

# RIVERSDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Drama Policy

Date:

Review Date:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Governor)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Headteacher)



## INTRODUCTION

At Riversdale Primary School, we believe that through drama, pupils are given the opportunity and encouragement to develop and demonstrate their creative talents. As with all arts, drama involves imagination and feeling, and helps children make sense of the world. It does this through the creation of imagined characters and situations, and the relationships and events that they encounter. Through engagement in drama, pupils apply their imaginations and draw upon their own personal experiences. Their increasing knowledge and understanding of how the elements of drama work enables them to effectively shape, express and share their ideas, feelings and responses, making use of language, space, symbol, allegory and metaphor. In addition, the exploration of the world through drama encourages children to challenge and to question but also has the potential to bring about social change.

Drama offers opportunities for participation and entertainment as well as learning and development. Good drama teaching will result in pupils learning about dramatic form and the content it explores. Across the curriculum, with particular emphasis on English, pupils are encouraged to take part in a range of drama activities, including theatre visits to develop cultural appreciation, dance workshops and clubs, and musical workshops. The use of drama as an informative tool has also been highly successful during school themed days, such as Internet Safety Day.

Pupils undertake one drama lesson per week from Reception through to Year 6. In addition, the school celebrates pupils' drama work in two performances each year: Christmas Nativities staged by each Phase Group and one class assembly, which is scheduled at the beginning of the academic year. In addition, Year 6 stage a Leavers' Production as their final opportunity to share their talents with the Riversdale community. All pupils are actively involved in these performances and take on their own acting role, but many also take on additional support roles such as set designing and prop making, allowing them to understand the various aspects of developing and staging a production.

## INTENT

At Riversdale Primary School we teach drama to:

- develop pupils' self-confidence and sense of self-worth by creating a supportive and constructive learning environment;
- develop pupils' respect and consideration for each other by encouraging turn-taking, acknowledgement of ideas, appropriate and safe behaviour, and focused listening;
- develop imaginative and creative processes and responses by involving pupils in a range of drama methods and activities;
- develop the capacity to express ideas and feelings through drama by encouraging constructive responses to drama work, sharing ideas and selecting appropriate drama methods;
- provide opportunities to see and hear different types of performance and drama;
- develop the ability to work constructively as a member of a group using skills of leadership, discussion, negotiation and the blending of different people's ideas;
- develop oral and physical skills, including using language and movement appropriate to role, through drama activities and responding to drama;
- enable pupils to build on skills attained and to progress their emotional and practical achievements;
- offer pupils the opportunity to experience aspects of theatre by rehearsing and presenting their work to others;
- develop script reading and script writing skills through structured activities and lesson plans;
- encourage a positive school ethos.

This Policy is designed to:

- provide a framework for the teaching of drama which ensures that each child receives his/her entitlement in the subject.
- secure progression, both within and between the Key Stages represented in the school.
- provide a means of achieving consistency in the way in which drama is taught throughout the school.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **DRAMA AND THE 2014 NATIONAL CURRICULUM**

The 2014 National Curriculum has a clear focus on the development of spoken language from Years 1 to 6, whilst children in the Foundation Stage follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which has continued to develop its emphasis on speaking and listening, play, role play, rhyme and song. Drama skills are taught as an integral part of the English Curriculum and in a range of subjects beyond this.

### **SPOKEN LANGUAGE**

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar, and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others, and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across primary education form part of the National Curriculum. These are reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **DRAMA IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Children in Nursery and Reception are introduced to drama through simple games, activity poems, action rhymes, structured play, character exploration and other activities based on traditional stories, simple speaking and listening activities and the opportunity to present and respond to improvisation.

Pretending to be others in imagined situations and acting out situations or stories are important activities in the dramatic curriculum for the Foundation Stage. The imaginative role-play and other play situations provide many opportunities for very young children to experience and develop their early drama skills and knowledge, and to learn about the world.

Drama supports the development of Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals in many ways. Children can suggest their own ideas for planning and creating a role-play. Then, as they play, the teacher or other adult can intervene sensitively as an active participant. This validates and extends the narrative of the play, supports appropriate language and allows the children to explore the power of their roles. Creative drama develops alongside imagination, confidence and language. As children engage in these drama activities, they become increasingly aware of the use of space and the way body language communicates meaning.

Drama is an ideal context for children to retell and understand traditional and contemporary stories, as well as for sharing their own personal responses and ideas. They may use a stage block to represent a bridge or pretend the classroom is a giant's cave, while taking on the roles of characters they have met in the story. Quality drama gives children a living context in which they can create narratives, draw on patterns of language and speak confidently. The teacher (or other adult) can support the drama's development by taking the part of a relatively low-status character in the story (teacher-in-role).

Drama provides a meaningful context for all children at the Foundation Stage to experiment in role with language for different purposes, whether or not English is their first language. Through drama, the teacher provides new opportunities for children to begin to make sense of a range of events, situations and feelings that go beyond the everyday. They have a greater chance to understand what they hear when gesture, sign, facial expression and other symbols are used.

## **DRAMA IN KEY STAGE ONE AND KEY STAGE TWO**

Pupils are enabled to enjoy drama as a subject in its own right, and as a learning medium across the curriculum.

Pupils at this age unselfconsciously mix drama, dance, music, visual art and aspects of media in assemblies, concerts and less formal events.

In class drama, children may work in groups, pairs, or as individuals during drama activities such as improvisation and role play. The class teacher may work with these groups/individuals, but more often will use a whole-class approach.

Exploring a story imaginatively in drama can include what may happen before the story begins or at the end, as well as beyond the events of the story. The opportunity to act out a story to others can be a highlight of the school experience for some pupils, particularly if they find other means of expression more difficult. Primary school pupils benefit from visits to and from theatre companies. This may help them to understand the process of making, performing and responding to plays and provide insights into a range of cross-curricular themes and issues, enhancing the teaching of other subjects, such as history and citizenship.

During Key Stage 1, pupils move from make-believe dramatic play for themselves to a more consciously planned form of drama, which may involve communicating with an audience. Good practice at Key Stage 1 involves pupils in activities such as exploring their ideas through devising scenes. They can work with a teacher-in-role, enacting their own stories for others through small group play making, using symbolic 'costumes' and props to stimulate drama narratives. Pupils become increasingly aware of their audience and act out stories using voice, movement, gesture and basic sound effects. When they talk about dramas they have seen or in which they have taken part, they can differentiate between them and explain how effects were achieved.

During Key Stage 2, pupils use a wider range of dramatic devices and techniques. Increased control of voice and body means that they portray more precisely defined characters. Pupils produce work with a clear story line and structure. They become familiar with forms such as shadow puppets, mime and chorus work, and those in other media, like animation. Pupils may learn lines and write short scripts which grow out of practical exploration of a story. They make connections between broader dramatic traditions and their own work, suggesting improvements. They may also experiment with simple technical effects and equipment, such as digital camera and video.

Both improvised and scripted drama provides a strong stimulus for writing. By writing from the point of view of a particular character (writing in role) children are enabled to express their understanding of the roles, events or situations they have experienced. They can also write as young playwrights, developing their improvised drama into scripts. As a result of teachers' skillful intervention, drama helps children's writing come alive, resulting in written work that features more effective vocabulary, striking imagery, pace and style.

Drama teaching often explores issues, ideas and dilemmas relevant to pupil's lives and investigates the behaviour of individuals and the nature of relationships. It therefore makes a particular contribution to personal, social and moral education. Drama is a social activity requiring pupils to communicate, co-operate and collaborate. It fosters creativity and thinking skills, raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence through self-expression.

As children progress through Key Stage 2, they will be introduced to subject specific terminology, ensuring they develop an understanding of the subject area itself. Pupils will be able to refer to specific explorative strategies such as still image, thought tracking or marking the moment, as well as staging techniques such as proxemics and levels. As children reach Year 6, they will begin to express how the assured use of the strategies may impact the audience or how they have been used to communicate specific intentions. (See **Appendix 1** for further detail)

## **CURRICULUM ORGANISATION**

Drama is taught through direct subject teaching once a week, but this is often taught in relation to a topic or other curriculum area. General teaching objectives for drama activities are provided in the National Curriculum for English, with a suggested focus for teaching plus ideas for extending and reinforcing.

Drama games and other simple, discrete drama activities provide a strong basis for teachers to introduce drama to pupils. These will develop appropriate responses, an awareness of drama rules, speaking and listening skills, interpersonal skills and self-confidence whilst also ensuring that teachers' skills and confidence with the subject are being developed.

The learning of drama skills may be enhanced in a variety of ways:

- By visits from touring theatre companies and Theatre in Education practitioners;
- Visits to theatres for backstage tours and to watch performances;
- Opportunities to perform in local and national theatre festivals;
- Opportunities to perform at school in assembly, for celebrations and at the end of term;
- Opportunities to attend external drama workshops;
- The use of audio-visual and IT equipment (for watching or listening to plays).

Drama is taught progressively through and across each key stage, building upon previous learning. The three interrelated activities of making, performing and responding provide a useful framework for identifying and assessing progression and achievement, and match similar categories in music: composing, performing and appraising, and in dance: creating, performing and evaluating. For the purposes of planning and assessment, making, performing and responding are treated separately, although they are frequently integrated in practice. Pupils improvising, for example, are simultaneously making, performing and responding. Similarly, the emphasis placed on each can change across the key stages. However, the principle of balance is important, and teachers should aim to include aspects of each activity in their teaching.

Making, Performing, Responding:

- encompasses the many processes and activities employed when exploring, devising, shaping and interpreting drama.
- covers the skills and knowledge displayed when enacting, presenting and producing dramas, including the use of theatre technology.
- incorporates reflecting on both emotional and intellectual reactions to the drama. This reflection is deepened as pupils gain a knowledge and understanding of how drama is created.

## **PLANNING**

The National Curriculum for English makes specific reference to speaking and listening in Key Stages 1 and 2 providing the starting point for lessons.

Drama sessions will be planned, resourced and delivered by subject specialist teachers, based on the learning objectives being addressed that week in other curriculum areas. This is likely to have a close link to the class' English study but may be related to other learning that is taking place. At Riversdale Primary School, drama teaching does not follow specific schemes of work allowing sufficient flexibility to meet the needs and skills of individual classes and teachers.

In addition to dedicated drama lessons, class teachers will also incorporate drama into their teaching of other subjects through planned activities, with the intention of exploring topics from differing perspectives.

The curriculum of our school is designed to provide equal opportunities for all pupils regardless of differences in race, sex, religion, social or economic class. We strive to achieve cohesion and continuity in the curriculum in order to allow each child to progress easily from stage to stage.

During the course of Key Stage 2, pupils will be offered the chance to extend their drama knowledge and skills through participating in performances and school drama sessions, both of which can be offered either during or after school hours.

It is our policy to ensure inclusion and equality of opportunity. For the most part we are able to do this by:

- providing experiences which are appropriate to the individual child;
- ensuring that the child has the resources necessary to carry out the work.

More able children are encouraged to join extra-curricular activities, such as drama clubs, to help provide a focus for their extra abilities. They are also provided for in terms of differentiated written work tasks, such as playwriting.

## **CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS**

There are strong links to other subjects including English, history, music, PE, PSHE, citizenship, geography, art and religious education. Drama methods can be used within these subjects to explore a variety of roles, topics, feelings, situations and facts. Specific aspects of all subjects can be explored using drama, such as character motivation, scenes and situations, roles, emotions, pivotal moments, debates, decisions and personal choices, and reactions or responses. It is necessary to ensure that appropriate drama methods are selected to develop learning and enhance subject awareness.

## **SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Through the vast nature of the subject, there are great opportunities to develop opportunities for SMSC.

- the studying of different texts - classical, contemporary, etc. can provide challenging starting points and give an appreciation of language and literature;
- exposure to great literature and poetry and its place within a culture can lead to appreciating moral or social aspects, for example Dickens social commentary or knowing that we can learn a lot about other cultures from its writing;
- drama and stories which create opportunities for moral judgements;
- shared activities – shared reading, group drama, corporate writing that lead to an understanding of an appreciation of the importance of the group and other people's point of view;
- knowledge of our language and its influence on our culture and the importance and value of other languages and cultures;
- awareness of traditional tales and their cultural background.

## **ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING**

Assessment will take the form of classroom observation whilst children are devising, performing or assessing drama in order to determine the quality of their work and to what extent they are meeting learning objectives. It will also take the form of questioning, during and after the drama, in order to ascertain their knowledge and understanding of a concept.

Where appropriate pupils should be involved in their own assessment in order that they develop a capacity to appraise, reflect upon, respond to and talk about their own learning using appropriate drama terms.

To ensure progression in each key stage, pupils should be able to:

- explore ideas and/or issues through a variety of drama skills and techniques of increasing complexity;
- devise and improvise structuring dramas of different kinds;
- use drama skills and knowledge to interpret a range of texts;
- prepare and perform both scripted and devised dramas for various audiences, using a selection of media;
- use and develop their knowledge of drama from different times and cultures, as well as classic and contemporary practice;
- reflect on, evaluate and analyse the structure, meaning and impact of their own work and the work of others as both participant and audience.

The National Curriculum for English is used to inform teacher assessment at the end of the academic year.

All work is assessed according to the school's marking policy and this includes rewards for achievements through the school's award system for individual pupils.

## **RESOURCES**

Classroom teachers will collect items which may be used as a stimulus for drama activities, such as poems, stories, fables, myths, songs, musical extracts, playscripts, historical documents and photocopies of works of art.

All children have access to an appropriate hall for practical drama sessions with access to the recently refurbished school stage area. The stage area has been blacked out for successful lighting and colour mixing. The area includes a series of professional LED stage lights and an up to date sound system. These are controlled through professional standard lighting desks.

All teachers have access to a range of drama reference books and scripted plays which are stored in the appropriate Key Stage areas.

## **IMPACT**

The main measurement of impact in the drama teaching will be the quality and breadth of work seen in pupil's English books. In addition, the success of class assemblies and annual productions will demonstrate the children's progress in communication skills, confidence and self-esteem.

Where drama teaching is at least good pupils will:

- show an increased self-confidence in performance evidenced through public speaking, school productions and/or class work e.g. debates;
- demonstrate respect and consideration for each other;
- apply drama strategies creatively and imaginatively in a range of contexts;
- express ideas and feelings through drama;
- providing constructive and reasoned responses to drama work;
- work constructively as a member of a group using quality communication skills;
- have developed oral and physical skills, including the use of language and movement appropriate to a role;
- understand standard English vs. non-standard English and where to appropriately utilise these.

## **MONITORING & REVIEW**

Drama is monitored and reviewed by the English curriculum team. However, individual teachers are responsible for the standard of children's work and for the quality of their teaching in English. Teachers and phase teams work collaboratively to support each other in the teaching of English including drama, understanding and applying current developments in the subject, and providing direction for the subject in the school.

Both the phase teams and curriculum team for English should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicate areas for further improvement.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

## APPENDIX 1: THE EXPECTED PROGRESSION OF EXPLORATIVE STRATEGIES, THE ELEMENTS OF DRAMA AND THE DRAMA MEDIUM

### Explorative Strategies:

These are ways of using drama to explore topics, themes, issues, play texts and performance.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Role Play</b></p> <p>The actor takes on a character and plays out a scene as that character.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Still Image</b></p> <p>When a frozen picture is created to show a certain moment or scene.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Soundscape</b></p> <p>A group work together to create a collection of noises that sound like a given theme, topic or place.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Hot-Seating</b></p> <p>Hot-seating is when you ask a character questions to find out more from them.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Thought Tracking</b></p> <p>Thought tracking is when the actor speaks a line that their character is thinking at a given point in the drama.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Role-on-The-Wall</b></p> <p>In the outline of a body, words or phrases are written to describe a character from a given scene.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Narration</b></p> <p>When one or more actor talks to the audience to tell a story or give some information.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Marking the Moment</b></p> <p>This is when you use different strategies (like narration, slow motion or still image) to emphasise an important moment in a scene.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cross-Cutting</b></p> <p>Two scenes happen side by side and performers can switch between the scenes.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Forum Theatre</b></p> <p>A scene is shown and then replayed. In the replay, actors can stop the scene and change the action.</p>		

### The Elements of Drama:

These are the different parts of a dramatic performance that relate to the story being told, the themes being developed and the ways the characters are presented.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Action, Plot and Content</b></p> <p>The story, characters and/or themes of the drama.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Characterisation</b></p> <p>The means used to portray a role using vocal and physical skills.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Symbols</b></p> <p>The representational use of props, gestures, expressions, costume, lighting, and/or setting.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Conventions</b></p> <p>The techniques typically used in differing styles of drama.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rhythm, Pace and Tempo</b></p> <p>the rate at which the action moves along and the extent to which these changes.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Contrasts</b></p> <p>E.g., stillness vs. activity, silence vs. noise.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Forms</b></p> <p>The way the story is told, the characters portrayed, and/or themes depicted.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Climax and Anti-climax</b></p> <p>Building and/or releasing tension, and/or sense of expectation.</p>

## The Drama Medium:

These are the different ways in which dramatic meaning (ideas) are communicated to an audience.

<b>Movement, Mime and Gesture</b>  Movement is the physical action that happens on stage. Mime is when actors remain silent and convey meaning through actions. Gesture is a single movement, made by part of the body, such as a fist clenching.	<b>Voice</b>  Using vocal techniques such as pauses, pitch and tone.	<b>Spoken Language</b>  The choice of words used.
<b>Space and Levels</b>  Using heights and proxemics to demonstrate meaning and relationships to the audience.	<b>Set and Props</b>  The set is the constructed or created setting in which a play takes place. The props are the items used during a performance. These may have symbolic meanings.	<b>Costume</b>  All the clothes and accessories an actor wears to demonstrate meaning and/or character. These may have symbolic meanings.
<b>Masks and Make-up</b>  Masks are a form of covering the face. Make-up is the cosmetic paint, powder and colouring used on stage to make faces and expressions visible to the audience. These may have symbolic meanings.	<b>Lighting</b>  The use of artificial light to create a range of effects and moods, or to direct the audience's attention. These may have symbolic meanings.	<b>Sound and Music</b>  This includes everything the audience hears. These may have symbolic meanings.

### KEY:

Expectations for the end of EYFS

Expectations for the end of KS1

Expectations for the end of KS2

Potential challenge in KS2

## APPENDIX 2: USEFUL RESOURCES

### Web Sites:

- [www.artsonthemove.co.uk](http://www.artsonthemove.co.uk) - resources, INSET courses, pupil workshops, information
- [www.nationaldrama.co.uk](http://www.nationaldrama.co.uk) - articles, news items, reviews, resources, links
- [www.ncdt.co.uk](http://www.ncdt.co.uk) - The National Council for Drama Training
- [www.uktw.co.uk](http://www.uktw.co.uk) - UK Theatre Web - resources, links, general theatre information
- [www.scholastic.co.uk](http://www.scholastic.co.uk) – drama resource books and education publications
- [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk) - national curriculum online, articles, news items, current practice
- [www.nate.org.uk](http://www.nate.org.uk) - National Association for the Teaching of English
- [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk) - curriculum practice, articles, advice, support, links

### Publications / Magazines:

- Primary English Magazine – available via NATE
- Child Education, Infant Projects, Junior Education, Junior Focus - published by Scholastic Limited

### Books:

- Drama and traditional story for the early years -  
Nigel Toye and Francis Prendiville. Publ. Routledge/Falmer. ISBN 0415195365
- Drama for People with Special Needs -  
Ann Cattnach. Publ. A&C Black. ISBN 0713636556
- Beginning Drama 4-11 -  
Joe Winston and Miles Tandy. Publ. David Fulton Publishers. ISBN 1853465275
- Ready to Go Ideas for Drama KS1 -  
Alison Chaplin. Publ. Scholastic Ltd. ISBN 0439017793
- Ready to Go Ideas for Drama KS2 -  
Alison Chaplin. Publ. Scholastic Ltd. ISBN 0439017807