

# Curriculum Intent – Performing Arts

## Curriculum Priorities

We want our curriculum to reflect what it means to be a young, British woman today and the Performing Arts curriculum at Nottingham Girls' Academy is designed to develop this as well as subject specific knowledge as well as play its part in developing cross-curricular skills and personal qualities. The topics delivered are selected to develop the pupils' understanding of the wider world and some of its culture and history.

The vision of the Performing Arts faculty is to engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of the arts and nurture their talent as performers, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. Pupils will be confident and creative, developing their skills and enthusiasm in a safe and encouraging environment both in and out of lessons.

We plan and deliver an exciting, diverse and creative curriculum using a variety of teaching and learning approaches to enthuse all learners. Through engaging lessons and extra-curricular work, department staff will build positive relationships with pupils, becoming role models in and beyond the classroom.

## Knowledge

By the end of **Key Stage 4** we want pupils to have:

- Knowledge of how to respond to a brief, selecting and applying the appropriate skills and techniques to create a performance.
- Knowledge of the skills and techniques required for a variety of performance work.
- Knowledge of how to review and evaluate own development and performance.
- Knowledge of the interrelationships between constituent features of existing performance material by examining professional practitioners' performance work.

For those who study this subject at **Key Stage 5** we want students to have:

- Knowledge of the Performing Arts sector and the organisations and roles within it, understanding the career opportunities and progression routes.
- Knowledge of commissioning briefs and proposals.
- Knowledge of the defining features of repertoire, historical context of performance material and the work of practitioners, understanding the ways in which a variety of art forms and styles are used.
- Knowledge of how to present and evaluate research findings.
- Knowledge of how to review and evaluate own and others development and performance work.

## Skills

The skills we aim to develop are:



Literacy & Numeracy



Communication



Problem Solving



Metacognition



Leadership



Collaboration



Physical,  
Practical &  
Technical



Digital Literacy

For example:

- **Leadership** - Pupils are regularly expected to lead within lessons; in small groups or sometimes whole class activities. This is differentiated as appropriate to support and nurture evolving leaders as well as shape and guide more established ones. Leadership is one of the Year 7 assessment criteria.
- **Physical, Practical and Technical** - In the majority of units the teacher models the technique and works with the class to develop it. Pupils are given time to develop/improve the technique, which once mastered, is used in assessments. Most of the units are physical, developing a wide range of physical skills such as extension, stillness, coordination and balance. At Key Stage 4 in all components, the teacher models the technique, and works with the class to develop it. Pupils are given time to develop/improve the technique, which once mastered, is used in assessments. Most of the units are physical, developing a wide range of physical skills such as projection, articulation, flexibility and alignment. At Key Stage 5, in all practical components, the teacher models the technique, and works with pupils to develop it. Pupils are given time to develop/improve the technique, which once mastered, is used in assessments.
- **Collaboration** - Performing Arts is collaborative in nature. Throughout Year 7 pupils practise working together, sharing responsibility, and compromising with others to accomplish a common goal. Over the course of the year, they begin to understand that their contribution is necessary for the success of the group/performance pieces. Through these experiences pupils gain confidence and start to learn that their contributions have value even if they don't have the biggest role. This is then continued throughout Key Stage 3,4 and 5 and during the final unit of Year 8 pupils work in all 3 disciplines are brought together to create 1 'final' Musical Theatre performance. When studying component 3 in Year 11 pupils demonstrate their understanding that their contribution is necessary for the success of the group/performance pieces and reflect on this process.

## Qualities

The qualities we aim to develop are:



For example:

- **Creativity** - All of the units of study promote and develop creativity; pupils create/develop work to perform. Pupils are taught skills and techniques, giving them the tools needed to express themselves creatively. Creativity also features in our assessment criterion. For example, the 'Pictures at an Exhibition' delivered in Year 9 further develops pupils' creativity via the use of 2 art forms to create work. In Key

Stage 4, component 3 culminates in a final performance that pupils create themselves. Both units 3 and 1 delivered in Key Stage 5 culminate in solo performances which the students must create/develop independently.

- **Resilience** - Pupils are constantly given verbal staff feedback, as well as written teacher and peer feedback in their books. This develops pupils' resilience as they are encouraged to work on the feedback to improve. The goal is the improvement of skills and evaluation which is incorporated at every step of the process. Each arts discipline has built in parameters to ensure that critique is a valuable experience and greatly contributes to the success of the final performance pieces.
- **Aspiration** - We regularly show pupils professional performances/works in order to inspire them and drive them to achieve their potential. In the Repertoire Dance unit taught in Year 9, pupils learn professional dance works, giving them the feeling of performing work as a professional dancer. For both internal components studied in Key Stage 4, we show pupils professional performances/works and then learn the repertoire from these works, developing an understanding of working a professional performer. In component 1, pupils are taught the roles and responsibilities of professionals in varying aspects of the industry. During Year 13, for both unit 1 and 3, we show students previous Distinction examination work in order to inspire them and unit 1 is heavily based upon career options/progression. Staff work closely with pupils to support them in their next stage of training/employment, always guiding them to make the best possible choices and open their mindset to the endless possibilities they have.

## Curriculum Principles

### Sequencing, Learning and Assessment

Our curriculum has been structured to take into account the cognitive science of how we learn. Key knowledge is covered sequentially and deliberately revisited and built upon. Spaced practice and retrieval are a feature of the curriculum structure.

This is further reinforced by:

- **Learning Challenge:** a purely formative assessment to help evaluate, and then reshape learning and address misconceptions at the end of each unit.
- **Learning Consolidation:** a summative assessment, taken at a planned interval from the end of the unit, to help evaluate retention of learning in the long-term memory.

### Cultural Capital

Cultural capital is developed throughout the curriculum with deliberate opportunities for all pupils (but especially disadvantaged pupils) to experience aspects of the taught curriculum through trips, events and activities and broaden their horizons.

For example:

- Pupils may take free peripatetic instrumental lessons, improving their understanding of music theory as well as their physical and interpretive skills. Pupils can take examinations and often demonstrate an improved understanding of music in their

curriculum lessons. All pupils who play an instrument perform in this Showcase and develops pupils physical, interpretive and performance skills, which are used in all Music units.

- Many extra-curricular clubs/activities are provided to improve pupils' skills and confidence, which then has a positive impact on curriculum work.
- The annual school show and Dance Showcase are inclusive and allows pupils to be part of a cast and perform their work to a live audience.
- In Year 9, pupils have the opportunity to go to Nonsuch Studios to watch a professional performance and take part in creative workshops around the themes of the play. This will inspire/motivate pupils and develop their drama skills and confidence.
- Where possible we arrange trips for pupils to see professional works. Doing this enables pupils to see the works that they are studying which they can then write about in their coursework. This also helps their practical skills and helps them when reproducing the repertoire.
- Pupils have the opportunity to audition for our Gifted and Talented Dance Company (G13) and choir. Pupils who are part of G13 and/or Harmony take part extra technique classes and workshops and perform regularly throughout the year at various locations both in and out of the city.

## Equality

We want our curriculum to reflect what it means to be a young, British woman today; for our pupils to know about the struggle and sacrifice that has led to the freedom and opportunity they have. We want them to know about their heritage and culture, and that of others in our community, enabling them to celebrate it and contribute to the progress of democracy as global citizens. We therefore regularly review and consult on the equality of our curriculum. We also have pupils from the Alternative Curriculum group attend Performing Arts lessons allowing them to develop and grow in a mainstream class.

For example:

- In Performing Arts we provide a broad and balanced curriculum where pupils get to experience styles of drama, dance and music from a variety of practitioners from around the world enabling them to know about their own, and others' heritage and culture, enabling them to celebrate it. We therefore, regularly review and consult on the equality of our curriculum. An example of this is the Jazz scheme of work that pupils study in Year 9, which allows them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the origins of Jazz music and dance and its links to slavery. As well as this, pupils also study a political theatre scheme of work in Drama in Year 9 where pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of a range of current issues such as protests, refugees, and moral dilemma.

## Careers and Employability

To support our pupils growing understanding of how our subject might support them with employment, we plan in explicit links between their subject area and possible career pathways. Examples of the careers and sectors we highlight are:

- Set Designers/Builders, Producers, Office based roles (such as HR, Marketing etc), Stage Managers, Costume and Wardrobe Roles, Wigs, Hair and Makeup Artists,

Lighting Technicians and Operators, Box Office and Front of House staff, Teachers, DJs, Choreographers, Entertainers, Writers, Directors and Performers.