



Performing Arts and Music Curriculum Statement

Vision

Our vision is to engage, empower and inspire students to develop their creative potential, their practical skills, confidence and overall performance. We aim to encourage students to become enthusiastic, imaginative, innovative and independent learners, empowering them to develop the necessary skills for further study and future careers. Performing Arts contributes to the development of students and to the school curriculum by providing a powerful and distinctive form of communication and expression. The curriculum is carefully planned to consider the sequence of content required for children to best make progress; building on prior learning to ensure transferrable knowledge and skills enable children to comprehend subsequent learning in the future. The subjects develop thinking; increasing perception, imagination, creativity, reflection and physical dexterity; skills which can be transferred to other areas of experience and learning. We understand the importance of students developing skills, knowledge and understanding of performing arts subjects as ways of engaging with cultural identity and personal expression, to facilitate their understanding of their community and wider society, enabling students to define themselves in relation to others, and the society in which they live.

Action

In each year of study students will encounter a range of performance styles that draw upon a variety of styles and stimuli within music, drama or dance to provide students with a developed understanding of the key cultural aspects of each performing arts subject. This will include the study of performance and composition/devising skills within every year of study, recognising the central importance of these skills for successful outcomes in Dance, Drama or Music.

Students will develop their analysis and evaluative skills to demonstrate in-depth understanding of how a successful piece of performance art is devised, constructed, and delivered. We seek to nurture performing artists who are imaginative, engaging, ambitious in scope and technically accurate in delivery. This is made possible by careful nurturing of performance technique, from initial basic skills through to complex technical intricacy. We build on the prior experiences of students, providing opportunities and links between home, school and other outside agencies. We develop students' ability to focus observational, listening and analysis skills to encourage objective and analytical judgement of artistic quality. By utilising their specialist knowledge of their subject areas, teachers are able to inspire students to be experimental, and to understand the place of the performing arts in their whole lives, as well as in their academic study.

Each year group has key, subject-specific knowledge and skills that are designed to develop students' confidence and ability to express themselves through each art form. Formative assessment is built into lessons to allow knowledge and skills to be embedded over time, with regular unit assessments of skills and knowledge to inform progress at key assessment points. We apply a rigorous approach of critique to address any misconceptions that children may have, and identify priorities for intervention or further focus in the nine module reports. This facilitates a top down view of what actions need to be taken, and is articulated in unit booklets. Session three provides opportunities to encourage students to further extend their learning experiences, as well as receive additional support where required. This ensures that students possess a steady foundation and enriched learning experience to motivate and inspire further learning in Key Stage 4 qualifications, and beyond into Sixth Form.

Impact

Outcomes within the Performing Arts department are strong, and compare favourably against national comparisons. Uptake on Music and Performing Arts courses at Sixth Form is good, with strong tradition of



students' pursuing higher education studies in Music, Performing Arts and related areas. We have sent a number of students to prestigious stage schools, universities and conservatoires, and numerous students have gone on to work in the Performing Arts industry. Enrichment groups are well established and cultivate a wider interest in the subjects across the school. From dance, music and drama groups in the lower school, to performance opportunities in a wide range of high profile events, including national competitions, staff strive to provide the extra impetus for students to pursue their passions and to maximise their progress. We also use visits to theatre, concerts, and other cultural trips of regional and national interest to contextualise and bring learning alive for our students.

Impact of COVID-19

The onset and continuation of the global COVID-19 pandemic presented some unique challenges to which we have responded to in a flexible way, adapting our methodologies to deliver as many aspects of each of the performing arts' curriculum as was possible. Staff underwent CPD in the use of these technologies, developing their skills in using pre-recorded and live material for lessons. Upon the fulltime return of students to school, a programme of rediscovery was implemented in lessons, along with the implementation of some interventions where possible and required. The onset of the second lockdown in January 2021, coupled with the increasing availability of resources and confidence of staff in using remote technologies, provided the opportunity for a more blended approach to learning. This included live lessons, video demonstrations for students to be able to practice at home, and group work through the utilisation of 'break-out rooms' on zoom and/or teams. There was naturally more of a focus on the theoretical and written elements of the course where practical coursework could not be fully delivered remotely. Peripatetic instrumental lessons were delivered online throughout this time. On their return, a review of students' learning quickly took place, along with a catch up programme for practical elements of the courses. This highlighted further need for intervention which was indicated through the module report system, and sessions were put in place to facilitate this. Throughout the pandemic we have undertaken curriculum restructuring to ensure that students make the most progress possible, and we continue to do so to ensure that students can fully catch-up for lost learning. From May 2021 we were able to re-establish face-to-face music school provision, and enrichment activities in line with the school's 'Roadmap to Recovery.' This has been, and will continue to be, hugely beneficial for supporting students' learning across the Performing Arts' subjects, and we will continue to expand our enrichment programme to enhance students' experience in the classroom. These artistic and social experiences will aid students in the road to recovery, ensuring that they can re-establish peer relationships, confidence and a renewed sense of belonging in the school. We now have a wide range of performing arts productions, music concerts, choir and ensemble activities in place to ensure that we are enriching our students' cultural experiences and development after a period of significant upheaval.