kicks off on the Friday and runs throughout Saturday with all the main stage events as well as five workshops and two panel discussions.

2026 JTFNZ Quick Overview	
Day One	
12:00pm	Directors, Teachers and PD Welcome
12:30pm	Official Opening
1:00pm	Pilot Showing #1
2:20pm	Student Workshops / Professional Development
5:30pm	Dinner Break
6:30pm	Pilot Showing #2
8:00pm	Kiwi All-Stars 2028 Auditions
Day Two	
8:45am	Festival Kick-Off
9:15am	Adjudication Sessions
1:00pm	Lunch Break
2:15pm	New-Works Showcase
3:00pm	Student Workshops / Professional Development
6:00pm	Dinner Break
6:45pm	On The Couch with Emma and Awards Ceremony
8:30pm	Finish (Approx.)

PILOT PROGRAMME

Pilot Workshop Programme

As an extension of the Junior Theatre Festival, the Pilot programme includes a week - long workshop for selected students. Students in the program will work with industry professionals to workshop a new Broadway JR. musical; dialogue, music, and choreography will be workshopped with these young performers to ensure the musical works are suitable to be performed by young musical theatre performers. The programme culminates in a staged presentation as part of the first day of the festival.

2026 Pilot Programme

Groups who have registered for the Junior Theatre Festival New Zealand will be invited to nominate up to four students for the program. Places will be opened to further students from registered groups as well as students not in registered groups that are part of JTFNZ if spaces are available after the first round of nominations. These students must be nominated by their Performing Arts Teacher or Directors.

The 2026 Pilot program will take place in Auckland, Monday 19 October through Friday 23 October. The cost of the week-long Pilot programme is **\$599 per student**. All pilot students must also be registered and attend the Festival either in a group or as an individual. This is an additional \$99.

Stay tuned for the announcement of this year's Pilot and the opening of registrations.



WHAT TO DO NEXT



1. Read Everything in This Booklet

This pack will give you all the information you need to prepare for the 2026 Junior Theatre Festival New Zealand (JTFNZ). Especially the new start times and requirement to attend Friday.



2. Meet with Your Whānau and Group

- Share with students and parents what to expect from the festival and the amazing experience it will be!
- Muster the very important chaperones for your group for the festival
- JTFNZ representatives are able to be apart of a pre-group meeting.



3. Select Your Show

Choose the show your group will be performing for adjudication.

- Any MTI Broadway JR. or KIDS Broadway JR. Collection or ONE ACTS Edition show licensed by your group between 2025 -2027 are eligible for adjudication at JTFNZ26
- If you want to present a show you haven't licensed before, you will need to contact your MTI-Australasia representative to get the performance license and materials.
- If your group has presented the full version of one of the Collection® musicals, please also contact your MTI-Australasia representative as they will be able to help by providing the junior equivalent for the celebration day.



4. Register Your Group

Step One

- Groups need to purchase a \$299 non-refundable registration fee.
- Go to www.iticket.co.nz/events/2026/oct/jtfnz to complete your group registration. Online Registrations close 1st July 2026, unless sold out earlier.
- At this time you will need to enter your group contact details and adjudication performance.
- At this time you can purchase tickets for your group members or you can come back later if you're not quite ready. Remember, every person attending the festival must be registered with a group.
- Our preference is that the registration of group and purchasing of tickets is done as one transaction. Please DO NOT ask parents to purchase individually.

Step Two

- Once your group is registered you will be emailed a group information form to be completed and returned. For this you will need everyone's first and last name, contact emails and phone numbers, any medical conditions, t-shirt size, and an emergency contact name and number of every person attending (performers, teachers, chaperones, and professional development). Emergency contacts need to not attending with your group.
- Complete your form and return by 1st August 2026.
- Groups who do not submit forms by this date may miss out on T-Shirts.
- Take a group photo – school style, naming it row-by-row left-to-right and send the file to 5678@JuniorTheatreFestival.nz by 1st September 2026.
- Once we receive your completed information and payment, we will assign your group an adjudication pod and order, your specific workshops programme, and your seats for all main stage events. This means, the earlier you send your completed material, the better seats you will have.

JTFNZ 2026 Pricing	
Group Registration (non-refundable)	\$299
Artistic team / Teachers with PD	\$99
Artistic team / Teachers no PD	\$79
Performer	\$99
Chaperones (1:7 ratio, cannot include artistic team)	\$50
Supporters or extra parents	\$50



5. Make Your Travel Arrangements

Groups attending the festival are responsible for making their own travel, accommodation and food arrangements. The more arrangements you make now, the happier you will be come October!



5. Come to Auckland and Sign In

At JTFNZ 2026 sign-in, you will receive all festival materials, including your official JTFNZ guide and schedules, etc. To speed up the JTFNZ Sign-In, you can arrive anytime from 10am on Friday which allows you to have enough time to get organised and settled in before the official JTFNZ Opening Ceremony Friday 23rd October at 11:30am.

- Reminder: Teachers / Directors / Professional Development Welcome is at 12:00pm so please be signed in prior.

GROUP LOGISTICS

Venue

The Victory Convention Centre (VCC) is a fabulous complex located across from the tree-lined Victoria Park, next to the Fanshawe Street Harbour Bridge onramp. With its beautiful bespoke 2200-seat, tiered auditorium; curving front foyer; and lofty break-out rooms, VCC can host concerts and conferences, symposiums, and small exhibitions and expos. The Victory Centre is easily accessible providing FREE underground parking with lift and stair access from 3pm Friday and all day Saturday.

For more information go and check out www.VictoryConventionCentre.co.nz



Lodging & Accommodation

Although lodging and accommodation is not provided by JTFNZ, we can help you find appropriate accommodations.

Meals

Groups are responsible for supplying their own morning tea, snacks, lunch, and dinner. We will have food trucks at the venue, and we have an onsite caterer who will help your group with preorders. However, we encourage you to pre-plan meals/deliveries. For us to jam as much into your JTFNZ experience we have allocated specific windows of time for lunch and dinner and we cannot wait for your group to return. Groups need to ensure their own catering rubbish is cleared into the bins onsite or taken away..

Travel

Each group is responsible for their own transportation to and from the venue. For larger groups, please make your travel arrangements in advance.

Festival Sign-In

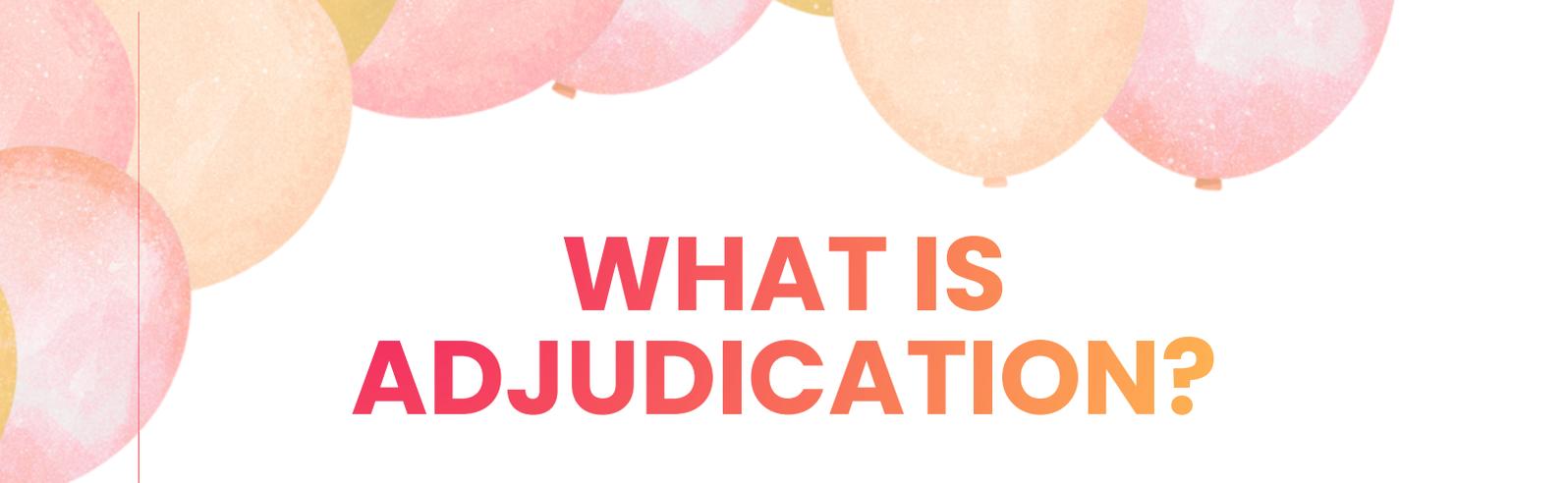
Festival Sign-In will take place within the venue. You will be able to enter through the main entrance and there will be helpful JTFNZ team members waiting to show you where to go. The venue will be open on Friday 23rd October from 10am and Saturday 25th October from 8am. To ensure a speedy stressfree sign-in process, please arrive with plenty of time to spare. It will take approximately 15 minutes for you to complete JTFNZ Sign-in.

Bring one director and at least one other adult to the sign-in table where you will receive all festival materials including your official schedules, t-shirts, and the all-important wristbands.

For Individual Students, Chaperones, and Professional Development participants not part of a registered group there will be a dedicated table and JTFNZ representative to sign you in and give you your schedules, t-shirts, and wristbands.



Day One
JTFNZ 2025



WHAT IS ADJUDICATION?

Each registered group presents up to fifteen minutes of a Broadway JR. or KIDS Collection or ONE ACT Edition to a small panel of professional theatre artists (aka adjudicators) and other festival attendees. Before your specific performance, your group is given approximately twenty minutes to warm up in a separate room equipped with a speaker and iPod cords. Following the presentation, adjudicators talk directly to the student performers, highlighting specific impressive areas of the presentation and offering constructive feedforward to encourage further growth. Following your adjudication and feedback session, your cast and creative team will be escorted to another room for a moderated discussion about what they experienced and how they interpreted the adjudicator comments. This discussion time is a great chance for students to reflect and celebrate their accomplishments.

Adjudication Rules & Guidelines

- No costumes, make-up, set pieces, or props are allowed. The only exception is small props that are ESSENTIAL to the choreography. For example, mugs for the tavern dance in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast JR.* are acceptable. A mask for the Beast or books for Belle are not.
- The performance space is approximately 8m x 6m. There will be some space on both stage left and right, but there are no curtains or back cross-over space.
- Groups should wear either their own production t-shirts or drama blacks.
- Performers must wear shoes at all times.
- Groups must provide their own accompaniment on a memory stick/device and operator.
- Microphones are not available.
- Everyone in the Adjudication Room must be registered for the festival with a group. Parents and/or guests of performers will not be admitted to any performance if they are not registered with a group.

If You Have Two Groups

- Each group must present a different Broadway JR title and have obtained a full ShowKit and license to present each of the titles within the timeframe guidelines.
- Each group must register separately. This means two separate registration forms and two non-refundable registration fees.
- Each group will be allocated to different adjudication categories and pods.
- Each group must have a minimum of 10 students performing.
- Each group must have a different primary contact. Each group must have a completely different creative team (includes director, choreographer, and music director).
- Each group must have a different set of chaperones.
- Each group must have their own cast. No student can perform in both productions.

Selecting Your Fifteen Minutes

1. Choose Your Musical

Any MTI Broadway JR. or KIDS Collection or One Acts Edition licensed by your group between 2025 and 2027 is eligible for adjudication at JTFNZ 2026.

2. Narrow Down the Scenes and Songs

You do not have to select one sequential fifteen minutes of your show, but make sure you select material that your students feel confident performing.

3. Honour the Author's Intent

You are not allowed to add lines, change the order of songs, make song cuts, add characters, or in any way, change the intent of the piece.

4. Make Sure You are Telling a Story

While it is impossible to tell the whole story in fifteen minutes, make sure you select scenes and songs that highlight your students' ability to tell a story. NO music cuts are allowed.

5. Ask the Following Questions

When you think you have a good fifteen-minute selection, read it aloud and ask yourself the following questions:

- Is a story being told? (Does your selection have a beginning, middle, end?)
- Is there a good balance between solos and group numbers, scenes and dialogue?
- Does your selection allow the students to shine and feel confident?

6. Read the Adjudication Rules and Guidelines

Read the information on the previous page to make sure your presentation can be accomplished without breaking any of the JTFNZ rules.

What the Adjudicators Are Looking For

Our adjudicators believe that engaging storytelling is the key to a good performance. Standout student performers are connected to the words, know why their characters are singing or dancing and are appropriately expressive in their presentation. These attributes are more important than being able to do a perfect triple pirouette with no connection to the story. For more detailed information, check out the JTFNZ Adjudication Rubric in the following pages.

This rubric will be completed by each adjudicator.

Watching the Other Performances

Students will have the opportunity to watch a number of other groups perform. This is their chance to discover other shows and support their peers. Your group's individual schedule will clearly detail which performances your group will be watching. Failure to attend these performances and be a supportive audience will affect your group's adjudication score.

Adjudication Tips From Our JTF Adjudicators

1 **Mix it up. Don't choose all up-tempo songs or all ballads. A heartfelt scene or song is just as inspiring and entertaining as a large group dance number.**

2 **Plan a 14 minute presentation, rather than a full fifteen minutes, to ensure you don't go over time. Remember, you are performing live. There will be laughter and you will want to hold for applause. Also, you don't want to be penalized for performing too long.**

3 **Rehearse your presentation in an 8m (wide) x 6m (deep) area to give your students an idea of how much room they will have when they perform. Set up your rehearsal space to allow your students to rehearse as they will perform at the festival.**

4 **Focus on your actors. Without costumes or scenery, your students' bodies, faces, and voices become even more essential to the clarity of the storytelling.**

5 **Encourage students to be attentive and to engage audience members by giving them something to watch for in each of the performances. In any spare time, find out what they learned from watching the other groups or an element of one performance they specifically enjoyed.**

6 **Read the Adjudication Rubric in the following pages to see exactly what the adjudicators are going to be looking for in your presentation.**

ADJUDICATION RUBRIC

1. General [25%]

Overall	Overall impression	1	2	3	4	5
Ensemble	Performers working together as a team	1	2	3	4	5
Commitment	Commitment in all aspects	1	2	3	4	5
Transition	Effectively used throughout	1	2	3	4	5
Pacing	Intentional and appropriate	1	2	3	4	5

2. Music [25%]

Storytelling	Story and emotion conveyed through singing	1	2	3	4	5
Intonation	Intonation (pitch) is accurate	1	2	3	4	5
Diction	Lyrics are understandable	1	2	3	4	5
Precision	Rhythms and cut-offs are accurate	1	2	3	4	5
Expression	Vocal variety and dynamics used throughout	1	2	3	4	5

3. Dancing [25%]

Storytelling	Story and emotion conveyed via movement	1	2	3	4	5
Style	Appropriate to the setting and themes	1	2	3	4	5
Execution	Performed cleanly and precisely	1	2	3	4	5
Variety	Variety in tempo, style, and pattern	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	Imaginative and interesting choreography	1	2	3	4	5

4. Acting [25%]

Storytelling	Story and emotion conveyed via dialogue	1	2	3	4	5
Objective	Actions are motivated	1	2	3	4	5
Characterisation	Characters developed are appropriate to the story	1	2	3	4	5
Physicality	Faces and body are connected	1	2	3	4	5
Articulation	Dialogue is heard and understood	1	2	3	4	5

5. Bonus

WOW Factor	Performance transcends and inspires (Up to 3 pts.)
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6. Penalties

Overtime	Minus 1 pt. for every 15 seconds over allotted 15mins
Behaviour	Minus up to 5 pts. for inappropriate behaviour

Grading Key

5	Perfect performance, no errors
4	Excellent performance; a few minor defects
3	Good but lacked consistency
2	Fair performance, identifiable weaknesses
1	Needs improvement



REMINDER CHECKLIST

- Register your groups interest in participating in the Festival with 5678@JuniorTheatreFestival.nz
- Hold your whanau/community meeting – we are happy to attend to answer questions.
- Confirm the exact number of people attending with your group and collect fees.
 - Number of performers in your group (**\$99 per performer**)
 - Number of chaperones in your group (**\$50 per adult**) ratio 1:7
 - Number of artistic team members / teachers (cannot be chaperones) also attending professional development (**\$99 per artistic / teacher**)
 - Number of other artistic team members/teacher not attending professional development (**\$79 per artistic / teacher**)
 - Additional parents, relatives, friends and family attending (**\$50 per adult**)
- Collate the following information for registration, and register at <http://www.iticket.co.nz/events/2026/oct/junior-theatre-festival-nz>
 - The Broadway JR / KIDS / One-Act title your group is performing
 - What year and month was this title licensed for performance
 - Name of organisation /group / school
 - Primary contact name
 - Primary contact phone number
 - Primary contact email address

○ Take or select your group photo and email with naming of students row by row left to right like a school photo by 1st September 2026 to 5678@JuniorTheatreFestival.nz

○ Collate the remaining information required for your Online Group Info Form.

- Names of all performers in your group, emergency contacts for each, medical conditions
- Names of all chaperones in your group (ratio 1:7), emergency contacts for each, medical conditions
- Names of artistic team: Director, MD, Choreographer, teachers attending (cannot be chaperones), emergency contacts for each, medical conditions.
- Names of additional parents, relatives, friends and family attending, emergency contacts for each, medical conditions.

○ Fill out your JTFNZ 2026 Online Group Information Form (google doc) by 1st August 2026. Your link to this will be sent once initial registration is complete.

○ Send in a group cast list with character onstage and performers first and last name by 1st September 2026 to 5678@JuniorTheatreFestival.nz

○ Organize your meals, housing, and travel.



OUR SUPPORTERS

Partners



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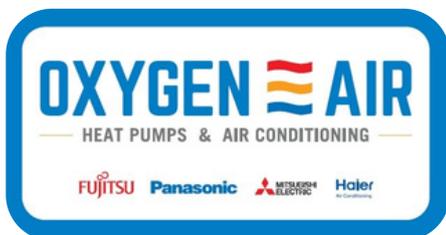
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