

Performing Arts Curriculum

Performing Arts at Archbishop Blanch aims to ensure that students nurture and develop as many key transferable skills as possible, in the hope that they will forever be able to demonstrate creativity, communication, confidence, commitment, concentration and collaboration. These 6 C's form the bedrock of all the performing arts projects/units to ensure that all students are inspired and encouraged to become the very best version of themselves.

Performing Arts at Archbishop Blanch also aims to provide students with the necessary skills, knowledge, understanding and experience they need should they wish to pursue further education and/or a career in this unpredictable yet thriving industry. In recent years The Creative Industries have been the fastest growing in the UK and thanks to the wide range of outlets for performance in today's technological society performance and production is on the rise. At ABS Performance we take an active interest in the industry in order to complement students learning and achievement and we offer an abundance of performance opportunities inside the classroom and out to meet the demands of our incredibly talented students.

Performing Arts at all Key Stages offers students the opportunity to explore a wide variety of performance skills and techniques in a range of disciplines across the performing arts; including acting, dance, musical theatre, as well as a wide variety of production skills; including set design, lighting, sound, costume design and props.

Students are assessed using a Credit, Advanced Credit, Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria, which complements our technical qualifications and ensures that students understand the holistic vision and purpose of their learning.

The Performing curriculum at ABS has been designed in an accumulative way, so that students build on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject unit after unit, year after year. We feel that this is the best way for students to become highly developed artists, capable of reaching the Distinction criteria in Year 11 and Year 13.

Year 7 & 8:

Autumn Term 1 – Introduction to Drama

In this unit, students are introduced to the basic skills and techniques needed to create and perform drama (such as facial expression, body language, gestures, tone of voice, still images, thought-tracking, using stimuli, semiotics, creating tension on stage, etc.) as well as the routines and expectations they will need to follow in their Performing Arts lessons in order to achieve and succeed. Each week, students will engage in workshops looking at different techniques and skills. Each of the skills will be developed to a basic level and will form a foundation that can be built upon in Year 9.

Autumn Term 2 – Pantomime / Melodrama

In this unit, students are introduced to the Pantomime (Year 7) and Melodrama (Year 8) genres. Each week, students will engage in workshops looking at what makes these genres different (such as their conventions, stock-characters, exaggerated style of acting, use of staging, blocking, direct address, etc.) and how to stage a play from a given script. Each of the skills will be developed to a basic level and will form a foundation that can be built upon in Year 9.

Spring Term 1 – Introduction to Choreography

In this unit, students are introduced to how to choreograph a dance. Each week, students will engage in workshops looking at different aspects of choreography, (such as warm-up and cool down, the six basic dance actions, chance dance, dynamics, space, relationships, motifs and development, etc.). Each of the skills will be developed to a basic level and will form a foundation that can be built upon in Year 9.

Spring Term 2 – Styles of Dance

In this unit, students will be introduced to the basic skills and techniques needed to perform range of different styles of dance, (such as Ballet, contemporary, Charleston, cheerleading, hip-hop, lyrical, etc). Each of the skills will be developed to a basic level and will form a foundation that can be built upon in Year 9.

Summer Term 1 – Dramatic Techniques

In this unit, students are introduced to a wider range of 'dramatic techniques' and how they can be used to devise more original and interesting pieces of drama. Each week, students will engage in workshops looking at various techniques and create different scenes; that will combine to create a 'Superhero Episode'. Each of the skills will be developed from a basic level and will form a greater foundation that can be built upon further in Year 9.

Summer Term 2 – Devising from a Stimulus

In this unit, students are introduced to even more dramatic techniques and how they can be used to devise original drama based on a piece of given text. Each week, students will engage in workshops looking at the given text and using various techniques to create different scenes based on it; that will combine to create a devised piece based on the original story. Each of the skills will be developed from a basic level and will form a greater foundation that can be built upon further in Year 9.

Year 9:

Autumn Term – Scripted

In this unit, students are introduced to the play 'Blood Brothers' by Willy Russell. Each week, students will engage in workshops looking at different acting techniques to bring the play from page to stage. Each of the skills will be developed from a basic level and will form a greater foundation that can be built upon further in Years 10 and 11.

Spring Term – Devising

In this unit, students are introduced to what it takes to run a theatre company. Each week, students will engage in workshops looking at different roles and responsibilities in order to stage their own piece of theatre. Each of the skills will be developed from a basic level and will form a greater foundation that can be built upon further in Years 10 and 11.

Summer Term – T.I.E

In this unit, students are introduced to the concept of using theatre to educate as well as entertain. Each week, students will engage in workshops looking at different real-life stories based on a social issue. They will also be introduced to a range dramatic techniques and to how these techniques can be used to create engaging drama. Each of the skills will be developed from a basic level and will form a greater foundation that can be built upon further in Years 10 and 11.

KS4 – AQA Technical Award in Performing Arts

Year 10:

Autumn Term – NOW Festival

Students are given the opportunity to create a piece of original work and perform it at the Epstein Theatre as part of Merseyside youth Association's NOW Festival.

The NOW festival aims to engage young people in a creative discussion around the topic of mental health, through whatever 'NOW' issue is chosen by the team and young people's steering group. The NOW Festival takes place during children and young people's mental health week and gives young people the opportunity to discuss, learn and explore mental health whilst gaining an amazing amount of experience. The festival incorporates the main message that the CAMHs partnership share across the city, that 'Mental Health is Everybody's Business'.

Spring and Summer Terms – Unit 1; Unlocking Creativity

This unit assesses the theoretical content of the learner's chosen discipline (performance or production). Learners will demonstrate core knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Research
- Idea development
- Planning and budgeting
- Presentation (skills and content)
- Transferable skill of communication

Year 11:

Autumn and Spring Terms – Unit 2; The Production/Performance

This unit provides the opportunity for learners to be assessed on the theoretical content of a holistic production or performance, both as an individual and as a member of a group. Students will take on a key performance or production role in a performance based on one of five performance briefs. They will also develop the transferable skill of teamwork.

Summer Term – Unit 3 Preparation

This unit is an examined unit. Preparation for this examination will involve students learning the core knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Roles and responsibilities within the performing arts industry
- The role of performing arts in society
- Approaches to rehearsal
- Working as a deviser/performer/director
- Marketing and public relations
- Health and safety
- Design and technical elements
- Reviewing performance
- Theatre/film in education

KS5 – OCR Cambridge Technical Award in Performing Arts

Year 12:

Autumn Term – Unit 4; Combined Arts

In this unit, students are introduced to how various art forms can be combined to create a performance, using an original piece of work as a starting point. Through various workshops, students will begin to understand the ways in which different art forms and styles have been combined, be able to develop skills for a combined arts performance, be able to rehearse and perform in a combined arts performance and be able to evaluate combined arts.

Spring Term – Unit 6; Improvisation

In this unit, students will demonstrate that they are able to use the skills and techniques of improvisation, be able to use and develop improvisation exploring stimuli, be able to perform in improvised performances and that they understand the effectiveness of improvisation.

Summer Term – Unit 3; Influential Performance Practice

In this unit, students will demonstrate that they know the historical context of performance material, that they understand the work of Practitioners, that they are able to demonstrate practical ideas in context and that they are able to present and evaluate research findings.

Year 13:

Autumn Term – Unit 2; Proposal for a Commissioning Brief

In this unit, students will demonstrate that they understand the key features of projects, that they are able to plan and develop a project from a commissioning brief and that they know how to write a final proposal for a project.

Spring and Summer Term – Unit 1; Prepare to work in the Performing Arts sector

In this unit, students will demonstrate that they understand the performing arts sector, that they know the organisations and roles in the performing arts industry, that they understand progression and opportunities in the performing arts sector and that they are able to produce strategies for sustaining a freelance career.