

BTEC Performing Arts

Curriculum Principles

By the end of their all-through education, a student of Drama and Performing Arts at Dixons Kings will:

- Know the roles, responsibilities and skills that performers and other design elements need to possess to make an effective piece of theatre.
- Understand different styles of theatre, practitioners and techniques whilst being able to implement them into a performance.

In order to truly appreciate the subject and create deep schema, topics within Drama and Performing Arts have been intelligently sequenced with the following rationale:

- The Drama curriculum is formulated through systematic planning, starting with the fundamental skills to build a character. KS3 explores the knowledge and development of physical and vocal skills to ensure that they can convey the age, status and confidence of a character before moving onto script work.

Year 7 Cycle 1: this involves an introduction to building a character, starting with understanding and implementing the physical and vocal skills. Students need to understand these skills first so that they can put them into practice in their practical work. The skills learnt are put towards a performance of 'Teachers' by John Godber where students will have to bring comedic elements to the performance as well as the performance skills.

Year 7 Cycle 2: Physical theatre involves studying and understanding the techniques personification, slow motion and exaggerated movement to show and bring a story to life. Students will study different groups such as Hymn Hands, Frantic Assembly and Chair Duets to ensure that it is successful. This is intended to allow students to focus on their bodies rather than just their words and allows a nice progression from their last practical task as it asks them to build on the physical skills and techniques they had started to explore. They will also complete a written exploration of their characters using the S.E.E structure learnt in to show their understanding.

Year 7 Cycle 3: Commedia Dell Arte follows on from the development of exaggerated movement, slow motion and mime that was in the previous cycle. Students will study the context of the 18th Century and create a story line with the melodramatic characters. Melodramatic characters were touched on in the previous unit but this allows them to bring a specific character to life as well as learning about archaic pieces of theatre that developed history. They will also use these characters to write an evaluation of the skills developed during this process using the S.E.E structure which allows them to be prepared for independent written work in KS4. They will also complete a written exploration of their characters using the S.E.E structure learnt in to show their understanding.

Year 8 Cycle 1: students learn and develop an understanding of key practitioners: Stanislavski and Brecht which is more in depth than just looking at the styles of theatre. They use research skills to investigate into the style for homework. Alongside this, they will study different styles such as Naturalism and Epic Theatre and explore difficult topics such as homelessness to develop their cultural and social awareness. They will also complete a written exploration of their characters using the S.E.E structure learnt in to show their understanding.

Year 8 Cycle 2: practitioner Stephen Berkoff is more complex than Stanislavski and therefore leads onto the style total theatre. This involves students understanding exaggerated movement, mime, and vocal sound effects but instead of being given plays, they will devise and develop this into their own fairy tale. This will ensure that they have understood how to implement exaggerated techniques. They will also complete a written exploration of their characters using the S.E.E structure learnt in to show their understanding.

Year 8 Cycle 3: Students will study Theatre In Education and create their own performance on a chosen topic. They will use stimuli to devise a group piece, for example, an image of bullying, they would use team work and collaborating skills to create a mind map and eventually create a group performance which shows the effects this can have on an individual. They will also complete a written exploration of their characters using the S.E.E structure learnt in to show their understanding.



Year 9: students will be introduced to the BTEC performing arts specification, Component 1. This involves watching, studying and analysing three plays:

- Style (including the practitioners like Brecht/Stanislavski/Berkoff)
- Creative intention and purpose
- First impressions
- Context
- Roles responsibilities and skills
- Interrelationships.

For this, students are asked to complete a presentation on each of these plays which they will present. They need to possess independent research and critical skills in order to make their findings concise and coherent. Students will also explore different stylistic features of plays through practical activities where they take on different roles and write about them afterwards. This all contributes to their coursework.

Year 10 Cycle 1: this is a chance to resolve any misunderstandings and fill any gaps from their presentations in year 9 and evidenced in intervention plans depending on the gaps. Students will receive and respond to questions and feedback issued.

Year 10 Cycle 2: students will complete the Work Book which is on a Microsoft Word Document. They need to discuss roles, responsibilities and skills as well as incorporating interrelationships to ensure the exam criteria has been met successfully. This leads on from the three presentations as all the fundamental information is there for them to develop from.

Year 10 Cycle 3: this is an introduction to Component 2 which asks students to complete practical and written explorations and development. They will complete a performance on monologues by December which will ask students to incorporate key performance skills and to show an understanding of the play they are performing. These skills will be dependent on the style of the play but they need to ensure that the performance skills are being incorporated.

Year 11 Cycle 1: students will continue writing and studying the chosen play of their monologues, ensuring that the development of performance skills is continually evaluated and discussed. These skills will differ from student to student depending on which text is chosen. Students will be receiving and implementing feedback from peers and teachers alike to ensure that it is fluid and polished.

Year 11 Cycle 2: this is the completion of Component 2 where students will perform their final piece. It will involve students memorising all lines and ensuring all written explorations are completed. Some of the skills students will develop over the process is self-discipline, performance skills, spatial awareness, characterisation and organisation.

Year 11 Cycle 3: Component 3 will involve making a group performance and writing an exploration of their ideas and thought processes, as well as the skills they have developed including use of weight, interaction with other performers, spatial awareness, timing, characterisation and stamina. Students will be supervised in these sessions by an external examiner and expected to complete this performance from a piece of stimuli which is released in January.

The Drama and Performing Arts curriculum at Kings has been influenced by:

- Dorothy Heathcote
- Heathcote's developed technique, Mantle of the Expert was based on the idea that children learn instinctively through imaginary play and that play, far from frivolous, is a generator of culture. In Drama at Dixons Kings, it is a 'safe space' where children can explore ideas, events, people, and narratives without ever having to be in any danger or having to cope with real consequences. This is evident in both KS3 and KS4 schemes of work which covers a variety of topics including, homelessness, bullying, being stranded on an island etc. KS4 looks into greater depth and the key contextual issues that was going on from the time the plays were set, for example Blood Brothers, which was set in the 1980's. Students are asked to study contextual factors and to discuss their impact on the world around them. Lessons allow for students to be creative and to imagine the journeys and outcomes of endless situations. These stylistic features also contribute to students being able to empathise with other people's situations and to develop understanding and compassion. To further this, KS3 explores the various styles and practitioners to ensure they are accustomed to them and ensures a fluid transition to the work in KS4. For example, we introduce key practitioners such as Brecht and Stanislavski in Year 8 which is then later used in greater depth in KS4 when studying other plays and styles.

Our Drama and Performing Arts curriculum ensures that social disadvantage is addressed through:

Wholly, students have been subjected to limited amounts of Drama and Performing Arts within the KS2 curriculum. Currently, its role within Dixons Kings is to enable students to be ready for the outside world, with gained confidence, empathy and the ability to effectively collaborate with others. This is achieved by allowing students to have a creative licence over devising their own performances, whilst giving students the freedom they need to create something completely different and inspiring. For example, last year students created their own performance, where they highlighted the problems in the community and suggestions to resolve them.

Socially disadvantaged students are identified during data analysis and robust intervention plans are created to close this gap. It is paramount that SEN students are the first members in the class that are addressed so that any misunderstandings can be rectified immediately. Similarly, when in practical groups, I attend to these students first to ensure that they have understood the task and outcomes.

We fully believe Drama and Performing Arts can contribute to the personal development of students at Dixons Kings through: Our belief is that homework is used for deliberate practice of what has been taught in lessons. We also use retrieval practice and spaced revision to support all students with committing knowledge to long term memory.

In KS3 Drama, homework centres around the knowledge, understanding and implementation of physical and vocal skills. This is set fortnightly and often requires students to answer their knowledge when they enter the classroom for the Do Now. Alternatively, students are set research tasks on plays or playwrights prior to exploring their work to gain a deeper understanding.

In KS4 Performing Arts, homework is a combination of computer, hand written work and practical work. The Performing Arts specification requires students to watch and study three plays and eventually, perform their own, therefore, students need to work independently and sometimes as part of a team. This is set weekly to ensure students are continually embedding and developing their knowledge.

We fully believe Drama and Performing Arts can contribute to the personal development of students at Dixons Kings through:

At DKA, we offer various opportunities for students to enhance and develop their personal development including lessons and enrichment after school. This gives students the option to take and explore the curriculum in more depth. Previously in enrichment, students have been given a stimuli to create a piece of theatre around, for example 'secrets'. In the process, they made mind maps and explored a lot of trial and error to make their performances effective and engaging, whilst allowing them to cover the theme of bullying and showing compassion to others. In KS3 lessons, students study a range of topics which allows them to see and explore from different perspectives for example Holes - students explore a plane crash where they are stranded on an island. Additionally, in KS4 we offer experiences to attend the theatre where students attended 'A Comedy About A Bank Robbery'. Students in KS4 are studying three different plays with opposing contextual situations as well as styles - it is our intention to take them to see one of these pieces of theatre in the near future to help with the understanding of the plays being studied.

Our belief is that homework is used for deliberate practice of what has been taught in lessons. We also use retrieval practice and spaced revision to support all students with committing knowledge to long term memory.

- Homework is integral to ensure student understanding outside of the classroom. In KS3 Drama, we use retrieval practice and spaced revision through setting revision homework from their Knowledge Navigators, such as the performance skills as this is a foundation for understanding the subject. Students are tested from Do Now and in class activities, which tests and holds them accountable for the learning that should have taken place.
- KS4 - students are continually asked to independently research plays and practitioners and make notes of these in their books, as well as completing online homework that contributes to their BTEC Performing Arts Coursework. This ensures that learning is expanded and developed outside the classroom also.

Opportunities to build an understanding of social, moral and ethical issues are developed alongside links to the wider world, including careers:

- Drama at Dixons Kings has the intention to incite students about the history of theatre and the type of society theatre was brought about in, as well the contemporary society we live in today. This is demonstrated through the different topics including Commedia Dell Arte which dates back to the 1600's and allows students to explore what society must have been like for those with opposing status'.



- To further this, students will be exposed to a number of texts which explore many social, moral and ethical issues. These include *The Good Person by Bertolt Brecht* which centres around the concept of homelessness and acting with civility to others. Students are invited to create their own devised piece on peer pressure and bullying, which confronts the issue of cyber safety and the psychological effects of bullying. In Year 7, Drama offers an enrichment session (COVID dependent) after school which includes a range of different techniques to practice physical and vocal skills, whilst giving the students the chance to collaborate on a project and create their own performance on the effects of bullying in schools.
- Drama in KS4 offers the chance to go to the theatre to see a live performance of prominent plays which opens students to new opportunities and to be exposed to themes and issues they may have not thought about before.

Remote working in our subject supports students to access the full curriculum in the following ways:

- KS3 - Homework resources and quizzes have been created to ensure that students are being tested on their knowledge at home. This will work to ensure that it extends the knowledge and understanding and ensures that students will be with the skills to tackle BTEC Performing Arts in KS4. These will be developed further throughout the year.
- KS4 - Students are set independent tasks which lead on from what they have discussed and started in lessons. This type of learning has a range of activities that allows students to be intellectually curious, for example, researching different activities, contexts and styles, as well as watching online performances to develop their awareness.

Further Information can be found in:

- Long term plans
- Schemes of work
- Knowledge Navigators
- Anywhere else - you add!