

DRAMA DEPARTMENT

Our Drama Department prides itself on enabling pupils of all abilities to succeed. There are currently two full-time drama specialists and five members of other staff who teach drama for part of their week. Drama is taught twice a fortnight in year 7 and once a cycle in years 8 and 9. All drama classes are mixed ability. At KS4 there are five lessons a fortnight. Presently there are three option groups in year 10 and also in year 11 with between 15 - 25 pupils in each of the six classes. A level Drama and Theatre is taught over nine lessons a fortnight with currently 19 students in year 13 and 30 in year 12. We follow the Cambridge IGCSE syllabus and Edexcel A level. We chose the IGCSE because it retains the practical/written exam weighting of 60%/40%, making it a better, more rewarding and suitable option for would be future professional practitioners, and a more dynamic experience for all learners.

In recent years IGCSE and A level examination results have consistently exceeded national averages. Our last results were again excellent, with the majority of IGCSE outcomes being 7-9; 100% of students achieving a pass at AS and A level [most in the higher grades of A and B]. Practical marks have been exceptionally good. Students have excelled across ability ranges.

Drama is mainly taught in our two purpose designed drama studios, with lessons also delivered in the school hall. Our equipment is regularly upgraded too – a recent refurb included £15,000 plus of new sound and LED lighting kit. We also have a flexi-time theatre technician and an apprentice who maintain and operate equipment and lead student tech teams.

The main school production is an annual event. Pupils gain so much from taking part, with many leavers describing their participation in shows as being a highlight of their experience here. Past productions have included: *The Sound of Music*, *The 39 Steps*, *Grease*, *Beauty & the Beast*, *It's A Wonderful Life* and *We Will Rock You*. This year the health crisis prevented a show, so we made a movie instead! We also have a repertory of exam presentations including Year 11 IGCSE scripted and devised plays, AS and A level productions, plus the potential for a lower school drama event. We sometimes run a Film School in Activities Week.

The Drama Department encourages students to build a genuine interest in theatre with, when possible, a range of highly popular trips. Our schedule also includes occasional visits into school by touring companies. We have benefited from strong links with the Cheltenham Everyman Theatre and the RSC.

Relationships between department staff and pupils are excellent.

We are looking for a well-qualified, energetic specialist who will extend and consolidate our drama practice at all levels. Someone prepared to set and maintain high standards in all areas of their work, within and beyond the basic curriculum. For the right candidate, there should also be the chance to help establish a brand new drama department in our soon to be built sister academy, The High School Leckhampton.

We continue to invest heavily in drama and there is a genuine desire from the very top to keep the 'buzz' going. If you love this subject, and if you enjoy the challenges and opportunities of working creatively with young people in exciting environments, this is the chance for you!

If you would like to speak to us for more information, please email asb@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

Anthony Bennett
Head of Drama
January 2021