



Willingdon

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

"Drama at Willingdon has helped me to unlock my creativity by providing a safe space to be who I am. From a shy and nervous boy in Year 7 to a mature and confident student in year 11."

Year 11 Student

"Drama gives me confidence and makes me independent with my choices. It has helped me with teamwork and connecting with other students who are not in my friendship circle"

Year 8 Student

CURRICULUM BOOKLET

Drama

July 2025

Explore, Communicate, Create

Our School Curriculum Intent

The curriculum at Willingdon Community School offers a broad, balanced, personalised and challenging educational experience, which builds on students' experiences in the primary phase of their education.

It aims to provide all students with the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes which are necessary if they are to become successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve the best they are capable of.

Subject Vision

Explore Communicate Create

At Willingdon Community School, Drama plays a vital role in building confident communicators and empathetic individuals. The curriculum develops creativity, independence, and teamwork, while enhancing key skills like communication, negotiation, and self-expression. Through role-play and reflection, students expand their vocabulary, grow in confidence, and build a growth mindset. These transferable skills benefit both academic progress and future employment





Key Concepts in Drama

In Drama lessons, students will have the opportunity to:

- engage with a range of stimuli to develop critical and creative thinking skills
- adopt a role
- take part in improvisation
- devise scripts
- use drama forms and strategies effectively to explore and present ideas
- engage in movement
- experience live and recorded drama
- respond to a variety of texts
- analyse and evaluate performances



Drama Learning Journey



KS3 Programme of Study

Year 7
Term 1 – Introduction - Shadow puppetry
<p>In term 1, students will be introduced to the exciting world of drama through three creative focuses: shadow puppetry, finding their voice, and theatre for children. They will explore how to use voice, movement, and visual storytelling to bring characters and stories to life in imaginative ways.</p> <p>Through shadow play, students will learn how to use light, shape, and silhouette to tell stories visually. They will also build confidence in vocal expression, learning how pitch, pace, and tone can transform a performance. Finally, students will apply these skills to create engaging, age-appropriate theatre for a young audience—developing their creativity, teamwork, and communication from the very start of their drama journey.</p>
Term 2 - Matilda
<p>During term 2, students will use the story of <i>Matilda</i> to explore and develop the fundamental skills of drama. Through key scenes and characters from the play, they will learn how to sustain characterisation, create powerful still images, and use thought-tracking to explore inner thoughts and motivations.</p> <p>Students will also work on choral speech, building their ability to perform confidently as an ensemble while using voice and rhythm to create impact. Using the world of <i>Matilda</i> as inspiration, this unit encourages creativity, teamwork, and strong foundational performance skills that will support students throughout their drama journey</p>
Term 3 – Darkwood Manor
<p>This term, students will enter the mysterious world of <i>Darkwood Manor</i>, a spooky setting designed to help them explore how to create and sustain tension in performance. Through improvisation and structured drama activities, students will develop atmosphere, suspense, and dramatic impact.</p> <p>Key skills include using body language, facial expression, sound, stillness, and pacing to build tension and engage the audience. As the secrets of Darkwood Manor unfold, students will learn how to work effectively as an ensemble while developing their storytelling, creativity, and performance confidence.</p>
Term 4 - Greek Theatre
<p>In term 4, students will travel back to Ancient Greece to explore the origins of Western theatre. Using the myth of <i>Theseus and the Minotaur</i>, they will learn the key features of Greek Theatre, including chorus work, narration, and stylised movement.</p> <p>Students will work collaboratively to retell the story using traditional Greek techniques, focusing on ensemble performance, choral speech, and physical storytelling. This unit helps students develop their vocal and physical control while gaining an understanding of how drama was used to entertain, inform, and inspire in ancient times.</p>
Term 5 - Ernie’s Incredible Illucinations
<p>This term, students will explore the playful and imaginative world of Alan Ayckbourn’s <i>Ernie’s Incredible Illucinations</i>. The story follows Ernie, a boy whose vivid daydreams come to life—blurring the line between reality and imagination.</p> <p>Through this fun and fast-moving script, students will develop key drama skills such as characterisation, physical theatre, comic timing, and ensemble work. They will also explore how to shift between realistic and exaggerated performance styles, helping them build confidence in both scripted and creative work. This unit encourages students to think creatively, perform boldly, and bring the extraordinary to life on stage.</p>
Term 6 - Harry Potter
<p>This term, students will explore the world of <i>Harry Potter</i> through drama. They will use physical theatre, soundscapes, split scenes, and writing in role to bring key moments and characters to life.</p> <p>Focusing on imagination, characterisation, and ensemble work, students will learn how to create magical atmospheres and tell powerful stories on stage.</p>

KS3 Programme of Study

Year 8
Term 1 - Inside Out
In term 1, students will use <i>Inside Out</i> to explore mental health and emotional wellbeing through drama. Using characters like Joy, Sadness, and Anger, they will create scenes that reflect emotional journeys. Through physical theatre, thought-tracking, monologue, and ensemble work, students will build performance skills while developing empathy and self-awareness.
Term 2 - Melodrama
This term, students will dive into the dramatic and exaggerated world of melodrama. They will explore classic stock characters such as the hero, villain, sidekick, and damsel in distress, while learning how to use exaggerated gestures, facial expressions, and vocal skills to create bold and entertaining performances
Term 3 – Back to the Future
In term 3, students will step into the world of <i>Back to the Future</i> , using physical theatre and promenade performance to bring key scenes and time-travel adventures to life. They will explore significant moments in history, reimagining them through creative, non-naturalistic performance techniques
Term 4 – Physical theatre
Building upon the skills developed in Term 3, students will further explore physical theatre, using their bodies and sound effects to tell powerful stories. Through gesture, stillness, ensemble movement, and bodies as objects, they'll create bold, visual performances
Term 5 – The Beauty manifesto
In term 5, students will delve into the thought-provoking play The Beauty Manifesto , which challenges societal standards of beauty and explores themes of self-image, identity, and confidence. Through the characters' personal journeys, students will examine how beauty is defined and the pressures placed on individuals to conform.
Term 6 - Refugee Boy
<p>This term, students will explore the powerful themes of identity, displacement, and belonging through Benjamin Zephaniah's <i>Refugee Boy</i>. The story of Alem's emotional journey as a refugee will be brought to life using techniques such as tension, status, and monologue to understand the character's internal and external struggles.</p> <p>Students will create dynamic performances that use physical theatre, marking the moment, and forum theatre to explore key moments from the play. Through forum theatre, students will examine different perspectives, making decisions that impact the characters' outcomes.</p>

KS3 Programme of Study

Year 9
Term 1 – Game over
In term 1 students will explore the award-winning playwright Mark Wheeller wrote the powerful verbatim play ‘Game Over’ based on Breck’s story for secondary school students. The play uses the real-life words of Breck, Breck’s family and the predator, to demonstrate in the clearest possible way the threats and dangers that children and young people may face in the online world they inhabit every day. This scheme is aimed at introducing students to a play in a similar way to how they might approach a set text at GCSE.
Term 2 - They Bothe Die at the End
In term 2 students will use Adam Silvera’s novel <i>They Both Die at the End</i> as a springboard for imaginative and emotionally resonant performance work. Students will explore key themes such as time, choice, and connection through devised scenes inspired by the book’s central question: <i>What would you do if you knew today was your last day?</i>
As part of the scheme, students will develop their use of cross-cutting to build tension and contrast between storylines, choral speech to enhance group storytelling and atmosphere, and smooth transitions to create fluid, engaging performance sequences. Through collaboration and creativity, students will refine their ability to communicate meaning, mood, and message in a powerful, ensemble-driven performance.
Term 3 – They Play that Goes Wrong
During term 3, students will dive into the world of comedy and farce, exploring the exaggerated characters, improbable situations, and fast-paced action that make this genre so entertaining. Through practical workshops, learners will develop key performance skills such as timing, physical comedy, comic exaggeration, and ensemble work.
Inspired by classic and modern examples of farce—from mistaken identities to slamming doors and dramatic misunderstandings—students will create their own hilarious scenes full of chaos and confusion. This scheme encourages bold choices, creative risk-taking, and confident performance, all while deepening understanding of what makes audiences laugh. Expect energy, mayhem, and lots of fun
Term 4 - Improvisation
In term 4, students will build confidence, creativity, and teamwork through a range of improvisation games and activities. They will explore key skills such as accepting and blocking offers, using status, and thinking on their feet with the "yes, and" rule. Through spontaneous scenes and character work, students will learn to trust their instincts, respond in the moment, and perform with energy and imagination—developing essential drama skills in an engaging and supportive environment.
Term 5 - Stage Combat
In term 5, students will dive into the exciting world of stage combat, learning how to create realistic and safe fight scenes for the stage. From slaps and punches to dramatic falls, students will explore key techniques to make physical storytelling both believable and engaging. With a focus on safety, teamwork, and precision, students will choreograph their own fight sequences while building skills in timing, trust, and spatial awareness. This high-energy unit combines physical skill with dramatic intent, helping students bring tension and intensity to their performances
Term 6 - Noughts and Crosses—GCSE text
In the final term of KS3, students will explore <i>Noughts and Crosses</i> by Malorie Blackman. Set in a world where racial roles are reversed, this story challenges ideas of identity, power, and forbidden love. Through practical workshops, students will develop characterisation, explore key themes such as prejudice, injustice, and friendship, and bring powerful scenes to life using a range of techniques. This unit not only strengthens performance skills but encourages empathy, critical thinking, and debate around real-world social issues.

Assessment Plan for Key Stage 3

The Drama curriculum offers a broad, coherent and rigorous course of study. It aims to inspire creativity in students. At the end of each topic, students will be set a practical assessment which aims to check their understanding of the topic, as well as developing their performing and written evaluation skills. In Drama we assess students in creating, performing and responding. The assessments will enable students to gain knowledge of Drama which will support them at GCSE and beyond.

	Creating	Performing	Responding
9	<p>My ideas are sophisticated and link clearly to the task.</p> <p>I can collaborate confidently with others in practical tasks and I am fully engaged in the process.</p> <p>I give myself a director's role. I can comment intelligently on my well realised performance using appropriate & consistent drama vocabulary.</p>	<p>I can apply a wide range of skills to create an engaging character in a well-rehearsed sophisticated performance</p> <p>I can confidently use a range of vocal & physical skills that create more than one mood/emotion or character. (Pitch, Pause, Pace, Inflection, Volume, Tone) (Body Language, Proxemics, Gesture, Eye Contact, Facial Expression)</p> <p>Individual performance is refined, articulate & dynamic, creating significant impact with ability to drive the piece</p> <p>My performance has a clear intention that is engaging for the audience & I can use a variety of different theatrical conventions to display my performance in. (Slow –mo – Split-stage – Choral Speech etc)</p>	<p>I can use all of the drama skill terms appropriately to say what I saw / did in rehearsal / performance.</p> <p>I can discuss more than one drama skill to justify my ideas communicating meaning to an audience.</p> <p>I consistently identify 'What Went Well' and 'Improvements' for the rehearsal / performance & can express this through clear & detailed analysis and evaluation.</p> <p>I am assured in using the 'analyse and evaluate' structure What How Why Successful? when verbally responding to performance</p>
6	<p>I can develop & refine ideas.</p> <p>I can collaborate securely with others in practical tasks and am engaged in the process.</p> <p>I am secure in commenting on significant moments (drama skills) within my piece that creates meaning with a good use of drama vocabulary.</p>	<p>I can apply skills effectively to demonstrate convincing characters and a clear story</p> <p>I am secure in the use of vocal & physical performance skills to create a successful character. (Pitch, Pause, Pace, Inflection, Volume, Tone) (Body Language, Proxemics, Gesture, Eye Contact, Facial Expression)</p> <p>I can sustain a character for a long period of time having a competent rapport with other actors & audience in both scripted & devised work.</p> <p>My contribution to the process is secure. I am confident with using the performance space creatively.</p>	<p>I can use all of the drama skill terms appropriately to say what I saw / did in rehearsal / performance to communicate meaning to an audience.</p> <p>I am secure in identifying 'What Went Well' and 'Improvements' for the rehearsal / performance and I am able to discuss more than one moment.</p> <p>I am secure in the skill of analysing, using the What How Why Structure.</p> <p>I am also secure in evaluating the success of a moment at the end of the Successful? part to my verbal response to performance</p>
3	<p>I can offer one or two ideas to the group rehearsal.</p> <p>I can collaborate with others in some practical tasks, but there are moments of unfocused work.</p> <p>I am developing my drama vocabulary appropriately, stating some but not all terms</p>	<p>I can apply some performance skills to show a character and tell a story</p> <p>I am beginning to show a moment of another character that is different from me, using at least one vocal skill to show how they're feeling. (Pitch, Pause, Pace, Inflection, Volume, Tone)</p> <p>I am beginning to show a moment of another character that is different from me, using at least one physical skill to show how they're feeling. (Body Language, Proxemics, Gesture, Eye Contact, Facial Expression)</p> <p>I am developing my ability to stay in role for the whole performance & face the audience at all times to show how they're feeling.</p>	<p>I can use one or more appropriate drama skill terms to say what I saw / did in rehearsal / performance.</p> <p>I can identify 'What Went Well' and 'Improvements' for the rehearsal / performance.</p> <p>I am developing the skill of analysing, using the What How Why structure but am not yet consistent in answering all parts of the question (Eg – What & Why but not How)</p>



KS4 Programme of Study

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Year 10	Naturalism (Stanislavski) and skill development. Scripted Aspect of Course Component 3: Texts in practice (practical)	Non-Naturalism and effective devising. Theme TBC Aspect of Course Component 2: Devising drama (practical)	Mock component 1 & 3 Play Blood Brothers Aspect of Course Understanding Drama	Mock component 1 & 3 Play Blood Brothers Aspect of Course Understanding Drama and texts in practice Assessment Written and practical assessments	Mock component 2 Devising – A range of stimuli Assessment Log book and performance	Mock component 2 Devising – A range of stimuli Assessment Log book and performance
Year 11	Component 2 40% Assessment Log book and performance	Component 2 40% Moderation Assessment Log book and performance	Component 3 20% External practical exam Extract 1	Component 3 20% External practical exam Extract 2	Component 1 40% Blood Brothers revision + Exam prep	Exams



Options Booklet Entry

Component 1: Understanding Drama 40% (Written Paper) externally set and marked

This is a written exam that takes place at the end of the second year of study. This written exam is structured to enable candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of Drama skills from all aspects of the 2 years of study. Students will visit several live theatre productions in preparation for the paper and explore a variety of texts.

Students will be expected to complete a range of written tasks which will enable them to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of performance skills.

Component 2: Devising drama 40% (practical)

This component is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.

Over the two years of study you will complete 2 practical devising units of performance for assessment. You will work with a range of stimuli such as poems, objects, pictures, newspapers and music to create original performances. Each option consists of 2 parts as the assessments take into account the student's work and contributions during the preparation period as well as their final performance:

1. Devising log (60 marks)
2. Devised performance (20 marks)

In preparation for this unit you will need to be committed to attending after school rehearsals.

Component 3: Texts in practice 20% (practical)

This component is marked by AQA.

You will have the opportunity to study and perform a range of plays. You will learn about structure, character objective, pace, technique, subtext, creating tension and comedy with plays. Your assessment for this component will consist of performing two extracts from one play for an external examiner.

Is this subject right for me?

Do you enjoy?

- Expressing yourself in a creative and confident way?
- Working as part of a group, contributing ideas and supporting others?
- Exploring new and imaginative ideas, creating your own performances?
- Working with scripts and plays?
- Attending live theatre?

You will need to demonstrate flair, imagination and creativity. Drama is not an easy option as there is a large written aspect to it. Drama is a creative and imaginative subject; commitment and a sense of humour are very important.

If you answered yes to any of these and this sounds like you, then Drama could be the right GCSE for you. Find out more by speaking to Miss McCarthy and by looking online at www.aqa.org.uk and going to GCSE Drama – overview 2016.

Literacy in Drama

Studying Drama at Willingdon will support the development of literacy. In every lesson students will have the opportunities to improve their speaking and listening through role play, group work and class discussion. Drama will also provide the context to develop writing skills and vocabulary through the analysis and evaluation of performances.



Numeracy in Drama

As part of the Drama curriculum students will focus on numeracy when they learn about the design aspects of theatre. They will explore upscaling measurements and dimensions for set, costumes and props. They will

Raising aspirations in Drama

All students are encouraged to aim high in Drama. Students will always be set high expectations, which inspire, motivate and challenge.

We believe all students can benefit from studying a creative subject and that all students can, and should, make excellent progress in their time at Willingdon.

Students are encouraged to attend revision and homework clubs to further enhance their work in class.

Broadening horizons in Drama

The Drama department offers a number of enrichment opportunities for our students. We run yearly theatre trips for KS3 and KS4 students. We also organise a large-scale production every year for all year groups to take part in acting, music, lighting, set and costume.

a KS3 club, led and organised by students.



We offer drama which is organised by students.

How Parents/Carers can support

KS3

- Please encourage your child to participate in extra-curricular Performing Arts clubs. These can be in or out of school. Performing Arts clubs enable students to develop their confidence, creativity and social skills, which are vital for being successful in Drama lessons and beyond.
- Ask your child what their achievement grade was from the previous term, and what their teacher feedback was. Discuss how they can make sure they are implementing this feedback in their lessons in order to improve their progress this term.
- Watching Drama programmes or films, as well as going to the theatre can enhance students' aspiration and develop their cultural capital.
- Encourage students to read scripts of plays in addition to reading novels.

KS4

- Encourage your child to respond to teacher feedback, making improvements to their work and catching up on anything missed. This is vital for both practical and theoretical elements of the course.
- Encourage your child to spend time revising from their exercise books and revision guides. Talking to your child about their learning in the subject and testing them on their knowledge will help them to commit it to their long-term memory. Students need to revise both Blood Brothers and their live review on a regular basis. You may find that websites such as BBC Bitesize and Quizlet are useful for supporting with revision.



British Values - Drama - Willingdon

British values are intrinsic to the work that we do in the Drama curriculum. Working in groups, co-operation, motivation and respect are the basis of the learning. This encourages the students to develop patience and self-esteem within themselves and towards others.

Democracy

In Year 8, we study 'The Beauty Manifesto'. We create a safe environment in which discussions about beauty, body image and peer pressure can be entered into. An 'opinion continuum' gives students an active way to consider and express their opinions, listen to others, and to begin discussing the themes and issues explored in the play.

The rule of law

Within the classroom, the code of conduct is clear and consistently applied. Students understand that the rules are in place to keep all members of our community safe. In year 9 we look at the harrowing true story of Breck Bednar who was groomed over the internet and brutally murdered. This powerful play educates about online safety and the repercussions of breaking the law.

Individual liberty

In Drama, we invest a great deal of time creating a positive culture, so that students are in a safe environment where choices and freedoms are encouraged. In lessons, we often create opportunities for students to choose the task that will challenge them, giving them more freedom to determine their own learning. In Year 9 students learn about devising and use the novel 'They Bothe Die At The End' as a stimulus to create original pieces of theatre using their own ideas to educate an audience.

Mutual Respect

Mutual respect is a fundamental part of Drama lessons and this is promoted from Year 7 upwards. When sharing work, we encourage students to build a relationship of trust with each other and therefore feel affirmed when they perform in front of the class.

Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

In Year 8 students study the play 'Refugee Boy'. This text allows them to explore character, theme and social context to an in-depth level. Students undergo a dramatic analysis of the reasons why people migrate and develop empathy for those who find themselves in difficult situations.

