

Drama at Litcham School

INTENT

1. To deliver the Drama National Curriculum.
2. To deliver a knowledge-led spiral Drama curriculum, where knowledge and skills taught and consolidated.
3. To deliver a broad Drama curriculum that includes opportunities to make and understand drama, eventually recognising it as a practical art form in which ideas and meaning are communicated to an audience through choices of form, style and convention.
4. To promote high expectations and a secure understanding of theatrical skills and apply them to create performances. This should prepare students to make informed decisions about further learning and progression opportunities.
5. To deliver an engaging and enjoyable Drama curriculum that is knowledge rich and allows students to develop the appropriate practical skills to work within this art form and provide opportunities for enrichment. Pupils will be well prepared to pursue Drama after leaving school.

IMPLEMENTATION

Curriculum Delivery

Pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 follow the Drama curriculum via the English curriculum whereby Drama skills are taught to specifically expand knowledge of themes studied at KS3. Drama skills in preparation for Drama GCSE in KS4 are taught in English units of study (1 session minimum per term) which are relevant to the texts studied during these terms. In all the units of study, Drama sessions are included which expect students, whether making, performing or responding to drama, to know the following:

Characteristics of performance texts and dramatic works including: genre, structure, character, form and style, language and stage directions. Social, historical and cultural contexts including the theatrical conventions of the period in which the performance texts were created. How meaning is interpreted and communicated and communicated through: performance conventions, use of performance space and spatial relationships on stage, relationships between performers and audience. Set design, costume, lighting and sound, actor's vocal and physical interpretation of character; drama and theatre terminology used by theatre makers and how to use it appropriately. The role of the performer, the director and designer.

At KS4 GCSE students are required to study a minimum of one complete and substantial performance text and a minimum of two key extracts from a second contrasting performance which must have been professionally commissioned or professionally produced. The texts must be studied to gain a practical understanding of Drama. Students must also participate in a minimum of two performances, one devised and one from a performance text (extracts only) which has been studied as part of the course.

Students must experience live theatre, where they are a member of the audience in the same performance space as the performers. This may be a professional or amateur, but not a peer, performance.

Students have access to Edexcel approved workbooks and revision guides which guide them through all the aforementioned skills as well as exam exemplars for their final exams.

Teaching and Learning (including pedagogical approach and research)

Throughout the two-year course, students have a mixture of theory, independent research-led and practical work involving different dramatic strategies and exposure to a variety of different practitioners. Since Drama involves a combination of practical work, written analysis and evaluation, an atmosphere of collaborative learning, discussion and metacognitive dialogue is generated in lessons. Collaboration with other schools' Drama departments in regards to best practice and moderation is encouraged in order to ensure that rigour and consistency is applied in marking and other forms of assessment according to the requirements of the curriculum. Our school policy is to encourage arts based subjects and this has been a popular choice for those who want to increase their confidence, want to pursue Drama as a career and relish the challenge of a course which offers an equal combination of practical and concentrated written evaluation and analysis.

Extra-Curricular

We provide a lunch time drama club for all year groups where pupils are encouraged to express themselves creatively. They direct, act and write drama pieces to perform in front of each other, incoming year 7's with their parents on open evenings and tutor groups. We are in the process of inviting on a regular basis incoming Drama groups to perform curriculum related pieces. We also encourage pupils to audition and take part in our school production.

IMPACT

Revision workbooks and online systems are used for homework and knowledge and understanding is clear using the black and blue pen system. Students have an end of unit devised practical piece accompanied by a 2000-word essay or a 1000-word essay plus five minutes filmed analysis and evaluation or filmed 8/10 minutes evaluation depending on the individual needs of the pupil. To prepare for this, students have to record their experience in writing of each of their lessons. They also learn and perform extracts in front of a visiting examiner. Finally, pupils study a play and how to answer questions which will come up in their written exam in May year 11. As part of this exam they will also be taught how to approach a live theatre set of questions based on a recent theatre trip. They will consolidate their learning with research homework on the history of theatre, elements of drama and the ideas of various relevant practitioners. The marks for each class are recorded in a centralised spreadsheet and progress is monitored by the class teacher, as well as recorded in the students' exercise books. Students are also assessed formally at Year 11 Mock in November and at the end of year 11 spring term. Findings are reported to students and parents/guardians through Insight, reports and Parents' Evenings. Strategies for students at risk of underachieving include additional questioning and support in lessons, or more scaffolding. Parental contact to home is made through phone calls, as well as sending postcards home to congratulate an improvement in an assessment, improvement in attitude to learning and consistent high levels in assessment and classwork. Coursework essays are drafted and looked at once, with general feedback provided in line with exam board guidelines. Homework tasks, are assessed formatively with students receiving written or verbal feedback on these and then having the opportunity in lessons to correct and improve their work.