WLA DRAMA Vision

Our Drama curriculum inspires students to become confident, creative, and reflective individuals. Throughout their journey, learners explore a diverse range of theatrical styles, texts, and practitioners, developing key skills in performance, devising, direction, and critical analysis. We aim to foster collaboration, imagination, and empathy while equipping students with the ability to express themselves clearly, evaluate theatre effectively, and engage with the world around them through an appreciation of drama.

Our curriculum aims to prepare students for academic success, further study, and the wider creative industries, while nurturing a lifelong appreciation for the arts.

Year 13

In Year 13 students become fully immersed in creating original and scripted work at an advanced level, choosing one stimulus from a range of four to develop an ambitious devised performance, followed by a scripted piece inspired by a different practitioner, genre, or company than studied in Year 12. These two performance components demand full commitment, teamwork, and a strong understanding of style, structure, and performance technique. Both are performed live to a visiting examiner, showcasing their growth as a theatre-maker. Students complete the year by revisiting and deepening their understanding of the three set texts, preparing to approach them with insight as a performer, director, and designer in your written exam. Students regularly complete exit tickets, engage in DIRT time to refine their ideas and responses, and take part in formal assessments across both practical and written components. This is their final and most challenging year — a chance to perform, create, and think at a truly professional level.

Year 12

In Year 12 students explore all set texts in depth, reading each play and developing their understanding of how to approach them as a director, performer, and designer. Students practise responding to exam-style questions, focusing on interpretation, theatrical vision, and production concepts. The main practical challenge is to reinterpret a published script, selecting a key extract to reimagine in the style of a chosen practitioner, company, or genre. Whether performing or designing, students use skills such as teamwork, line learning, structure, and the application of stylistic features to bring their vision to life. Students complete formal assessments in both practical and written work, use exit tickets to track understanding, and engage in regular DIRT time to reflect and improve as both a theatre-maker and examwriter. This year challenges students to deepen their knowledge, refine their craft, and begin thinking like a theatre professional.

Year 11

In Year 11 Drama, students prepare to perform or design at the highest level. They work on a short extract from a published script, either as a performer or designer, to be presented to a visiting examiner, focusing on vocal and physical skills, character interpretation, group collaboration, and refining their individual contribution for a polished live performance. Students then shift focus to the written exam, studying a set text and learning to explore key theatrical concepts such as costume, tone, tempo, props, staging, acting choices, and how to review live theatre like a professional critic. Throughout the year, they complete formal assessments, engage with exit tickets to track progress, and use DIRT time to improve practical and written work. This is their final challenge — to bring everything they've learned together as a confident performer, creative thinker, and reflective theatre-maker.

Year 10

In Year 10 students hone their devising skills, working as a team to explore powerful stimulus material using styles like Theatre in Education, physical theatre, Brecht, and The Paper Birds, to develop their ability to listen, collaborate, refine, and perform with purpose and clarity. Students also begin learning about production roles — such as lighting, sound, costume, and set — and how these elements can shape and enhance a performance. Alongside practical work, they are introduced to exam-style writing, building the skills to reflect critically on their creative choices and performance work. Students complete formal assessments for both devised and scripted work, use exit tickets to check progress, and take part in regular DIRT time to improve and refine their ideas. This year will push students to become a confident performer, thoughtful collaborator, and reflective theatre-maker — ready for the challenge of Year 11.

Year 9

In Year 9 students tackle more complex ideas and techniques to prepare for GCSE-level work. They commence the year studying Teechers Leavers '22, learning how to use multi-rolling, non-naturalistic performance, and ensemble work to tell sharp, satirical stories. They then deepen their devising skills by exploring the work of The Paper Birds, using real stories, physical theatre, and issue-based performance to create thought-provoking work. Finally, students take on the role of both actor and director, exploring a set text in detail and learning how to review live theatre like a critic. Each unit will include a formal assessment, with regular exit tickets to track for understanding and DIRT time to reflect and improve their practical knowledge. This is the year Drama becomes more demanding — and more rewarding — as students learn to think, perform, and create like a professional.

Year 8

In Year 8 students build on their skills by creating their own performances with a purpose. They begin with Theatre in Education, devising work around bullying for a Key Stage 2 audience, learning how to create clear messages through characters and structure. They then explore scripted drama through the play Kes by Barry Hines, focusing on working with text, developing character, and performing with realism. Students end the year by looking at education and opportunity through Our Day Out by Willy Russell, using drama to reflect on society, class, and aspiration. Across the year, students complete assessments at the end of each unit, use exit tickets to reflect on their progress, and take part in DIRT time to improve practical work based on feedback Year 8 Drama will challenge you to devise, perform, and think like a true theatre-maker.

Year 7

In Year 7 students explore how drama tells powerful stories, building confidence to work as a team and craft their own improvisation. They explore published texts and study the ancient tragedy of Oedipus the King, to grasp the roots of theatre and practise performing lines with confidence. Students finish by exploring mining through drama, connecting Cumbrian history, the 1984 Miners' Strike, and the film Brassed Off to real-world issues like the Woodhouse Colliery. Students take part in regular exit tickets to reflect on their learning, and use DIRT time to improve practical work after feedback. Student progress is assessed each term through creative performances and character work. Drama will challenge students to think, create, and perform at their best.