

## **Drama**

*"Drama is exposure; it is confrontation; it is contradiction and it leads to analysis, construction, recognition, and eventually to an awakening of understanding." - Peter Brook.*

The drama curriculum at All Saints Academy is developed to help pupils live out their lives with dignity, faith and hope by embedding skills and knowledge learners need to become well rounded citizens. By rehearsing a range of texts and performances, learners will develop critiquing skills and how to behave in a dignified manner both on and off stage. They will have faith in themselves to memorise lines of dialogue and stage directions. The drama curriculum is rich with explicit links to English, dance, media and social sciences enabling students to develop their drama skills whilst drawing from a wide range of experiences. Students arriving with us from our main feeder schools have had a varied approach to their drama curriculum and will have the benefit of a broad and structured approach in Year 7 to improve their confidence when performing; in their ability to communicate in a staged environment and to understand that they all have the capability to perform. Our students will, by studying drama, develop an understanding for the value of the performance arts and develop a sense of creativity that they will be able to apply as a key skill throughout their lives. By having creating faith in their own ability they will realise that that they are able to strive for success and achieve their hopes and dreams.

### **Research informed practice in the Arts:**

In the Arts faculty the department has used research by Dianne Minicucci (*Decolonising and diversifying the art curriculum*) and the NSEAD website (*National Society for Education in Art and Design*) to inform changes in the curriculum maps. It has allowed the lessons to incorporate more cultural capital and to broaden the focus away from traditional the canon of white, male, western artists. This has also made lessons more varied and added an extra dimension of interest to our students' work. In textiles and graphics the team have read work by Sarah Graham, Lucy Sparrow, Lekwena Mciver and Yinka Shonibare to improve aspects of planning, sequencing and subject specific knowledge. Finally, subjects have been more focused on knowledge rather than skills. This has helped student's analysis of art and design, and their understanding of context and cultural capital. This approach is advocated by authors such as Myatt in her book, *The Curriculum*.

### **SEND support provided in drama:**

All students work towards the same outcomes in all lessons. Differentiation is achieved through the tasks set and the ability for students to access them and participate. Academically high achieving students that have a strong theoretical understanding of drama can struggle to perform and vice versa; this is mitigated through the tasks set for devised and practical work. Support is offered through the allocation of

tasks and the scaffolding through approach of practical delivery. Demonstrations are given, these model high performance as well as give detailed descriptions of what is required at each stage to support and stretch all students. In addition, changing the number of pupils within a group helps to differentiate activities provides more or less time to perform skills. The direction of stimulus style also offers support and challenge where needed, along with teacher led questioning to check understanding when circulating the class.

## **Year 7**

### **Substantive Knowledge**

Throughout Year 7 drama, students will build upon skills that they have explored in primary school. Students will explore the language of characterisation, stock characters, Lazzi, historical performance, voice control, movement statements and hot-seating. By exploring the styles of commedia dell'arte students develop an understanding of how the work of dramatists is communicated effectively through performance and how alternative staging allows for different interpretations of a play. The academic learning culminates in an exploration of *The Tempest* and link this to the exploration of the skills and virtues we have developed throughout the year.

### **Disciplinary Knowledge**

Students will spend time exploring tableaux, thought tracking, narration, basic storytelling, accepting and blocking, scene building, spontaneous and planned, improvisation and status. Students are then introduced to the basics of improvisation and are able to apply this to given stimuli that will embed an understanding of how to create theatre. Students will develop a comedic performance based around the skills and virtues explored with a particular focus on Good Speech, Good Temper and Good Humour. In the final half term, we explore the application of mime, narration and chorus.

Throughout the curriculum, a differentiated approach is provided to ensure that all students are able to engage in the curriculum from a performance, directorial and designing perspective to ensure engagement of all abilities. The application of these skills and abilities enable our students to improvise, rehearse and perform play scripts and poetry in order to generate language and discuss language use and meaning, role, intonation, tone, volume, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact to their performances. This forms a clear link to the English curriculum.

Students will be able to experience live theatre in a provincial theatre and engage with major conventions of performance and pantomime. The exploration of live theatre will enhance students' appreciation of live theatre and contribute to the development of cultural capital for all students. Pupil Premium students will be given the opportunity, perhaps for the first time, of engaging with live performance in a professional forum at a professional theatre.

## **Year 8**

### **Substantive Knowledge**

As the Year 8 lessons develop, students are able to link their learning within drama to history and geography in the development of our knowledge of protests and the ways in which these have played an important part in shaping our understanding of the modern world. Students will then explore physical theatre through 'Jaques Le Coq's 7 Levels of Tension and Frantic Assembly.' They will further demonstrate their understanding of how the work of dramatists is communicated effectively through performance and how alternative staging allows for different interpretations of a play. Students further explore classical theatre in Antigone and will then practise, in greater detail, the ways in which the academic curriculum of drama is understood by completing linked sections of the examining body.

### **Disciplinary Knowledge**

Improvisational skills which were explored and applied throughout the Year 7 curriculum are now applied in devising their own murder mystery performances. Working in small groups, students will explore the virtues outlined throughout the academy and create a tableaux performance based around social justice issues. They will link these issues to Fundamental British Values and explore the ways in which theatre can influence the modern world. Students will use their previous performances as a basis for further developed performance and summative assessment using technical skills that they have developed and established as part of their performance repertoire from year 7 and earlier in year 8.

Students will visit Shakespeare's Globe and absorb live performance further developing their cultural capital from Year 7 to nationally and internationally recognised theatre. All students will be invited to engage in this activity as part of their curriculum which will, in turn, support their further learning in their English curriculum.

Students across all levels of ability are able to engage with this curriculum by participating in structured performance, directorial and design activities allowing all of our students an equitable opportunity of engagement within the arts. This will allow the students throughout Year 8 to have truly developed a broader understanding of the drama curriculum and through these applications they will be able to engage successfully when developing their knowledge of Stanislavski and Brecht in Year 9.

## **Year 9**

### **Substantive Knowledge**

In Year 9, students build upon their previous knowledge and skills through a combination of improvised, devised and scripted performance. By exploring the key concepts of practitioners such as Stanislavski and Brecht, students will gain cultural capital and develop an appreciation of this art form. Students will understand how the work of dramatists is communicated effectively through performance and how alternative staging allows for different interpretations of a play. They will appreciate societal perspectives and

approaches to situations, whilst exploring political theatre and the ways in which the arts can provide a voice for the voiceless. An element of media teaching is integrated into work on lighting, staging and vision with careful awareness of the stark differences between performing for stage and performing for television.

### **Disciplinary**

Students will be able to improvise, rehearse and perform play scripts and poetry in order to generate language and discuss language use and meaning, using role, intonation, tone, volume, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact to further their essential skills within English language and beyond.