

KS4 Curriculum Intent for Acting

At Dixons Cottingley we develop students to lead successful and happy lives and make a positive contribution to their community. Our curriculum in each year is designed to provide experiences, opportunities, knowledge and skills that enrich and challenge our students. We understand that the curriculum is key to determining the life chances and choices for our students and therefore we will not compromise on providing the very best. We achieve this in Performing Arts through the below:

By the end of KS4 students at Dixons Cottingley studying Acting will be exposed to the following:

- Job roles and responsibilities within the Performing Arts industry, including on-stage, technical, front-of-house and creative roles, alongside the qualifications and skills required for progression
- Practical and theoretical exploration of professional performance work and acting styles, including Children's Theatre (*Peter Pan* at the National Theatre), modern British drama (*Blood Brothers*), and practitioner-led theatre
- Developing confidence and professionalism through performing for an audience and sharing work within rehearsal and performance settings
- Understanding professional rehearsal processes, including planning, refining, evaluating and responding to feedback

By the end of KS4 students at Dixons Cottingley studying Acting will be taught the following skills:

- peer and self-assessment skills, enabling students to identify strengths, set targets and reflect on progress
- The use of acting skills and techniques to communicate character, intention and meaning to an audience
- Analysis of professional performing arts works and the influence of key practitioners on style and performance
- Working practically from scripts and performance material to interpret, rehearse and perform scenes

In order to truly appreciate the subject and create deep schema, Acting has been sequenced with the following rationale:

The purpose of the Acting curriculum at KS4 is to enable students to explore a wide range of characters, issues and performance styles through practical and vocational learning. Students work collaboratively within rehearsal, developing ensemble skills while learning how professional performance is created and refined. They explore how acting choices are shaped by context, practitioner influence, audience and intention.

Students are supported to articulate opinions about performance, develop confidence in expressive communication and reflect critically on their own work. Peer and self-assessment are embedded throughout, ensuring students understand how to evaluate and improve performance in line with vocational expectations.

Key skills & concepts of learning

- Perform
- Explore topics, issues and characters
- Work cooperatively
- Develop teamwork and rehearsal discipline
- Evaluate and improve performance
- Develop interpretative performance skills

- Develop opinions, creativity and confidence

Component 1: Exploring the Performing Arts

To develop as a performer, students build a broad understanding of professional performance work and influences. They explore performance styles, practitioner approaches and the roles and responsibilities within the performing arts industry.

Students analyse professional repertoire, including Children's Theatre, considering creative intention, staging, design and performance skills. They develop an understanding of how practitioners shape meaning and influence performance material, supporting informed and critical engagement with performance.

Component 2: Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts

Students develop technical, practical and interpretative acting skills through workshops, rehearsal and performance. They work from existing repertoire to apply acting techniques, communicate intention to an audience and refine performance through structured rehearsal.

Throughout the process, students review their own progress and identify areas for improvement. This component supports students in understanding their strengths as performers and helps them make informed decisions about future study or careers in the performing arts.

Component 3: Performing to a Brief

Students respond to a given brief, considering purpose, audience and performance context. Working collaboratively, they use stimulus material to devise and develop a performance that communicates clear intentions to a specific audience.

Students adapt acting skills and techniques to suit venue, content and target audience, applying both existing and newly developed performance skills. This component reflects professional practice and prepares students for real-world performance contexts.

The Performing Arts curriculum at Cottingley has been influenced by:

Professional companies such as the National Theatre and Leeds Playhouse, whose work demonstrates inclusive theatre for a range of audiences and socially relevant themes

Key practitioners including Brecht, Stanislavski, Artaud, Frantic Assembly, Kneehigh, Peter Brook and Joan Littlewood, whose approaches inform acting style, rehearsal processes and performance intent across KS4

Our Performing Arts curriculum ensures that social disadvantage is addressed through:

- Disadvantaged students following the same ambitious curriculum pathway, supported through high-quality teaching, intervention where needed, and enrichment opportunities such as theatre trips and workshops
- SEN students following the same curriculum pathway, supported through adaptive teaching, modelling, scaffolding and varied modes of participation

Opportunities to build an understanding of social, moral and ethical issues are developed alongside links to the wider world, including careers, through:

Exploration of social, moral and ethical themes within professional performance work, encouraging students to connect performance content to modern society. In-depth study of performing arts job roles, qualifications and career pathways, and how each role contributes to the rehearsal and performance process



- Tolerance and Respect of opinions and diversity - Students engage with a range of cultures, histories and performance traditions. They are taught to listen respectfully, value different perspectives and work collaboratively. Performance work encourages critical discussion of prejudice, inequality and representation.
- Individual Liberty - Students make creative choices in rehearsal and performance, take ownership of their work and reflect on personal development. Confidence is built through supported risk-taking and self-expression within a professional rehearsal environment.
- The Rule of Law - Clear expectations around behaviour, safety and rehearsal practice are maintained. Students follow agreed protocols to ensure a safe, disciplined and respectful working environment.
- Mutual Respect - Mutual respect is embedded from the outset and reinforced through group work, rehearsal and performance. Students support one another's development and contribute to a positive, professional learning environment.
- Through BTEC Acting, students develop confidence, communication skills, resilience and cultural awareness. Engagement with professional performance deepens understanding of society, ethics and representation. Students leave KS4 prepared for further study, employment or training within the performing arts and related fields.

A true love of Acting is developed by teaching beyond the domain of the BTEC specification.

Alongside the formal requirements of the BTEC Acting course, students are encouraged to see acting as both a craft and an art form. Teaching goes beyond assessment criteria to develop curiosity, discipline and professional awareness. Students are supported to explore rehearsals as a creative process, develop resilience, refine technique and take ownership of their artistic choices. Acting is positioned not only as a qualification but as a transferable skill set that supports progression into further study, training or the wider creative industries.

Component 1 supports this by deepening students' understanding of professional performance, practitioner approaches and the processes that shape different performance styles. Through research, discussion and analysis, students develop transferable skills such as critical thinking, communication and independent enquiry which support progression into Level 2 or Level 3 vocational or academic pathways.

Component 2 supports further progression by focusing on the development of acting skills and techniques in greater depth. Students apply rehearsal methods, refine performance choices and work collaboratively as an ensemble. This component develops confidence, communication and teamwork skills that are valuable regardless of future career direction.

Component 3 further extends students' independence by requiring them to respond creatively to a brief. Students consider audience, purpose and context, applying acting skills flexibly and professionally. This prepares students for real-world performance contexts and progression into further education or training.

Out of school learning

Out of school learning supports and reinforces classroom teaching through deliberate practice and exposure to professional performance. Students engage with recorded theatre, documentaries and practitioner interviews, including resources from organisations such as the National Theatre and Bristol Old Vic. These experiences build cultural capital, deepen understanding of industry standards and support analytical coursework. Theatre visits and performance observations further develop students' appreciation of live performance. Homework tasks focus on meaningful practice, including line learning, research, reflection and evaluation, supporting long-term retention and achievement.

Further Information can be found in:

Long term plans

Curriculum Implementations

KS3 Assessment Document

All PowerPoint lessons, sub sheets, sub worksheets and knowledge organisers on SharePoint



