



### Drama Curriculum Intent

#### Purpose and Vision:

Through curriculum and extra-curricular **Drama** we strive at Aylesford to create an **open-minded and experimental community**, unafraid to **take risks** and **explore the essence of human behaviour** through process and performance.

During the different key stages of study, we focus on developing our students' **interpersonal, teamwork and performance skills**; developing their ability to **communicate confidently, sensitively and with creativity**. The attributes of a good drama student – Independence, Creativity, Communication, being a Team Player and being Reflective – are explicit in the learning of our students at all Key Stages. Also embodied and encouraged through our curriculum are the character strengths – respect, self-discipline, motivation, resilience, integrity, courage, open-mindedness, confidence, compassion, and curiosity. As a department we believe that Drama has a vital role to play in the SMSC development of all students.

We expose our students to excellence through a department of experienced subject-specialists, regular professional **workshops**, theatre visits and **in-house productions** that always look to redefine the audience's traditional expectations of a "school play".

It is our intention that students who leave us after 7 years of study should not just understand the impact major theatre practitioners have made on the arts and society as a whole, but have the potential to **be the theatre practitioners of the future**.

#### Key concepts that underpin the Drama Curriculum

<b>1</b>	Audience Awareness
<b>2</b>	Characterisation
<b>3</b>	Dramatic Styles and Forms
<b>4</b>	Exploring Text – Analysis
<b>5</b>	Devising from Stimulus
<b>6</b>	Historical/Social/Cultural/Political Context
<b>7</b>	Application of Directing Skills
<b>8</b>	Designing Set/Costume/Sound/Lighting
<b>9</b>	Evaluating own and other's live performance

## **Academic end points:**

<b><u>Year 7</u></b>	<p>The ontological structure of knowledge in Drama in Year 7 is primarily vertical. In the Autumn term Students will have explored a tool-kit of practical techniques that they will have been able to apply in the 4 schemes of learning that follow. By the end of the year students should be able to present in performance a range of stereotypical and archetypal characterisation, be able to present a clear story in a piece of performance group work, create short, rehearsed improvisations and behave appropriately as performers and as a watching audience. Each scheme develops the students' understanding of how these skills are essential for successfully communicating with an audience and structuring coherent drama. By the end of the year students should be able to use the skills they learn in term one in their practical work with minimal prompting.</p>
<b><u>Year 8</u></b>	<p>In Year 8 the ontological structure becomes more horizontal as students are introduced to a range of contrasting theatre forms, styles and genres to which the skills learnt in Year 7 can be applied. By the end of Year 8, students will have practically explored the story and themes of two classical texts - introducing students to two important periods in theatre history, the dramatic features of two contrasting genres, two specific theatre forms and a recent historical event. Students should now begin recognising the cultural and social importance of Drama through the ages. In performance, Characterisation should be more nuanced and three-dimensional, and students should be starting to show some empathy and truthfulness in their performances.</p>
<b><u>Year 9</u></b>	<p>In the final year of KS3 Drama students will be part of a carousel where they will spend three terms study theatre and three terms studying another creative subject. During their time with the Drama Department, students will have developed both a practical and theoretical knowledge of a range of influential writers and practitioners. With a focus on the Power of Theatre, students will study Theatre in Education and rehearsed improvisation. Through this they will have developed a strong understanding of how theatre can effectively combine with other art forms, how to create a piece of didactic theatre for an age-specific audience and how to use extended improvisation to create a naturalistic performance. All of these skills provide students with either the tools they need to move into GCSE Drama, or to recognise and analyse performance elements of other areas of the curriculum at KS4 and 5.</p>
<b><u>Year 10</u></b>	<p>By the end of Year 10 students will have begun to accumulate a range of performance or design skills that deepen their understanding of both devised and scripted performance. Students will be introduced to the Theatre Practitioner Constantin Stanislavski and the concept of method acting as an introduction to the GCSE course before learning about other practitioners. They will have devised an extended piece of theatre from a given stimulus in the style of Frantic Assembly, applying their techniques and theories to the work and analysing how successfully they were able to do this. Students will have engaged in 2 long term creative projects, developing the ability to analyse and critically assess their work and the work of others. Students will have been introduced to the set text – DNA – and begun to consider how to deconstruct a text in relation to a range of performance spaces. Year 10 will also visit the theatre and learn about analysing and evaluating professional theatre in preparation for the written exam.</p>
<b><u>Year 11</u></b>	<p>By the end of Year 11 students will have recognised the horizontal ontological structure of the knowledge they have acquired studying GCSE Drama. By exploring, social political theatre and Bertold Brecht as the chosen practitioner for their Component 1 Devised unit and comparing this with their work on Stanislavski in Year 10 they will have observed how the two most influential theatre practitioners of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century both compliment and contrast each other. Students will have been able to draw on this knowledge when exploring the Component 3 Set Text DNA, developing a growing understanding of how space, form, design and context can impact on a production. Students will have developed the skills to analyse a piece of live theatre in some depth, particularly how the performance and design aspects of a play generate a</p>

	range of audience responses. Students will have learnt to approach a role with clear artistic intentions, creating text-based performances that are true to the writer's intentions.
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### **What will you see in Drama lessons?**

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Students in all Key Stages predominantly work practically in lessons, At KS3 this is mostly small-scale group or pair tasks, which are shared, with feedback from teacher and peers. At KS4 students are often working on long-term devising or scripted projects, with continuous teacher feedback.

Work on set texts also often takes a practical format, and students at KS4 regularly work in groups. Students will have theory lessons that build on practical exploration and culminate in written exam papers, essays, or portfolio work.

#### **What evidence of learning will you see in Drama?**

In Years 10 and 11 when students are working on group performance pieces, each group will have a rolling feedback document which their teacher will regularly update. When acted on, feedback can be ticked off and commented on by the group.

#### **What formative assessment will you see in Drama?**

KS3 will be assessed at the end of each term through and practical performance.

Teacher uses Observational Checklists/criteria to assess

Check learning – Open & closed questioning, green or red tiles (equivalent of Fist to five)

Plenary Q&A

Timely verbal feedback – Written Target setting

KS4 will be assessed continually through teacher observation in workshop settings and through practical performance.

Teacher uses Observational Checklists/Criteria to assess devising and performance skills.

Check learning – Open & closed questioning, green or red tiles (equivalent of Fist to five)

Plenary Q&A

#### **What is the department currently reading and why?**

## ***The Curriculum***

Our curriculum at KS3 is structured to ensure our students learn about the world around them **through drama**, rather than learn drama skills without context. This enables them to develop their **empathy and understanding** of their own and other cultures, beliefs and periods of history. At KS4 the emphasis moves gradually more towards **theatre studies and drama theory**, with pupils developing a strong understanding of theatre history and the demands of **performance, design and direction** through the texts studied, but all the while **the core values of KS3 remain**.

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The schemes in **Year 7** introduce the pupils to stereotypical and archetypal characterisation, storytelling and how to create atmosphere on stage. Each scheme develops the students' understanding of how these skills are essential for successfully communicating with an audience and structuring coherent drama. Emphasis is placed on students starting to use the skills they learn in term one in their practical work with minimal prompting.

In **Year 8**, the context and technical style of the work becomes a little more advanced, with emphasis on classical texts (The Tempest and Antigone - introducing students to two important periods in theatre history), genre (Soap Opera and horror), theatre forms (Mask) and how to use drama to explore recent historical events (Evacuees). Although subtle, the emphasis on theory enable students to begin recognising the cultural and social importance of Drama through the ages.

In **Year 9** we develop students understanding of the Power of Drama. We also challenge them to empathise with a range of characters, situations and time periods. For example, Year 9 will be introduced to naturalism and then spend a time studying the Theatre in Education writer Mark Wheeller and scenes from four of his TIE plays. Students will develop an understanding of drama techniques used to communicate a message to an audience. The second term we follow a SOW where they will explore life in a Young Offender's Institute in the 1970s where they will be part of an extended rehearsed improvisation looking at knife crime in prison. Then finally they will create their own TIE devised work in small groups. We conclude KS3 Drama with a term exploring Theatre in Education, culminating in pupils creating their own TIE pieces designed for a younger audience. This provides an excellent stepping stone for the more complex devised work required of pupils at KS4.

Throughout **KS3** students are assessed practically at the end of each SOL. Assessment criteria covers use of Skills, understanding of concepts and ability to demonstrate knowledge. Homework quizzes or research projects and written end of unit evaluations/target setting reflect the natural interleaving of skills that occurs throughout each year.

At **GCSE** pupils create a mix of devised and scripted work for performance, whilst also studying theatre forms and styles by devising in the style of an established theatre practitioner and studying a set text from a directorial perspective. In Year 10, we have traditionally taught Frantic Assembly as the devising practitioner for a practice Component 1 unit, whereas in Year 11 for the genuine GCSE practical examination, pupils explore the style and techniques of Brecht. Frantic Assembly follows an introduction to

Stanislawski and naturalism in the first term as we feel this provides an important theoretical grounding for the students, Stanislawski also enables them to better understand the style of theatre Brecht was railing against when they undertake their actual devised unit in Year 11.

The written examination set text DNA enables pupils to explore how a naturalistic text can be interpreted in a variety of styles, enabling them to incorporate both the Stanislawskian and Brechtian ideas the devising units have taught them.

The exam board we have used since the introduction of the new specifications in 2016 is Edexcel. We felt the choice of texts for the written examination and structure of the practical work was best suited to our students as are the texts used as stimuli for devising. For the externally examined scripted performance unit the freedom offered by Edexcel in terms of texts enables us to choose performance texts that best suit each individual, whether that be finding a more accessible and relatable text such as John Godber's *Bouncers* or *Teachers* for a less able student, or stretching the empathetic and naturalistic skills of a more able student with texts such as Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*.

## ***Extra-Curricular***

### Clubs

We aim to provide opportunities for all through our extra-curricular programme. For KS3 students we have after school clubs, one for KS3 to develop their improvisation skills and build on the techniques they have learnt in lessons with students from outside their class.

### School Productions

Open auditions will be held for our Main School production every year, which rehearses twice weekly from October through to March, when the show is performed. We normally have a cast of around 30 students from Years 7-13. This may change from year to year. The mission statement of Aylesford School Productions is "to produce theatre that alters the perception of the "school play" and challenges cast and audience alike". This is reflected in the range of texts we have performed over the last decade and the innovative ways in which we have used the school hall as a performance space!

We also hope to launch a House Drama competition the summer of 2024 and provide a truly vertical student experience, with performers in Years 7-9 and directors in Years 10-13. Open to all performers in KS3 and directors from KS4 & KS5.

### Exam Revision

KS 4 Students will be expected to attend afterschool rehearsals in preparation for practical examinations. They will also be required to attend revision session in preparation for the written examinations.

