



Drama Curriculum

Statement of Intent, Implementation, Impact

Intent

Drama is a statutory part of English in the National Curriculum and, at Broughton, we strive to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of Drama. Our curriculum ambition is to provide an academic Drama curriculum that develops knowledge, skills and cultural capital. The coherent planning is sequenced towards pupils collaborating creatively to confidently present their ideas for an audience through live performance. We aim to develop pupils' interpersonal skills and to stimulate their imaginations to explore issues beyond their own experience, in a safe and supportive environment.

The rationale for Drama in Years 7, 8 and 9 is skill driven and aims to build personal competences which can be relied upon to succeed, not only in drama lessons, but beyond school life and in future employment. Drama promotes self-esteem and provides all pupils with a sense of achievement regardless of academic ability. The Drama curriculum is successfully adapted and developed to be as ambitious as possible, and to meet the needs of SEND pupils. It centres on social and communication skills which enable pupils to enjoy and achieve. Drama is the inspiring, rigorous and practical subject which prepares all young people to live and work with confidence in the wider world. The creative arts industry is growing faster than any other sector in the UK and the Drama curriculum at Broughton is designed to promote the creativity, empathy and problem solving skills needed for careers in this sector.

Drama places unique demands upon the critical thinking and emotional engagement of participants. It challenges pupils to move from a superficial response to texts and situations, to a more sophisticated response. When pupils are emotionally engaged they experience for themselves roles, tensions and dilemmas while being able to step outside a text or situation to gain an additional perspective. Developing this ability to participate and observe means that, given a new situation, text or dilemma, pupils are able to transfer their analytical skills to them.

We intend for pupils at Broughton to explore, experiment and express themselves in a safe and non-judgmental environment. In Drama pupils can expand their thought processes and learn to articulate their ideas, opinions and feelings. Because of the variety of options within the subject (performance, design, director, writer) all pupils have the opportunity to thrive.

Implementation

At Broughton all Drama lessons are taught in the purpose built Drama Studio to offer all our pupils access to the very best teaching and learning resources. In Drama pupils study for 1 hour a week in Year 9 and 0.5 hours a week in Year 7 and 8. Progress in Years 8 and 9 is aided by smaller teaching groups (21-24), while in Year 7 classes are taught as a tutor group (30/31). At Key Stage 4 pupils work towards a GCSE qualification and study for 2 hours a week in Year 10 and 3 hours a week in Year 11. Cohort size is variable with current KS4 classes of 23 and 24 pupils.

At Key Stage 3 the Drama curriculum is taught through project-based schemes. The teaching is integrated with timely assessments and projected end points. Pupils have the opportunity to experiment with script interpretation and characterisation, devise original drama, explore the technical and design sides of performance and theatrical techniques. They will develop confidence, presentation and teamwork skills. Pupils cultivate reading publicly through script work, but also private reading opportunities are presented to extend pupils' understanding and enhance their creative response. A range of texts and media from classic to contemporary are used, including Shakespeare. A variety of performance styles and genres are introduced alongside technical, IT and design resources to inspire pupils and enable them to realise their creative ideas in performance. A range of teaching and learning strategies are employed to ensure lessons are stimulating. Practical approaches are blended with theory so that research and analysis can be put into practice. Inclusive approaches are used in all lessons to enable even reluctant speakers and performers to develop the confidence to engage and enjoy Drama.

During the course of a project pupils are offered teacher formative assessment and clear success criteria to self and peer assess. DIRT time is then used to improve performances. Each project is formally assessed through a final practical performance which is filmed to enable pupil reflection on performance and assessment. Grading is recorded in department internal tracking records.

Cross curricular planning is important in Drama with KS3 schemes. Links with PSHE topics are developing in KS3 schemes in conjunction with working parties (social media). Drama at KS3 culminates in the summer MAD project which is a multi-disciplinary arts project. We co-operatively plan visual and performing arts work around a shared theme (recent themes were Lancashire Witches & The Legend of Hercules). This project is sequenced to build towards a 3 hour workshop which incorporates a 40mins theatrical performance in the Drama Studio. The aim is to create a professional theatre environment where pupils perform for each other to showcase the performance skills (acting, directing, designing and technical) that they have developed over the Key Stage and use the Art work that they have developed to enhance the visual impact of their performance.

This approach at KS3 prepares those pupils who choose to opt for Drama GCSE. Teachers are passionate about creating a professional performance atmosphere and this enthusiasm captures the imagination and interest of our pupils.

At KS4 the Edexcel GCSE course is followed. CPD is completed to keep up to date with the specification. Links with other schools' Drama Departments studying the same course are constantly developed through social media groups and meeting to standardize both written and practical work. Links with local sixth form colleges are important for demonstrating the next academic level of the subject and GCSE groups attend performances and workshops. The curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulative knowledge and skills for the future.

Impact

By the end of Year 9 all pupils have participated in the MAD performance workshops and actively employed the skills they have honed throughout years 7,8 and 9. This is a wholly inclusive project enabling disadvantaged and SEND pupils equal performance opportunities. The standard of these performances showcases the progress and achievement across the key stage. Pupils continue to achieve well in Drama at GCSE. Current uptake for Drama has steadily increased over the last three years, despite the impact of the EBACC progress measure.

Pupils enjoy and achieve in Drama across the Key Stages (evidenced by pupil voice questionnaires, final performance standards and GCSE results). Theatre visits are well attended by pupils, behaviour and engagement are excellent and pupil feedback is overwhelmingly positive. GCSE performances in the Drama Studio are well supported by parents who compliment the standard that their children are working at. Many pupils continue their studies after Broughton with some past pupils graduating to prestigious acting schools and industry jobs.

Recording of performances enables pupils to reflect on progress and to demonstrate how assessment is made. High quality exemplars are used to bench mark and inspire. Pupils are keen to watch each other perform and enjoy analyzing and assessing performance (evidenced by engagement in lessons and pupil voice questionnaires). Departmental networking and cross-moderation with other schools and colleges ensures that high standards of provision are maintained.

The Act Up extra-curricular Drama club is well attended and supported by GCSE pupils who often lead sessions. Their ability to lead younger pupils demonstrates the success that they have had in this subject area, showcasing the leadership skills they have developed at the same time as their performance skills.

The Drama curriculum at Broughton encourages pupils to read widely and often, to attend the theatre, and fosters an appreciation of the arts and culture.

COVID Curriculum

COVID restrictions clearly have a devastating impact upon a subject like Drama, which is practical in nature and grounded in group collaboration. While masks are not required for performance, they are for rehearsals which limits vocal skills and facial expressions. Social distancing dictates that group work has to be reduced and monologue and duologue work favoured. Audience restrictions mean that pupils have not experienced the sense of occasion that they would normally when performing for a live audience. Schemes of work at both key stages have had to be considerably altered to adhere to these restrictions.

KS4

Due to performance restrictions and periods of remote learning, Component 1 for Year 11 was adapted to monologue performances. Option to take part as either an actor or designer was still offered. As an invited audience was not permitted all performances were for the rest of the class and a small variety of teaching staff. All performances were filmed in December, according to EDEXCEL guidance. To compensate for the limitations that monologue work naturally presents

and for the restrictions COVID imposed upon design candidates, pupils were given the opportunity to complete a further paired devised performance during lessons in April/May. Again, all performances were for a live audience consisting of the rest of the class and teaching staff and were filmed.

Component 2 performances were limited to one key scene as a duologue or monologue. Pupils were still able to opt for design or acting roles. Performances were completed using the rest of the class and teaching staff as the live audience and were filmed as per exam board guidance. The revised time limits published by the board were implemented.

Access to the National Theatre's database was obtained in April 2020 and allowed pupils to view recorded and streamed live performances for free. Section B of the written exam (Component 3) is a review of a live performance and the exam board gave permission for the National theatre performances to be used.

KS3

During remote learning all schemes at KS3 had to be suspended and new schemes suitable for the TEAMS medium utilized. National Theatre performances, theatre design and monologue work were all introduced in new schemes.

Since returning to school group sizes have been restricted and shared use of props, costume or equipment has not been allowed. Existing schemes have been adapted to still allow pupils to realise a final acting performance, but with minimal theatrical effects (limited costume, props, set). The Yr9 MAD project has had to be delivered in subject lessons only, with no final performance workshop.

May 2021