

**“Study, find all the good teachers and study with them,  
get involved in acting to act, not to be famous or for the money.  
Do plays. It’s not worth it if you are just in it for the money. You have to love it.”**

**Phillip Seymour Hoffman**

## **Drama at Noel-Baker**

Drama is a building block of life. To have the opportunity to express yourself in a way not defined by pen and paper, to learn the best that has been thought, created and performed in Drama. Drama helps individuals view the world differently and lets the pupils explore their creative potential whether it is on stage or behind the scenes.

## **Key stage 3 Drama**

All students in Year 7, 8 and 9 receive one hour of Drama each week. The curriculum covers a wide range of topics and disciplines that include, creating, performing and responding. The pupils will mainly work in small groups but there is also the opportunity to work as individuals and also on whole class pieces. Students will explore a wide range of topics from Greek Theatre to musicals and modern styles of theatre.

## **Year 7 Drama**

Unit 1: Basic Techniques; using the theme of Heroes and Villains, this unit teaches the basic techniques of still image, narration, slow motion and flashback. The students learn not just what the techniques are but how they can be used in a performance. Students also explore how to create characters using a range of vocal and physical techniques to perform them to an audience.

Unit 2: Scripts and Characterisation; in this unit, the students discuss the themes of bullying and morality through the exploration of the script ‘The Terrible Fate of Humpty Dumpty’. The students explore what happened to the main character as well as the varying reactions of the ‘gang’. The unit has a focus on how to create and perform effective characters as well as being able to interpret a script.

Unit 3: Greek Theatre; this unit teaches the students about ancient Greek theatre and the role of the chorus. The students explore what the role of a chorus was and how they communicated to very large crowds in large open spaces.

Unit 4: Trestle Masks; this unit teaches the student about the theatre company ‘Trestle Theatre’ and their style of performance. The students explore the use of masks and the impact this has on the physicality of their performances. The students learn how to communicate a plot line without the use of words.

Unit 5: Devising from a stimulus; this unit will give pupils the opportunity to create their own pieces based on the same stimulus. They will use the skills and techniques they have already been learning and then giving the basics of devising to create completely original pieces of work.

Unit 6: Musical Theatre; this unit will be using the forthcoming school production as the base. Pupils will learn how dance, music and acting work together in musical theatre. They will also learn a brief history of musical theatre and how it has evolved over the years.

## Year 8 Drama

Unit 1: Shakespeare – A Midsummer Night’s Dream; this unit will give the students a chance to explore Shakespeare from a practical point of view. We have chosen A Midsummer Night’s Dream so the pupils can explore the different types of characters, the fairies, the lovers and the mechanicals. They will also get an understanding of Elizabethan Theatre and the performing skills needed in order to perform three scenes from the play.

Unit 2: Verbatim Theatre; this unit introduces the style of verbatim to the pupils. They will use a range of events including the Black Lives Matter Movement, Women’s and LGBTQ+ rights to explore how using real people’s words to create their own pieces of theatre.

Unit 3: Commedia dell’arte; this unit explores a 16<sup>th</sup> century form of theatre that focuses on character types. The students explore the ‘stock’ characters using specific physical movements and gestures associated with the characters. They will get the opportunity to create their own versions of this style of comedy theatre.

Unit 4: Slapstick – Silent Movies; this unit will give the pupils the chance to bring out their silly side. The skills they are developing through mime and comedy culminate in a silent movie which is then filmed and made to look like a silent movie from the 1920’s.

Unit 5: Practitioner – Stanislavski; this unit will focus on the beliefs of theatre practitioner Konstantin Stanislavski. Students will explore his views in a practical way and get them to question whether they agree or disagree with his views. They will learn about how Stanislavski used to train his actors and then put this ideas into practice. Practitioners are vital to know and understand if pupils in year 9 are thinking on continuing Drama through to GCSE.

Unit 6: Devising - Stanislavski; this unit will give pupils the opportunity to create their own pieces in the style and ideas of Stanislavski. They will use the skills and techniques they have already been learning and then giving the basics of devising to create completely original pieces of work.

## Year 9 Drama

Unit 1: Scripts – Noughts and Crosses; this unit introduces the pupils to the play version of the novel written by Malorie Blackman. Using the script as a starting point the pupils will develop an understanding of how to use non-verbal communication to show hierarchy and status. Pupils will also study character development and will finalise in a whole class performance.

Unit 2: Devising from a theme; this unit will give pupils the opportunity to create their own pieces based on the same stimulus. They will use the skills and techniques they have already been learning and then giving the basics of devising to create completely original pieces of work.

Unit 3: Physical Theatre - Frantic Assembly; this unit looks at Physical Theatre focusing on the work of Frantic Assembly who are a UK Physical Theatre company. They have created many pieces of work and focusing on the exercises they use to create pieces of performance. With the final stage of getting pupils to ‘fly’.

Unit 4: Practitioners – Brecht; this unit will focus on the beliefs of theatre practitioner Bertolt Brecht. Students will explore his views in a practical way and get them to question whether they agree or disagree with his views. They will work on extracts of Brecht’s own plays. Practitioners are vital to know and understand if pupils in year 9 are thinking on continuing Drama through to GCSE.

Unit 5: Devising - Brecht; this unit will give pupils the opportunity to create their own pieces in the style and ideas of Brecht. They will use the skills and techniques they have already been learning and then giving the basics of devising to create completely original pieces of work.

Unit 6: The Performing Arts Industry; the final unit of the year will be the pupils working as a production team whilst studying other careers possibilities with the Performing Arts Industry including set design, lighting, sound and costume. They will work on a performance brief and present their ideas and research.

### **Key stage 4 Drama**

Currently at key stage 4 we offer GCSE Drama (Eduqas syllabus). Students receive three hours of lesson time in Year 10 and Year 11 each week.

### **Year 10 GCSE Drama:**

Techniques and Practitioners; students will look at how the techniques they have learnt throughout Key Stage 3 can now be developed and used in relation to specific practitioners. Students will create and perform a variety of mini projects in varying styles to further deepen the knowledge they have of the practitioners and how their ideas translate to the stage.

Component 1 – Devising Theatre; students devise an original piece based on the work of a practitioner. They have to include distinct styles and techniques that are linked to that practitioner. The piece is created in response to a stimulus that is set by the exam board. Alongside this they are creating a portfolio of evidence that shows the devising process they have been on and a final evaluation of their performance. This is marked by the teachers and externally moderated.

### **Year 11 GCSE Drama:**

Component 2 – Performing from a text; students will be in groups and performing two extracts from a published play. They will be working in small groups and will learn how to learn lines, structure rehearsals, develop characters and write artistic intentions on how the performance is to be performed. This is then marked by a visiting examiner.

Throughout year 10 and year 11 pupils will also work on Component 3 – Interpreting Theatre. Students will study a set text and look at the whole play. All this information is then the basis for a written exam.

They will study:

- Plot
- Characters
- Social, Cultural and Historical Context
- Costume
- Set Design

Students will also be learning how to write a Live Theatre Review. This is the second part of the written exam

- Character Relationships
- Atmosphere
- Set Design
- Sound
- Lighting

### **Drama Enrichment activities**

The main bulk of our enrichment sessions take the shape of rehearsals for the school show. But we don't just stop there, we also offer Drama club which is open to all years. This is an excellent opportunity for pupils to further develop their knowledge and excitement for the subject.

We are extremely lucky with the Drama facilities at Noel Baker. We have two large Drama Studios, one which is rigged with lighting and a fantastic theatre that can hold up to 300 people. There is a sliding door between the back of the theatre and one of our Drama studios which we use as our backstage area for productions. We also have a full rack of lighting and sound system and the use of 12 head microphones. The seating is in the bleacher style which can be moved back to use all of the floor space.

### **Further studies and career progression in music**

Options in Drama after GCSE can be A Level, BTEC Level 3 or even could possibly go to a drama/performing arts college. Many universities and employers like to have students and employees who have varied post 16 qualifications, Drama can be favoured as it shows skills in time management, communication, team work, resilience, confidence, commitment, dedication, and creativeness. There are a vast number of career options available in Drama, such as: performing, directing, costume, lighting, sound, set design, education, drama therapy, journalism, radio and TV, theatre in education, front of house and many more.