



ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL
A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

DRAMA AND PERFORMANCE CURRICULUM

DRAMA AND PERFORMANCE CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

The Drama & Performance Department at St. George's is committed to the integration of Christian values with faith, dignity, hope, community and kindness at the forefront in our curriculum. Pupils will develop an appreciation for the diversity of creative ideas, respecting the dignity of each individual, and the unique opportunities performing offers for personal, mental and spiritual growth. A fundamental emphasis is placed on the respectful interaction with others in the Drama community as pupils are challenged to overcome the obstacle of taking dialogue from the page to the stage in a confident and powerful manner, ultimately to reach their full potential in His image. Community is central to our approach, as we foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment where pupils can collaborate and share their ideas in a democratic approach to developing ideas. Under the guidance of the teacher this inspires creative problem-solving, enhancing leadership skills and recognising the interdependence of all people in God's kingdom. By exploring texts which arouse curiosity, motivate action, invigorate learning and recognise the beauty and dignity of all people and cultures, Drama & Performance provides our pupils with the platform to enhance confidence and self-esteem for public-speaking and performance. Open-minded attitudes to cultural diversity and an appreciation of the culture of others is cultivated through the exploration of texts by playwrights ranging from Sophocles to Benjamin Zephaniah. We capitalise on the many opportunities to enrich our pupils with cultural capital through the exploration of different styles and genres of theatre in which cultures, religions and values vary. For example, pupils study the key features of the origins of Thespis, the first actor, who was discovered at the Festival Dionysia in Ancient Greece. Students will be able to analyse and evaluate the dynamic range of extracts and familiarise themselves with their significance socially, historically and contextually. As a result, pupils develop an appreciation for the religious and cultural importance of the heritage of theatre and its influence on modern entertainment.

As future leaders in the entertainment industry our pupils are challenged to approach their careers with a deep sense of faith in their gifts, to be determined, reflective and kind with a commitment to making a positive impact on an audience. Through explorative rehearsal pupils will become more resourceful and reflective by applying what they learn to practical examples in the theatrical world. We have a 'No Opt-Out' core expectation to performance, ensuring that all pupils are expected to perform and challenge themselves to do so when asked. This expectation enhances an atmosphere of community and support within the classroom and develops an understanding of the important role an audience has in empowering the speaker. As a result, pupils are able to grow a positive mindset when addressing an audience; who respond with appreciation, respect, positivity and a celebration of the different talents we have. This strong emphasis on controlling the nerves that are naturally associated with public speaking ensures that pupils attain fundamental skills that set them apart to their peers within any chosen industry as they are

challenged to adopt SHAPE (using full sentence, hand gestures, articulation, projection and eye contact) to engage and impact an audience.

At St. George's we understand that Drama & Performance are used as an explorative tool, enrichment or extra-curricular activity at Key Stage 2, not taught as a specific subject and therefore we focus on mastering the acting skills whilst using assessment for learning strategies such as questioning and self/peer feedback to develop subject knowledge and tier 3 vocabulary. Quality teaching and learning, combined with a culture of high expectations are key to producing enthusiastic and engaging and interdependent performers who thrive in leadership opportunities embedded within the curriculum to help them thrive in future roles. Drama & Performance allows pupils to progress onto a specialised GCSE Drama course, A-level Theatre Studies or vocational Triple-Performing Arts course; consolidating their skills for future learning and employment in the entertainment industry. Examples of this could be gaining employment as a performer, designer, stage manager or promotion. This curriculum recognises the vibrancy of the theatrical industry and the career pathways it opens within the United Kingdom and internationally.

In order to achieve a true understanding of Drama & Performance, topics have been intelligently sequenced based on the following rationale:

- The curriculum is designed to provide many opportunities to interleave and consolidate knowledge through the application of skills in practical performance. The pupils' progress is centred around the taxonomy of definition, explanation, application and reflection; providing a tiered, creative approach to achieving outstanding outcomes in each topic area (Biggs and Collis 1982). As a result, pupils will consistently revisit knowledge (spaced learning) and interleave acting skills.
- The curriculum exposes pupils to the foundations of vocal & movement acting skills, and acknowledges the experiences some pupils may have had at KS2 in this area. Within each topic pupils will learn new vocal & movement tier 3 terminology and explorative strategies will be used to ensure the engaging application of these acting skills to a high standard. The curriculum focuses on these golden moments of application and takes every opportunity to 'make the learning stick' within them.
- Pupils are able to apply their understanding to unfamiliar texts and to synoptically link through the different arts and units within multiple performance disciplines.
- In the latter stages of the curriculum there is regular and systematic exam decoding and practice. Pupils are explicitly and methodically taught how to answer each type of exam question which strengthens literacy skills and builds pupil's confidence.
- Teachers present subject content clearly, promoting appropriate democratic discussion in rehearsal. Teachers check progress and understanding, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback, responding and adapting lessons as necessary. Furthermore, the modelling of efficacious feedback ensures peer assessment is also rigorous and effective.
- The curriculum's underlying rationale follows the fundamental theory that Drama is made of two core elements: Performance and Audience (P. Brook,

1968). As a performer, pupils work collaboratively while thinking independently when engaging in all lessons and performances. As an audience, pupils demonstrate manners, respect and tolerance for the bravery of their peers and shape their comments to be constructive and efficacious. This allows pupils to express themselves in a confident manner

- The curriculum is communicated in an environment of high expectations and community, which accepts mistakes as part of a reflective, learning process an actor is accustomed to before achieving an outstanding outcome.
- The curriculum is creative and as teachers of Drama & Performance we are committed to developing our schemes of work and adapting to changes for example, the passions of pupils, changes in skills and for a particular cultural focus such as Remembrance.
- The curriculum provides pupils with cultural capital opportunities to increase their curiosity in the world around them and expose them to different interpretations of texts. Examples of this are in the department's strong relationships with the Royal Shakespeare Company Programme, The Grand Theatre's Schools Alive Production and Theatre trips to view live productions.
- Every lesson is literature-rich and begins with a 'Do Now' task centred around a published text, which is embedded with the recall of knowledge and application of skills in the previous lessons. Topics have been meticulously planned and sequenced to ensure that pupils are always building on and deepening their previous learning

The Drama & Performance curriculum will address social disadvantage by addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills:

- All pupils access the same curriculum; we have the highest expectations of all. This is inclusive of all pupils no matter their circumstances, social setting, cultural or religious beliefs, gender, sex or race.
- The curriculum will have clear and robust expectations for all whilst maintaining a positive culture of high expectations modelling consistent by the teachers.
- The curriculum will take advantage of the positive, extra curricular experiences pupils have had at KS2 and strive to take advantage of the fact that all pupils in Year 7 have never experienced a regularly timetabled Drama lesson but embedding a practical, literature-rich 6-week acting workshop at the start of the curriculum which all pupils can succeed in.
- The curriculum ensures a wide range of texts, genres and techniques are studied and explored from diverse theories. .
- Teachers will effectively model assessment for learning strategies, particularly questioning and feedback.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities have additional support.
- Students from our local community will be exposed to local cultural sites, companies and programmes within the entertainment industry. In our town there are many opportunities and careers within the entertainment industry, it is our moral, Christian, duty to ensure that all pupils are able to access these opportunities.

We fully believe Drama & Performance can contribute to the personal development of pupils at St George's:

- Learners will be celebrated for overcoming the common challenge found in Drama & Performance: the nerves that naturally occur when publicly speaking to an audience. High expectations and a no-opt policy will be implemented within a caring and kind atmosphere to ensure learners control nerves and speak with confidence and vigour.
- Pupils will develop socially in Drama & Performance lessons through the established routines in democratic group work with a variety of peers and professional rehearsals that foster leadership, celebrate creativity and accept making mistakes is part of the creative process. Under the guidance of the teacher, pupils will explore their place within group work; ultimately identifying their strengths to make vital contributions.
- Pupils will explicitly use speaking and listening skills in all topics when having to produce a presentation or deliver to an audience. Students will be trained to speak in full sentences, enhance their points using hand gestures, use clear articulation, project their voices loudly and maintain confident eye contact.
- The Christian values of community and kindness are grown through effective peer assessment, which enables pupils to have an accurate understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement, to accept them and to understand how to learn from them; ultimately raising self-awareness, esteem and perception.
- Morality is evident in the curriculum where there is reference to, and use of a particular text or practitioner's style. Examples of this are the pupils' exploration of the didactic Epic Theatre style of Bertolt Brecht or the rehearsal process of DNA by Dennis Kelly. Topics within the curriculum such as these naturally provide many opportunities for balanced discussions of moral and ethical issues. Students are given time to discuss these issues both in pairs and as a class to allow pupils to develop spiritually and gain an appreciation that certain choices may have different consequences and outcomes.
- The curriculum introduces big issues such as gender, equality, mental health, death, prejudice and social topics within the work of playwright Mark Wheeler.
- Pupils have access to high-quality resources within the curriculum which are literature-rich, and develop transferable interpersonal skills, including working with others, problem solving, independent study, and personal, learning and thinking skills.

Through all key stages, our belief is that exam preparation, practice and home learning revision should be interleaved with revisited powerful knowledge that has been modelled and taught in lessons. This knowledge is recalled and applied through a range of tasks, from low-stakes quizzing to extended practice.

- Pupil outcomes are influenced greatly by their ability to memorise lines for a role. At its core this ability directly impacts grades at KS4, whilst at KS3 pupils are able to reduce nerves and build their retention of knowledge and recall by exploring techniques to memorise lines. It is with this reasoning that memorising lines is a fundamental and consistently applied homework with the Drama & Performance curriculum.

We fully believe Drama can contribute to the personal development of students at St George's.

- By engaging with our curriculum, students cultivate essential employability skills, including leadership, creative problem-solving, and the ability to collaborate within a democratic team. Through the mastery of "SHAPE" (Sentence, Hand gestures, Articulation, Projection, and Eye contact), pupils build the confidence and resilience required for public speaking, setting them apart in any chosen industry.
- Our curriculum provides clear education routes, allowing pupils to progress from Key Stage 3 into a specialised GCSE Drama course, A-level Theatre Studies, or a vocational Triple-Performing Arts course. These pathways prepare students for diverse future careers within the vibrant global entertainment industry, ranging from performers and directors to designers, stage managers, and choreographers

Opportunities are built in to make links to the world of work to enhance the careers, advice and guidance that pupils are exposed to:

- Each topic has a 'careers spotlight', where pupils will explore a profession linked to that particular unit of work. Pupils will learn about the qualifications and skills required and the responsibilities of the job.
- The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to consider the world of work and how Drama & Performance leads to successful careers.
- Information is provided about qualifications needed, salaries and career progression are also referenced.
- Through strong relationships with local entertainment companies, pupils will experience real-life entertainment and the skills and jobs created in this industry.

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- The Drama curriculum at St George's is a powerful vehicle for character development, fostering resilience and confidence as students overcome public speaking nerves within a supportive "No Opt-Out" culture that celebrates bravery and empathetic understanding. We sharpen critical thinking and decision-making through democratic rehearsals and the rigorous analysis of complex moral themes by exploring a wide variety of published texts, requiring pupils to solve creative problems, interpret subtext created by dramatic irony, and evaluate the consequences of actions. These elements are deeply rooted in our core Christian values of faith, dignity, community, and kindness. By recognizing that every student is made in His image, we cultivate a respectful environment where inclusive collaboration and efficacious feedback reflect our commitment to the interdependence of all people.

A true love of Drama & Performance involves learning about various cultural domains. We teach beyond the specification requirements, but do ensure pupils are well prepared to be successful in GCSE examinations:

- The curriculum interleaves the core topics of the GCSE Drama specification within each topic. Pupils are exposed to additional knowledge of cultural, historical, political impacts on theatre – knowledge that they may otherwise not encounter.
- Pupils will read around the topic to enable broader exposure to the contextual knowledge surrounding both historical and cultural elements of theatre.

SMSC, Christian and British Values

In addition to the references already made to the spiritual, moral, social and culture development of the pupils, the Drama & Performance curriculum embeds the following links:

SPIRITUAL:

- Pupils' imagination and appreciation for creativity is nurtured in the practical exploration of devised and scripted theatre throughout the KS3&4 schemes of work.
- All topics will include deep-dive techniques of characterisation in which pupils will explore and expand their understanding of a character's personality. Examples of these techniques are Character Profiles and Role-on-the-Wall techniques.
- Pupils will be allowed the freedom of interpretation and express their own opinion and ideas around character and text. The teacher will use effective questioning to guide them on this creative journey.
- The curriculum develops pupil's empathy and compassion skills through a clear understanding of an audience's role. Formative assessment expectations allow them to take into consideration other people's aims, motivations, values, principles and beliefs.

MORAL:

- Moral and ethical issues and the ability to differentiate between right and wrong as clearly outlined in classroom expectations. Furthermore, the practical exploration of morality plays such as A Terrible Fate of Humpty Dumpty, Antigone, Macbeth and DNA form the foundation of their understanding of the consequences of behaviour and actions.
- The curriculum requires the pupils to evaluate, comment upon and discuss various moral issues relating to live performances by exploring themes within these texts such as gender, inequality, racism and discrimination.
- Didactic practitioners and styles are explored with the aim for pupils to portray an efficacious piece of theatre. Examples of this are Bertolt Brecht's Epic Theatre, Augusto Boal's Forum Theatre and Mark Wheeler's Theatre-in-Education.
- Pupils will reflect on the political and social issues that theatre has challenged within history; using literature reference as inspiration such as *"Art is not a mirror held up to reality but a hammer with which to shape it."*

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:

- Social skills are developed through organised and professional rehearsal processes in which pupils work together to create ideas in a democratic process.
- Pupils will be exposed to leadership opportunities with each rehearsal process with titles given depending on gifts and passions of each member of the group. Examples of these roles include director, choreographer and researcher.
- Collaboration is central to all topics within each scheme of work. Examples of the fundamental approaches to ensure outstanding outcomes in group work include positive mental attitude, constructive feedback, leadership, determination, confident projection and effective communication.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT:

- A multitude of topics explored through analysis and performance of text. A fascination in learning about the world around them is developed by exploring a variety of published texts from playwrights from diverse cultures.
- Students study the changes within society and how theatre has historically depicted these changes.
- Culture capital opportunities are embedded in the Drama & Performance calendar using the relationships St. George's has with local organisations. Students benefit from visits to live theatre productions, theatrical programmes of study and performance venues, to inspire further knowledge and skills.
- Christian and British Values (in addition to the references above):
 - Democracy: embedded in the culture and high expectations of all rehearsal processes.
 - Rule of law: modelled effectively by the teachers through the high expectations in the school.
 - Individual liberty: opportunities for collaborative exploration of topics within effective group work where all pupils are allowed a 'voice'. This is demonstrated clearly by the pupils' diverse interpretations of plot, characters and themes.
 - Mutual respect: embed in the culture and high expectations of the role of an audience member. Opportunities to express mutual respect are guided by the teacher during democratic rehearsal and constructive peer feedback.

CURRICULUM SEQUENCING

All children are entitled to a curriculum and to the powerful knowledge that will open doors and maximise their life chances. Below is a high-level overview of the critical knowledge children will learn in this particular subject, at key stage 3, through Year 10 into Year 11, in order to equip pupils with the cultural capital they need to succeed in life. The curriculum is planned vertically and horizontally giving thought to the optimum knowledge sequence for building secure schema.

Unit Sequencing			
KS3	Progress Period	9 weeks	An Actor's Workshop Vocal and movement skills - Democratic rehearsal expectations - Performer & Audience roles Script: The scripted works of Roald Dahl, Michael Morpurgo (war plays)
		9 weeks	Scripted Theatre Published text exploration - Cultural Capital - Dramatic Irony, Tension & Impact - An actor's process - Performance - Vocal live theatre analysis Plays: RSC: Wendy & Peter Pan, Julius Caesar.
		Extension	Devised Theatre Stimulus exploration - Improvisation techniques - Characterisation techniques - Devised performance Script: Darkwood Manor

Year 10	Term 1	10 weeks	Component 3: Interpreting Theatre - Section A delivery Script: I Love You Mum - I Promise I Won't Die
		3 weeks	Component 2: Performance of a Text - delivery Script: <i>A choice of 25 different plays</i>
	Term 2	6 weeks	Component 2: Performance of a Text - delivery Script: <i>A choice of 25 different plays</i>
		5 weeks	Component 1: Devising Theatre - delivery Stimulus exploration - performance, recording & audio verbal feedback
	Term 3	3 weeks	Component 1: Devising Theatre - delivery Practitioner exploration - script writing & written feedback
		3 weeks	Component 3: Interpreting Theatre - Section B delivery Live Theatre Analysis - <i>A choice of 23 different plays</i>
		4 weeks	Component 1: Devising Theatre - delivery Devised performance & recording
		3 weeks	Component 1: Devising Theatre - delivery Portfolio of Evidence
Year 11	Term 1	4 weeks	Component 1: Devising Theatre - internal assessment in September of the Devised Performance
		3 weeks	Component 1: Devising Theatre - internal assessment in October of the Portfolio of Evidence (including evidence)
		6 weeks	Component 1: Devising Theatre - internal controlled assessment in October of the Devised Evaluation
	Term 2	6 weeks	Component 2: Performance of a Text - delivery
			Component 2: Performance of a Text - external assessment in February - March (TBC)
		6 weeks	Component 2: Performance of a Text - external assessment in February - March (TBC)
	Term 3	6 weeks	Component 3: Interpreting Theatre - delivery Component 3: Interpreting Theatre - external assessment in May (TBC)