

## CURRICULUM POLICY

### **Curriculum Overview**

Tring Park School for the Performing Arts aims to provide a high-quality education for 8- to 19-year-olds through a specialist curriculum. Rigorous training in the performing arts, combined with an extensive academic programme of study, contribute to a curriculum which develops the whole person and opens up a wide range of higher education and career opportunities. Commitment, creativity, technique and artistry are nurtured by our specialist teaching staff in a dynamic and exciting environment.

Tring Park School strives to develop our pupils' vocational talents through specific specialist training in Dance, Acting, Musical Theatre and Music. We also value the importance of a broad and rigorous academic education to enable pupils to develop intellectually and thereby help them reach their full potential in the world of the Performing Arts and beyond. In our Academic Curriculum, small classes, taught by well-qualified, highly experienced teachers, ensure that every pupil is given the best possible chance to attain his or her maximum potential. The curriculum is designed to give pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative aspects.

Furthermore, we ensure the safety and wellbeing of our pupils and recognise the importance of educating them in these matters. We also recognise and celebrate the importance of spiritual, social and moral education in our curriculum and effectively prepare our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British Society.

The requirement to ensure that children and young people are able to use the internet and related communications technologies appropriately and safely is addressed as part of the wider duty of care to which all who work in schools are bound. Our E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy ensures safe and appropriate use. The development and implementation of such a strategy involve all the stakeholders in a child's education - from our Principal to the senior leaders and classroom teachers, support staff, parents, and the pupils themselves.

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school, whether from internal sources - pupils, staff or governors, or external sources - school community, external agencies or individuals. Our pupils see our school as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this; we have a duty to ensure this happens. Our Prevent Policy is in line with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

Our aim is that young people leave the School as independent, co-operative, responsible and creative young communicators, with a lifelong interest and ability in the arts, learning and self-development and the confidence to take the fullest

advantage of the many opportunities that lie ahead. We believe that these skills and qualities, coupled with relevant vocational and academic qualifications, prepare our pupils to go into work, further or higher education, and to make a positive contribution to their society and the wider world.

### **Practices and procedures**

Tring Park offers a range of specialist Performing Arts courses, supported by a strong academic provision. The balanced curriculum sets us apart from other schools and provides pupils with a well-rounded education, enabling them to achieve high academic excellence and versatility as a performer.

Whilst the majority of our pupils pursue careers in the Performing Arts, a significant number win places at leading British and international universities, including Oxbridge and Russell Group institutions. Former pupils have gone on to study a wide range of subjects, including Law, Medicine, Architecture, Physics, Actuarial Science and Engineering.

The School consists of:

<b>Prep Department</b>	National Curriculum Years 4 – 6
<b>Lower School</b>	First to Third Form (Years 7-9)
<b>Middle School</b>	Fourth & Fifth Form (Years 10-11)
<b>Senior School</b>	Lower & Upper Sixth (Years 12-13) with an additional year for the Dance Course (see below)

In the Lower School, three and a half hours vocational training takes place in the morning, with academic teaching taking place in the afternoon. In the Middle and Senior Schools, the process is reversed with academic teaching undertaken in the morning and four and a half hours vocational training undertaken in the afternoon.

### **Prep Department**

#### **Vocational**

The Prep Department offers a broad training in the performing arts, giving pupils a foundation on which to build as they progress through the School. Emphasis is on establishing a good basic technique in all areas, whilst encouraging a passion for the performing arts. Vocational classes include; choir, ballet, modern dance, tap and drama. Pupils in the Prep Department have various performance opportunities throughout the year. They all take part in a drama-based performance, which takes place in the Summer term. In addition to this, they are also included in the *Carol Service* in December and *Founders' Day* in July. Pupils are taught vocational subjects in 11 periods a week (50-minute periods) as part of their integrated timetable.

#### **Academic**

Pupils are taught in a single mixed age class covering all Key Stage 2 National Curriculum subjects, with age and ability related differentiation provided as

appropriate. The pupils follow an integrated curriculum and are taught in twenty 50-minute and twenty-seven 35-minute periods (some double) in the week. Prep pupils spend one third of their time in Vocational lessons and the remainder in Academic lessons, of which the majority take place in the dedicated Prep classroom, but they do visit specialist teaching areas for their vocational training and some academic classes such as Reading, French, Art and ICT.

## Lower School

### **Vocational**

Two vocational courses are offered: Dance and Performance Foundation. In addition to this, every Lower School pupil sings in a choir. Pupils are taught 20 periods a week (50-minute periods). Lower School vocational classes take place from 8.30am to 12.05pm each weekday morning.

The aim of the **Junior Dance Course** is to produce a young dancer who has an excellent foundation in classical ballet with a sound understanding of posture, placement and alignment. We strive to enable each pupil to develop a strong technique alongside an understanding of artistry and performance. Pupils will study core classes in classical ballet, modern and tap dance and in Third Form will study contemporary dance. Additional classes are offered in body conditioning, stretch, music and drama to enhance the curriculum. The Young Dancers Show takes place annually and gives pupils the opportunity to be showcased in our own Markova Theatre. Additionally, the pupils are encouraged to enter the Junior Choreography Competition that takes place at the end of the Summer Term to support them in developing their creative skills.

The aim of the **Performance Foundation Course** is to build confidence and performance skills whilst consolidating basic technique. Pupils on the Performance Foundation Course take part in core technique classes in classical ballet, modern and tap dance, solo and group singing classes and acting classes which cover script work, voice work and improvisation. In addition to this, pupils will also have the opportunity to take part in workshops and performances. All pupils on the course work towards a large-scale production in the School's Markova Theatre each year.

### **Academic**

In First and Second Form, the academic element follows the requirements of the National Curriculum with the full range of subjects for Key Stage 3: English, Maths, Science, ICT, History, Geography, Religious Studies, French, Spanish (offered from Second Form onwards), Art and Design, Music and CPSHE. Pupils are taught 50 periods per fortnight (35-minute periods). Lower School academic lessons take place from 1.25pm to 4.35pm each weekday afternoon.

In Third Form we have introduced a 12:55pm start, increasing our periods to 60 per fortnight. Maths and Science start teaching GCSE material in Third Form, while all other subjects continue with Key Stage 3 content. These lessons also include a tutor period.

## Middle School

### **Vocational**

In Fourth and Fifth Form, two vocational courses are offered: Dance and Performance Foundation. Pupils also have the opportunity to audition for the senior school choirs. Pupils are taught 15 periods a week (90-minute periods). Middle School vocational classes take place from 1.45pm to 6.30pm each weekday afternoon.

The **4th and 5th Form Dance Course** is designed meet the needs of the aspiring dancer. The Dance Course provides in-depth training in classical ballet, contemporary dance and jazz. Supplementary training in pas de deux, pointe-work, virtuosity, solos, repertoire, fitness and pilates is also provided, along with the opportunity to pursue syllabus examinations in ballet (RAD & Cecchetti), modern (ISTD) and tap (ISTD). Pupils have an annual show in Tring Park's own Markova Theatre. This gives every pupil the opportunity to experience performing in a variety of dance styles and of working with a number of choreographers. Additional syllabus classes take place on a Saturday.

The **Performance Foundation Course** gives pupils the opportunity to use and develop their skills and talents in technique classes and live performances, so that they can make the right choices about the future direction of their career and education. Pupils will continue to study core classes in ballet, modern and tap dance, solo and group singing and acting. Pupils on the Performance Foundation Course all take GCSE Drama as part of their curriculum. In addition to this in the first term of each year pupils audition for either a musical, a play or a commercial music showcase, all of which will be showcased in the Markova Theatre. In the subsequent terms of the Performance Foundation Course there will be the option to participate in either a Drama, Commercial Music or a Musical Theatre project, which may culminate in an in-house performance.

### **Academic**

In the Middle School, compulsory GCSE subjects are English Language, English Literature (IGCSE), Maths, Science (Double or Triple Award) and a Modern Foreign Language (French, Spanish; German and Mandarin can be taught by request). Students on the Performance Foundation Course complete GCSE Drama as part of their vocational timetable. Pupils also choose three additional subjects from the following options: Drama, Geography, Religious Studies, Art, History, ICT, and Music. Option blocks are formed based upon student choices, staffing availability and sufficient numbers to run a particular course. Information is provided to help pupils and their parents to make informed choices. Pupils are taught 50 periods per fortnight (50-minute periods). Middle School academic lessons take place from 8.30am to 12.55pm each weekday morning.

## Senior School

### **Vocational**

In the **Senior School** there are four courses offered for students to study: Dance, Musical Theatre, Acting and Commercial Music. Students are taught 15 periods a week (90 minute periods). Senior School vocational classes take place from 1.45pm to 6.30pm each weekday afternoon.

The **Sixth Form Dance Course** is a three-year programme of study. The course culminates in a year of pre-professional experience, delivered through the School's own touring company Encore Dance Company. During the first year of training, students study three core subjects: classical ballet, contemporary and jazz dance. The curriculum is enhanced by additional classes in pointe work, repertoire, virtuosity, pas de deux, body conditioning, weights classes, pilates and commercial dance. Second year students continue to develop their skills and the contemporary improvisation is introduced. During the third year of training, dancers join Encore Dance Company and have the opportunity to work with internationally known guest professional choreographers. This important final year gives opportunities for those chosen by choreographers to perform classical repertoire as well as having work created especially for them. In addition, jazz double work is taught during their final year. All students can opt to take syllabus classes in RAD ballet and ISTD tap and modern dance as an extra class on Saturdays. There are many performing opportunities structured into the Dance Course. In addition to the annual showcase, which is held in a professional theatre, there are many in-house performance opportunities along with chances to both dance and present work in the student choreography show. At the successful completion of the third year and, if all assessments and professional studies have been passed and guided learning hours have been fulfilled, students should achieve the National Diploma in Professional Dance which is a level 6 qualification within the National Vocational Qualifications framework. Later, this can be converted into a B.A. in Professional Practice via a distance learning course through Middlesex University once the student has gained their first professional job.

The two-year **Musical Theatre Course** provides students looking to forge a career in the performing arts with a strong understanding and knowledge of technique in the three essential specialist skills. Students study an intensive two-year course focussed on singing, dance and acting. The Musical Theatre Course core classes include training in all aspects of singing needed by a musical theatre professional, including genre studies, interpretation, sight singing and music theory. Students on the course receive core dance training in classical ballet, jazz and tap dance, with an emphasis on versatility, performance skills and secure technique. Acting classes are designed to build confidence and encourage versatility and spontaneity and students will study a range of skills including improvisation, voice, text work, narration and character studies. Students regularly take part in a programme of performances, workshops and master classes designed to build skills in every aspect of the profession. Students on the course perform in Tring Park's Markova Theatre, as well as a variety of venues across London and the UK.

The two-year **Acting Course** includes classes covering: voice, classical and modern text, physical theatre, movement for actors, acting study, improvisation, dance and singing. All students on the Acting Course also benefit from screen acting lessons and workshops. Students in the Upper Sixth produce a short film, including all elements of production, filming and editing. A strong theatre company ethos is fostered as part of the Acting Course activities, and students participate in a variety of performances throughout the year. In the first term of the Lower Sixth, Acting students produce a Theatre in Education performance, which is taken to local schools and community groups. All Upper Sixth students perform in a full-scale production in the Markova theatre in this term. In the spring term the Acting Course also produce a Festival of Contemporary Theatre with a different play each day of the week and in which students perform some of the most challenging material.

The two-year **Commercial Music Course** focuses on Pop, Rock and Jazz music. It is aimed at musicians interested in enhancing and developing their understanding of the pop idiom and give them the skills to pursue professional work or further training. The creative aspects of the Commercial Music Course allow students to write original material, create their own arrangements and write for commissions. Core classes include; song writing, ensemble performance, studio musicianship, master classes given by industry professionals, theory and aural training, the music industry, music in context, and one lesson a week on the student's primary instrument. Live performance constitutes a large proportion of the course and there are opportunities throughout the year to collaborate with some of the other vocational departments.

## **Academic**

In the **Sixth Form**, depending on academic ability, students can choose to study up to a maximum of four Advanced Level qualifications. Students on the Musical Theatre, Commercial Music and Acting Courses are expected to take at least 3 A level subjects. Due to the fact that they are taking the Trinity diploma, the Dance Course does not have this requirement. There are currently twenty subjects offered as part of the curriculum (see below). Option blocks are formed based upon student choices, staffing availability and sufficient numbers to run a particular course. Information is provided to help students and their parents to make informed choices. Subjects are allocated either 11 or 12 (50 minute) lessons per fortnight. Sixth Form academic lessons take place from 8.30am to 12.55pm each weekday morning.

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## **Special Educational Needs**

Every opportunity is provided to enable pupils to develop their skills and aptitudes, as set out in the schemes of work for each curriculum area. Our curriculum provision enables all pupils to have the opportunity to learn and make progress, including those with Special Educational Needs (SEN), who may require additional support. A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. High quality

teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN.

Those pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (formerly a Statement of Special Educational Needs) will have an annual review.

### **Able, Gifted and Talented**

Each curriculum area will make provision for Able, Gifted and Talented (A,G&T) pupils through schemes of work and lesson plans (incorporating, for example, AFL, high order questioning, thinking skills, hypothesis, discussion, etc.) Subjects will provide extension and differentiated opportunities for A,G&T students through the use of more complex resources and materials, tackling more challenging questions and tasks, demonstrating higher levels of thinking and presenting increasingly sophisticated responses.

Occasionally, pupils may be fast tracked in a particular subject area, for example if a student is fluent in a language, having lived abroad, or is a native speaker.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

Pupils whose first language is not English are assessed upon arrival to establish their English language capabilities and needs. Extra support is provided through timetabled EAL lessons. These lessons aim to develop the pupil's English language skills and communicative ability and to build the pupil's confidence to succeed in an English-speaking environment and enable them to successfully access the curriculum. Pupils are generally taught in one-to-one lessons or, in some cases, pairs or small groups of 3 or 4. The lessons are tailored to the individual needs of the pupil and his or her ability and level. Most pupils will receive 1-2 hours of EAL per week unless their language needs are very great, in which case they will receive more.

Pupils have the opportunity to follow the IGCSE English Second language in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> form if it is felt that they will not cope with the First Language paper. Pupils also have the opportunity to follow the appropriate Cambridge English course and take an exam at an external centre. Pupils are encouraged to do so at all levels from PET to Cambridge Advanced. Pupils whose English is at an appropriate level, study for and take IELTS in the 6<sup>th</sup> form.

### **Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)/Citizenship**

The curriculum provides for the teaching of Personal Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) including SMSC, economic education and careers education. Through the PSHE programme we also recognise the importance of educating our pupils in fundamental British values thereby promoting a balanced presentation of political views. This is taught to class groups as a timetabled discrete subject at Key Stage 3 and through other subjects, assemblies, tutor time, charity events, vocational lessons and co-curricular activities at Key Stages 4 and 5 (for example the post exam programme for 5<sup>th</sup> Form pupils). Further details can be found in the PSHE policy, handbook and schemes of work.

## ACADEMIC CURRICULUM SUBJECTS

	Preps (Years 4-6) Key Stage 2	Forms 1-3 (Years 7-9) Key Stage 3	Forms 4/5 (Years 10-11) Key Stage 4	6th Form (Years 12-13) Key Stage 5
AGE	7-11	11-14	14-16	16-18
English	•	•	•	•
Maths	•	•	•	•
Further Maths				•
Science	•	•	•	
Physics			•	•
Chemistry			•	•
Biology			•	•
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	•	•	•	
Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)/Citizenship	•	•	•	
History	•	•	•	•
Geography	•	•	•	•
Religious Studies	•	•	•	•
French	•	•	•	•
German			•*	•*
Russian			•*	•*
Mandarin			•*	•*
Italian			•*	•*
Spanish		•	•	•
Art and Design	•	•	•	•
Film Studies				•
Business Studies				•
Psychology				•
Photography				•
Dance			•	•
Music	•	•	•	•
Music Technology				•
Drama/Theatre Studies		•	•	•

\*By request