

Drama

Curriculum Intent

Here at Carnforth High School Drama Department, our focus is to inspire students with the confidence and creativity to understand the world, both on and off the stage, in a variety of new and engaging ways. It is a common misconception that Drama is just for those who want to be 'actors'. In fact, it is a subject concerned with the development of transferrable skills that are relevant to all, in terms of personal and social awareness and future employability, whatever the ultimate career choice. However, in our lessons, we also work hard to develop the performance skills of our students (rather than following an issues-based curriculum) so those who wish to study the subject at GCSE and A Level are well prepared.

The Drama curriculum is ambitious and challenging, using the work of some of the most influential drama practitioners including Brecht, Berkoff and Frantic Assembly.

Like the other arts, Drama involves imagination and feelings; it helps us to make sense of the world. We want students to be able to communicate and engage with others in a positive and confident fashion. The language of theatre provides an opportunity for pupils to explore the world of people from other places, times, and cultures, and to examine differences and similarities with their own environment. Students will learn to look for solutions to very real problems- problems from their own life, or problems faced by characters in literature or historical figures.

Drama at Carnforth is exciting, interesting, and varied. There is a balance of practical and written lessons. Students have opportunities to devise their own work, use drama techniques to explore themes, issues, and ideas, interpret the work of playwrights and theatre practitioners and realise text. Practically they develop their physical and vocal skills in performing to an audience and explore how meaning is communicated to an audience through choices of form, style, and convention. Through written work we focus on developing evaluative skills; analysing writer's choices and crafting together clearly communicated points on performance and technical based features. In this way Drama accomplishes several goals at once-enriching students' school experience through the wider curriculum as well as reinforcing traditional academic skills.

At Key Stage 3 we encourage the students to think of themselves as actors, learning their craft. We develop their vocal and physical skills through the work of practitioners including Berkoff and Brecht. We also give them an understanding of theatre from other times and cultures including Greek Theatre, Commedia Dell 'Arte, Victorian Melodrama, Chinese Theatre and Japanese Kabuki Theatre.

From the streets of Liverpool with Blood Brothers to the engaging choices of the Live Theatre component, the Drama curriculum at KS4 follows the engaging AQA specification. Students are expected to be able to devise their own drama, write a devising log, study a play, review a live performance, and perform a script.

As a department we wholeheartedly believe that Drama can enable our students to grow into more rounded and self-aware young adults. Drama, in short, is essential.

Implementation

Key Stage 3

- Year 7** As the students start their learning journey in the world of drama, they start with an imaginative project in which they travel on the Spaceship Orion to another planet. They then travel back in time to have a taste of Greek theatre followed by a foray into the gruesome world of Sweeney Todd. Throughout the assorted topics they are continually working to develop their vocal and physical skills.
- Year 8** In year 8, students continue to develop the vocal and physical skills they have established and worked on within Year 7 whilst broadening their horizons trying a variety of theatre styles ranging from Physical Theatre developing these skills through a historical look at Commedia Dell 'Arte. The students end the year by looking at Theatre from Around the World such as Japanese Kabuki theatre; Brazilian Theatre and African Theatre.

Year 9 To round off the KS3 Drama experience, students begin the year by focusing on devising skills, creating their own pieces based on a piece of creative work around a key theme chosen by the students. They then continue their journey through Drama history with a focus on Melodrama and the rise of exaggerated theatre. The year ends with a focus on the design and acting work of a performance and the key areas that are included in this for a set text.

Key Stage 4

Year 10 As the students begin their journey with GCSE Drama, they focus on the set text of Blood Brothers by Willy Russell, combining practical and theory-based responses. After spending time exploring these characters; developing written responses and evaluation skills the students move on developing their work on key drama practitioners; creating pieces of drama inspired by a theme and evaluating for their coursework component. The students will focus on the work of Brecht and Berkoff to influence their work and craft a piece of their own design. The final component of the year will be a practice of a theatre review of a live performance piece.

Year 11 In Year 11, the students will complete the final three components of the exam the Texts in Practice practical, Live Performance and the written component Understanding Drama, revisiting key areas of the previous years such as Blood Brothers. Students will focus on the practical elements of their scripts for the Text in Practice work and use this to help craft their responses to the written exam.

Impact

Assessment at KS3

Students will be assessed on the use of their theatrical skills (vocal and physical) as well as their ability to evaluate themselves and the work of others. The students will complete a series of practical based assessments; there shall be some written evaluation of their performances exploring the choices they have made and how they feel they have done.

KS3

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
'Let's get creative'	Spaceship Orion	Physical Theatre	Devising Theatre
History of Theatre	Greek theatre	Commedia Dell 'Arte	Victorian Melodrama
People and Places	Sweeney Todd	Theatre from Around the World	Set Text: Acting and Designing

Assessment at KS4

Students will be equipped with the skills to write about acting and designing skills. They also will be able to analyse performances in live theatre relating to these skills. Students will become comfortable with use of script-based work; develop characterisation skills and be able to make the figures on the page their own. Practice lessons in line with GCSE practical guidelines and written based questions with feedback both verbal and written will help the students' progress towards their GCSE.



Students complete their GCSE Drama exam in Year 11. The exam board the department uses is AQA.

KS4

GCSE Exam structure	Weighting	Assessment	When
Component 1: Understanding Drama	40%	External Exam	Year 11
Component 2: Devising Drama	40%	Coursework Component	Year 10
Component 3: Texts in Practice (Practical)	20%	External Examiner assesses students' live performance work.	Year 11

Department

Ms A Barton (Head of Department) abarton@carnforthhigh.co.uk