

BARTON COURT GRAMMAR SCHOOL - DRAMA

Drama is a popular and thriving subject in the school; at the moment there are about 70 pupils studying GCSE in years 9, 10 and 11. The group at A-Level cohort currently has 7 students in year 13 and 9 students in year 12. There is a good level of interest from current year 11 students to study the new specification next year. Students also have drama lessons at KS3 once a fortnight. This is a one-person department, but is supported by an excellent team of drama prefects in years 11-13.

School productions and extra-curricular are a focus point of the department, and working closely with the music department we offer one main school musical every year alongside drama clubs and student-led productions. The department offers at least one annual trip to the west-end alongside smaller trips to see local theatre across the year. The department is also in charge of an 'school production enrichment day' every year, where the whole year 7 cohort is involved in prop-making, set painting, and learn about both the musical theatre genre and the range of careers in the performing arts. We also offer performance opportunities for talented students as part of the 'gifted and talented' evening.

The Drama department is a successful member of the Royal Shakespeare Associate School's programme at The Marlowe Theatre. This means actively contributing to The Marlowe's up and coming school opportunities are essential, in return, we take part in performances ourselves on the main Marlowe stage once an academic year, whilst taking part in a site specific piece, both of which are directed by the curriculum lead.

Teaching takes place in either the drama studio or the main school hall. Room 19 is an amphitheatre-style performance space with a Jestor Zero88 lighting desk and a set of rigged lanterns and the performing arts studio is a bigger rehearsal space. The main school hall has also just had a recent technical upgrade with new speakers, a new Jestor board, and new LED moving head lanterns with built in colour wheels and gobos. All rooms have access to a projector and classrooms/computer rooms are available to book for theory lessons.

Key Stage 3

Students have drama lessons fortnightly and a great emphasis is placed on providing a creative and supportive environment. The focus at key stage three is on confidence building, performing and developing a constructive critical eye towards their own and peer work. Students study a wide range of skills such as silent film acting, body language, voice, naturalism and physical theatre. There are also opportunities to explore issues such as loneliness and bullying through prepared improvisations. As well as performing, they learn how to give and receive constructive feedback and apply it to improve their own work. Students are assessed formally at the end of each unit through either a practical performance or a written evaluation.

Key Stage 4

KS4 (Years 9 – 11) follow the AQA GCSE specification with first exams in June 2018. The current year 11s are working on their scripted performances for Component 3 and their Component 1 written exam, studying 'Billy Elliot' for section C. The play 'Blood Brothers' has been studied by all year groups as their set text for section B of the examination.

Lessons are delivered through 4x 60 minute lessons per fortnight. Learning is supported by a wide range of practical activities, ICT and printed resources, ensuring that a variety of activities is offered to suit every type of learner. Texts for performance are selected carefully to showcase the skills of the students and the year 11s are currently working on scenes from 'DNA', 'Too Much Punch for Judy', 'Girls like that', 'Macbeth' and 'Things I know to be True'.

Key Stage 5

Year 12 students have been introduced to their set texts for Component 1 (40%) of 'Much Ado About Nothing' and 'Our Country's Good' and have already explored John Godber and Constantin Stanislavski

for Component 3 (30%). Year 13 students have completed Component 2 and are preparing to complete their third extract of Component 3 and their written exam Component 1 when we return to school.

Lessons are delivered through 9 x 60 minute lessons per fortnight. Most students studying A-level have taken drama at GCSE but this is not a requirement as the course assumes no prior knowledge. A variety of teaching and learning activities are employed to provide a thorough, challenging and, above all, stimulating grounding in the subject and its methods. A high number of students opt to study drama or dance at university after studying in the sixth form.