

Drama Curriculum Intent Statement

“I regard the Theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being.” Oscar Wilde

We want all students to experience the magic, awe, wonder and richness of the Theatre. Our students do not always have the frame of reference for Theatre and Drama as an art form and as an expression of the world, like they often do with Art or Music. The study of the Drama Curriculum engages students in an exploration of the world from multiple perspectives. It promotes active discussion and exploration of a range of themes and issues in order to promote diversity, equality, and social, moral and cultural understanding. The Curriculum enables all students to confidently express themselves, their emotions, ideas, opinions and thoughts in a safe, creative, and collaborative space. The Curriculum takes students on a chronology of the ideologies and advancements in Theatre, from antiquity to modern day in order to explore and study the great playwrights and practitioners that have influenced modern Theatre. The Curriculum equips students with high quality, cultural capital through an understanding, appreciation and awareness of how history, society and culture has impacted Theatre, and how Theatre has impacted history, society and culture. Through a wide range of opportunities and experiences both inside and outside of the classroom, students will develop an appreciation of the performing arts and grow to understand its value for themselves and for society as a whole. Through the Curriculum students will develop deep knowledge and understanding of performance genres, texts and styles, their context including the theatrical conventions of the period in which they were created through high quality and ambitious opportunities to demonstrate and apply their knowledge and understanding through **Making**, **Performing** and **Responding** to Drama.

KS3 Curriculum Rationale and sequencing

Year 7 - A History of Theatre -From antiquity to Shakespeare

The year 7 Curriculum aims to equip students with important foundational knowledge and understanding of the history of Theatre and introduce them to the Historical, Cultural and Social context and the Theatrical conventions of the time period.

The Year 7 Curriculum journey begins with the antiquity of Theatre. The great birthplace of comedy and tragedy and the authentic roots and origins of Theatre. Students explore performance spaces, Dionysia festival and the Worship of the God Dionysus. They are introduced to the Great Playwrights with a focus on Euripides. They will explore and experiment with Theatrical conventions such as Greek chorus and Mask work. They will explore the play Medea and develop their knowledge, understanding of the contextual influences and how to use vocal and physical skills.

In term 2 students will continue their journey through Theatre time through their study of Medieval Theatre. They will learn how The fall of the Roman Empire and ‘The dark ages’ or contributed to the demise and evolution of Theatre in England. They will explore Liturgical Drama and will understand the connections between Greek Theatre, didactic theatre and morality plays.

In term 3 students continue their chronological exploration through the study of Shakespeare’s work - Macbeth. Students learning is complimented through the correlated study of the play in English Curriculum.

They will build on prior knowledge and understanding of tragedy and how the genre has developed over time. Students will understand how The Renaissance was a rebirth of theatre and how themes of the Ancient Greek theatre came back into style and how Medieval and Greek theatre merge during the Renaissance. Students will develop their understanding of theatrical design elements and use their creative ideas to create mood and atmosphere. They will begin to draw Parallels with commedia dell'Arte.

Year 8- Styles, Genres and Practitioners

The Year 8 Curriculum journey continues with a chronological exploration of Theatre while focusing on influential practitioners and styles of Drama.

In term 1 students study the style of commedia Dell'Arte and further develop their use of characterisation. Students will build on prior knowledge and understand how commedia Dell'Arte became more about entertainment, how lazzi was born, how it has parallels with Greek comedy and how the use of masks developed in Theatre. They will gain knowledge of how the role of women developed in the Theatre. Students will explore commedia characters and the art of improvisation, which they will build upon and develop further in term 2 through the study of Stanislavski and characterisation.

In term 2 students explore the practitioner, Stanislavski and the rise of naturalism in order to develop their ability to create original characters, understand practitioner methods and Theatrical style and explore his impact on modern Theatre. Students will be introduced to character development and rehearsal techniques. They will know and understand who Stanislavski is, his influence on theatre and his method. Students will begin to be able to identify and investigate how successfully theatre makers communicate meaning to an audience. Students will build wider knowledge, concepts and understanding of how European Theatre developed since Commedia Dell'Arte and what came after through Melodrama and stock characters. They will know how Stanislavski's system was in response to this type of Theatre.

In term 3 students continue to contextualise practitioners and their influences. They will explore German Theatre practitioner, Brecht. They will explore devices such as Gest and Spass. They will build on developments from Russian Theatre and realism movement and be able to compare and contrast theatrical conventions and practitioner intentions. Student will have previously explored the rise of naturalism in European theatre and will be able to contextualise how Brecht transformed the narrative of modern theatre through the introduction of non-naturalistic devices. They will be able to compare the varying philosophies and principles of both practitioners. Non naturalistic theatre is a difficult concept for most students so scaffolding their understanding of this with previous study of naturalism is effective. Students will learn about how Brecht had established the Berliner Ensemble and was regarded as one of the greatest theatrical practitioners and how the turmoil of the times through which Brecht lived gave him a strong political voice. Students will learn about how his ideas were so revolutionary that they changed the theatrical landscape forever.

Year 9 - Contemporary Theatre

In Year 9, students use their knowledge, understanding and context through the study of contemporary Physical Theatre, with a focus on Frantic Assembly, one of the most influential contemporary ensembles. They will build on how the style has evolved from Greek theatre, commedia dell'arte and Brechtian devices. They will be introduced to modern practitioners of physical theatre in order to contextualise the style and conventions. In term 1 Students will begin to explore a wider range of theatre styles and focus on physical skills and ensemble work to tell stories and communicate meaning.

In term 2 and 3 students will progress to using their deep knowledge, skill and understanding to create, refine and apply their skills in performance. They will learn how to develop a piece of theatre, from conception to

performance, using their refined theatrical skills in a specific context and in response to a stimulus. They will explore and respond to a wide range of stimuli relating to society, culture, history and politics, giving them a wider understanding of the modern world in which they live, along with a cultural understanding of how we can express ourselves and our own ideas through Theatre. They will refine their skills in working as an ensemble. They will learn how to form their own aims and intentions for theatre and drama, using their knowledge and understanding of the concepts and big ideas in Theatre. They will be able to make informed decisions about their artistic choices and be able to confidently explain, justify and demonstrate their ideas through effective performance skills, use of conventions and portrayal of a character. This will be underpinned by mastery of knowledge of Theatre and Drama styles and genres in order to make informed creative decisions and analyse and evaluate their performance work and the creative process. Students will learn how to respond to, analyse and evaluate Theatre, the performances of professional actors and designers, using their refined knowledge of Drama and Theatre to form a critical understanding and practical application of their refined skills.

By the end of Key stage 3 all students will know, understand and be able to:

Students will gain deep knowledge and understanding of Theatre throughout History and it's evolution. They understand the Historical social and cultural ideas that are associated with the specific context. Over the course of Key stage 3, students will have developed a secure knowledge and understanding of the history of theatre, the periods, styles and genres, contextual influences, the key advancements and practitioners, and how all of these factors have changed the landscape of modern Theatre.

They will learn how to practically experiment with, apply, analyse and evaluate their theatrical devices and techniques. Students will know, understand and be able to use theatrical skills and elements of design, showing a practical understanding of how they integrate to create effective theatre for audiences. The Curriculum gives all students the knowledge and skills to be able to make important connections and draw comparisons and contrasts between a range of styles, genres, forms and conventions in drama. Students gain high quality opportunities to read, explore, discuss, perform, watch and respond to a range of ambitious plays, texts, articles, extracts and other resources.

The Key Stage 3 Curriculum gives students the knowledge, understanding and skills in making, performing and responding to Drama, to progress confidently to Key stage 4. If students do not study Drama as a Key stage 4 option subject, the curriculum will still give them transferable knowledge, skills and attributes for life.

Key Stage 4 Rationale and Sequencing (AQA GCSE Drama)

Examination Board Rationale

At St. Cuthbert's. students study the AQA Examination at Key stage 4 in Year 10 and 11. This exam board is the most robust, ensuring students have a deep and broad knowledge and understanding of play texts,

styles, genres and conventions of Theatre. It allows a set text study of a choice of ambitious, yet accessible plays. The AQA specification prepares students thoroughly for A Level and further study in both Drama and Theatre Studies.

Year 10

Term 1 : Study of a set text - Blood Brothers

The Key stage 4 Curriculum begins with component 1, understanding drama as this unit is the foundation of all knowledge and skills in Drama and Theatre practices. It will give them a model of effective theatre for when they progress to devising drama and texts in practice. This component - understanding Drama - enables students to interleave knowledge, skills and understanding of all 3 components and prepares them confidently for further study. Study of a choice of 6 set texts is the basis of this component and the reasons for choosing Blood Brothers are as follows: The play is one of the most iconic modern British plays that explores a wide range of modern issues that students can relate to and will develop their cultural awareness and understanding of British history, society and culture -most of which has directly affected their lives today. The themes and context are relevant and relatable to our students and it is appropriate for all abilities due to it's realistic characters and more complex themes and issues. It presents challenge, depth and ambition through it's tragic elements, use of conventions and opportunities for design. Students study the play through reading, analysing the script, performing the play and interpreting roles and watching the play. At the end of term1 students will know the synopsis, characters time period, playwright, location and setting, and sequencing of key events from the plot. They will know what Britain was like in the late 20th century, social class of the characters, family structure and gender roles. They will explore the playwright, Willy Russell, form and genre, the structure of the play and style. Students will know mood and atmosphere is created. They will learn how to analyse stage directions, speech and language. Students will be able to explore and analyse the character and performance of key characters. They will know how to develop a character in performance that is appropriate to context and intentions. They will know the relationships, interactions and use of space for the characters. They will be able to describe, explain and justify their decisions.

Term 2 - Practical exploration of a set text: Blood Brothers

During term 2, students will explore the play practically, and show their knowledge and understanding through performing and responding to the play. In addition, Component 3 Texts in practice is also interleaved and assessed. Students will work collaboratively to generate, develop and communicate performance ideas. They will Develop a range of theatrical skills and apply them to create performances. They will begin to reflect on and evaluate their own performance work and that of others. At the end of term 2 students will know the status of characters, the use of space and physical skills and how lighting could contribute to mood. Students will know how to use proxemics and interact with each other. Students will know where symbolism is used. They will know how sound design could be used to create an atmosphere and foreshadow. Students will know how gesture and movement can be used to show mood and atmosphere. They will know how props, set and lighting could be used to reflect context. Students will know and understand he relationships development of Mickey and Linda. They will develop know how to use their physical skills to interpret this. Students will know how dynamics, pace and volume can be used to create tension for the audience Students will know how costume and sound could be used to show mood and atmosphere and show character development.

Term 3 - Devising

At the end of term 3 students will have progressed to component 2 - creating their own devised drama and will be able to draw on aspects of their Key stage 3 learning and Year 10 work on the set text to consolidate this. They will know and understand the process of devising and the skills required Students will explore



and analyse a range of various stimuli and know how to respond to it. Students will know how to create initial ideas in response to the stimulus chosen. Students will recall prior knowledge of practitioners such as Stanislavski, Brecht and Frantic Assembly and be able to use them to create effective drama. Students will know how to experiment with a range of practitioners and style to communicate their aims. Students will examine and know a wide range of factual information through research of their theme, stimulus and ideas. Students will know how to effectively use research to create and develop ideas for performance. Students will be able to identify their own aims and intentions and the aims and intentions of the group/ piece. Students will know how theatre conventions impact on their work, such as structure, style, rehearsal techniques and conventions.

Year 11

Term 1A - Devising

In year 11 students will complete their NEA devised theatre assessments. Students will build on preparation work in the previous year to develop an effective piece of drama for performance. At the end of this term students will know how to effectively use research to create and develop ideas for performance. Students will be able to identify their own aims and intentions and the aims and intentions of the group/ piece. Students will know how to employ character development techniques and will be able to explain their use of performance skills. Students will have a wide knowledge and understanding of theatrical devices and techniques. This knowledge and understanding of developing effective Theatre will be the foundation skills for the next component.

Term 1B - Response to live Theatre

In term 1B, students interleave their knowledge and understanding of how drama is developed and performed through analysis and evaluation of live Theatre. The rationale for teaching this in term 1B after the set text and devising is that students' prior knowledge on what contributes to successful theatre and how it is developed and performed gives students a better foundation to be able to use analysis and evaluation skills successfully. It is also due to the popularity of live and accessible professional Theatre in the winter. Students are offered numerous Theatre trips to support their understanding of live Theatre. The production chosen is updated annually in line with recent developments in popular Theatre. Students are also given access to Use of National Theatre and Digital Theatre + allow students to access a range of high quality and versatile sources of professional Theatre.

Term 2 - Texts in Practice

At the end of term 2 students will progress to component 3 -texts in practice. They will build on prior knowledge of a range of play texts and their features to be able to progress to realising 2 extracts from a chosen play. Students will know and understand their chosen plays context, plot and will know the text and dialogue they are performing. They will know and be able to interpret and perform a character as appropriate to the demands of the performance. They will know how to develop a range of vocal skills and techniques eg clarity of diction, inflection, accent, intonation and phrasing; pace, pause and timing; projection, pitch; emotional range; song and/or choral speaking. They will know how to develop a range of physical skills and techniques eg movement, body language, posture, gesture, gait, co-ordination, stillness, timing, control; facial expression; eye contact, listening, expression of mood; spatial awareness; interaction with other performers; dance and choral movement. Students will know how to develop an appropriate performer/audience relationship and ensure sustained engagement. Students will know how to adopt the latest safe working practices.

Term 3 - Revision, Rehearsal and Examination

Term 3 is used for students to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and theatrical skills in performance and examination of component 1 - understanding drama and component 3 - texts in practice. Students will revise and recall the set text *Blood Brothers*. They will re visit it through re reading the play and close analysis of key extracts. They will refine and rehearse their texts in practice for examination.

By the end of Key stage 4 all students will know, understand and be able to:

The Key stage 4 Curriculum aims to inspire creativity in students and provide opportunities for students to make and understand drama, recognising it as a practical art form in which ideas and meaning are communicated to an audience through choices of form, style and convention. Students will be able to make informed decisions about further learning and progression opportunities, apply knowledge and understanding when making, performing and responding to drama.

They will explore a range of performance texts understanding their social, cultural and historical context including the theatrical conventions of the period in which they were created. They will know and understand the characteristics of performance text(s) and dramatic work(s), including: genre; structure; character; form and style; language and stage directions They will develop a wider range of theatrical skills and apply them to create performances. Students will be able to work collaboratively to generate, develop and communicate ideas, and develop as creative, effective, independent and reflective students able to make informed choices in process and performance. Students will contribute as an individual to a theatrical performance and use their knowledge and understanding to reflect on and evaluate their own work and that of others. They will have an awareness and understanding of the roles and processes undertaken in contemporary professional theatre practice. Students will know and understand how meaning is interpreted and communicated through: performance conventions; use of performance space and spatial relationships on stage; relationships between performers and audience; the design of: set (including props), costume, lighting and sound ; actor's vocal and physical interpretation of character; the drama and theatre terminology used by theatre makers and how to use it appropriately. Students will acquire, develop and apply skills in: creating and communicating meaning and realising artistic intention, in a live theatre context for an audience, through: research; developing ideas; interpreting texts; devising; rehearsing; refining and amending work in progress; their contribution to the final performance; analysing and evaluating their own process of creating live theatre and analysis and evaluation of live theatre work of others.

