

Why is Drama Important?

Drama allows students the opportunity to be creative and innovative; it develops independence and transferable skills; we focus on thinking not knowing.

Mission Statement: The Department aims to liberate the creative potential of each child and teach them the Drama, Theatre and social skills necessary to express their creativity in a meaningful and artistic way.

Drama is about being human and the human condition; about trying to make sense of the world in which we live; so, instead of only 'finding out' we focus on thinking and making universal links. We have a viewpoint, often determined by a role. It may change tomorrow, next week or next year, but we have a view, and by acknowledging our viewpoint, we are making links, we are making sense of our learning by fitting it into a greater context.



Summary of the Department

The department has four teachers of Drama, Dance and Performing Arts who deliver the curriculum for Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 in a newly built Drama, Dance and Music annexe. Drama and Dance have three dedicated performance studios and share an IT teaching room which houses 28 computer units. Laptops and ipads are used to provide visual support for Dance and Drama activities. Each studio is equipped with sound and lighting equipment with projectors in two of the three; in addition, the Dance Studio has a sprung floor, a mirrored wall and ballet bar for drama and dance rehearsals.

Department Teaching Staff:

- Barbara Hindley: Curriculum Leader and first point of contact for parents (drama.contact@williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk)
- Michelle Serrechia: Teacher of Drama
- Rikki Inglesfield: Teacher of Drama and DTA

Aims of the Drama Department:

These aims and objectives relate directly to the aims of William Howard School.

1. To stimulate lasting pupil interest and enjoyment in Drama. To create an atmosphere where pupils wish to learn, and where they come to enjoy Drama because they are active participants in it. This will enable each pupil to achieve his/her potential in a variety of situations, to ensure the highest level of achievement for each pupil.
2. To enable pupils to be familiar with knowledge, principles, skills, techniques and vocabulary related to Drama.
3. By exposing pupils to a wide range of material we aim to enable pupils to see Drama as part of a wider body of knowledge and skills, and, ultimately, within a social, cultural and historical context.

4. To enable pupils to work independently and as part of a team.
 5. To value each individual and encourage each pupil to feel the value and worth of others, and to encourage empathy, so that each pupil approaches all issues with tolerance and insight.
 6. To allow pupils to develop informed opinions and to be able to support them by reasonable and reasoned arguments in an environment within which all students will feel safe and free from prejudice.
 7. To encourage pupils to have a critical awareness, and to develop the ability to analyse, evaluate and discriminate.
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Key Stage 3

At KS 3 students follow a programme of study that leads directly to GCSE level: by the end of Year 9 all GCSE skills will have been incorporated into our practical exploration.

Key Stage 4

GCSE Drama (Edexcel)

- Unit 1: Drama Exploration (30%). This is the exploration of creative and structural aspects of Drama, including responding to a range of stimuli; using explorative strategies, the medium and elements of Drama.
- Unit 2: Exploring Play Texts (30%). This is the exploration of a play text involving exploration of character, interpretation and design implications of the play. Unit 2 also requires a visit to a live theatre performance. Both units need supporting Documentary Evidence.
- Unit 3: Drama Performance (40%). A practical examination of a devised or scripted play to an audience including a visiting examiner.

BTEC Performing Arts (Edexcel)

A decision about exact assignments and course content will be based on the students who have chosen to study Performing Arts. This year all students are following a Musical Theatre pathway which includes all three disciplines of acting, singing and dance.

Key Stage 5

Drama and Theatre Studies (Edexcel)

GCE AS Level

‘Since the emphasis in most GCE Drama or GCSE Drama and Theatre Arts courses is on improvisation, devised work and/or performing, the Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Drama and Theatre Studies deliberately focuses on working with plays. In this way, the Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Drama and Theatres Studies aims to bridge the gap between GCSE and full Advanced GCE by providing an opportunity to study plays from the point of view of a director, designer, performer and informed audience member. The qualification is designed to enable students to acquire a knowledge and understanding of the language of drama and theatre as well as to develop their performing and analytical skills’.

GCE A Level

'The full Advanced GCE in Drama and Theatres Studies aims to extend the knowledge, skills and understanding acquired in the Advance Subsidiary units by enabling students to apply what they have learned in their own creative work.

In devising theatre, students alternate between the roles of playwright, performer, designer and director, and apply their knowledge of different theatre forms and structures gained from Advanced Subsidiary to the creation of their own work.

In performing theatre, students are required to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding within the structure of a director's interpretation of a play, and to operate at a highly intellectual level as well as at a highly skilled practical level. The aim of the full Advanced GCE is to enable students to operate more autonomously and with confidence within a drama and theatre context'.

Applied GCE Performing Arts (Edexcel)

In AS units you will learn about:

- Exploring skills for performance (internally assessed; externally moderated)
- Planning for a creative event (internally assessed; externally moderated)
- Performing to a commission (externally assessed)

In A2 units you will learn about:

- Employment Opportunities in the Performing Arts (internally assessed; externally moderated)
- Advanced Performance Practice (internally assessed; externally moderated)
- Advanced Production Practice or Production Delivery (externally assessed)

Learning Outside the Classroom

- Lunchtime Drama clubs for Years 7 and 8
- Whole school annual musical
- Theatre visits (across the north)
- Visiting specialists (professional theatre practitioners, Chief Examiner of A Level Drama),
- Daily open workshops- the dance and drama studios are open each morning break, lunch time and after school for rehearsals; informal dance and training.