Edexcel BTEC National Extended Certificate in Performing Arts Level 3

Everything the Drama department do is underpinned by their inspirational vision: 'The study of drama matters. Drama enriches the soul – theatrical experiences enrich and move us emotionally, socially and culturally that you often won't find in a textbook!'

Curriculum Intent

The intent of the Pearson BTEC Level 3 National in Performing Arts curriculum is to provide an applied, vocational learning journey that equips students with the technical performance skills, critical industry knowledge, and reflective practices required for higher education or employment in the creative sector.

This course is designed to transition you from a performing arts student into an industry-ready professional.

Our curriculum is carefully sequenced to build your academic depth, collaborative skills, and technical mastery over time.

You secure high-stakes external marks early beginning with Unit 1, building a conceptual foundation that informs subsequent independent practical work.

In Unit 1 you will dive into the minds of the world's most influential directors, choreographers, and theatre makers. This unit gives you the language, analytical tools, and theoretical framework you need. You will learn why performance works, which makes your own practical work significantly stronger.

You will then work as an ensemble in Unit 3, you will respond to a live theme provided by the exam board, creating an original piece of performance from scratch.

You will immediately apply the techniques learned in Unit 1 to a practical, collaborative project. This unit builds your teamwork and performance stamina.

With the external exams finished, you will slow down to look closely at yourself. You will isolate your personal technical gaps in acting, dance, or musical theatre, using professional repertoire to upgrade your skills in Unit 2.

You will use the feedback from your previous performances to target your weaknesses and build a highly disciplined training routine.

To finalise the course you choose a specialist unit aligned with your exact career or university goals (e.g., Classical Acting, Jazz Dance, or Musical Theatre Performance).

This is your capstone project. Your technical skill will peak exactly when you are preparing audition material or showreels for your next steps.

Why study BTEC National Extended Certificate in Performing Arts at The Sixth Form at Ridgewood?

- Teachers are passionate about the performing arts industry and possess strong subject knowledge in a range of contemporary performances, practitioners and practices
- There are outstanding studio and theatre performance spaces with stage lighting and sound facilities
- You will regularly attend live theatre performances to enjoy and analyse a wide range of performance styles
- The course is focused heavily on preparation for employment in the Arts
- Students who study this course say they 'love to work with others', 'love performing their work to an audience' and 'enjoy exploring a range of performance skills and techniques'

What topics will I study in this subject?

Skill	What this skill involves in this subject
Performance skill	You will engage in a range of workshops where you will be expected to perform your work. You will need the confidence to perform in front of a range of audiences.
Collaborative working	You will be required to work collaboratively with others in both rehearsal and performance. It is important you contribute ideas and listen to your peers in order to move the drama on.
Performance analysis	You will analyse a range of repertoire looking at both production and performance elements. You will explore the impact of these skills in relation to the director's intention.
Self-discipline and reflection	You need to be motivated and reflect constantly on your current skill level as a performer in order to improve, setting realistic goals to achieve throughout the course.
Exam Technique	You will have a three hour written exam and will therefore need to practise responding to exam questions under timed conditions.

Topic	What this means
Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners' Work (25%)	You will explore the work of two influential practitioners in response to a set task from the exam board. You will identify cultural factors that influence their work such as creative intentions, performance, production, and watch a range of repertoire in order to make independent judgements.
Unit 2: Developing skills and techniques for performance (25%)	You will develop your performance skills through a range of workshops and classes to develop the necessary interpretative, technical and acting skills. This unit has a range of practical and written assessments and you will be expected to keep a log of your developing skills showing the impact these have in performance.
Unit 3: Group Performance Workshop (33%)	You are provided with a given stimulus and through discussion, research and practical exploration you will create a group performance that will be presented to a live audience.
Optional Unit (17%)	You will also study one optional unit. There are a number of different units that you can choose from across the three art forms of drama, music and dance. Some of these include: Acting Styles, Musical Theatre techniques, Contemporary Dance, Classical Ballet techniques, Improvisation and Street Dance technique.

What skills will I need in this subject?

What will my lessons involve?

- A typical lesson in BTEC Performing Arts will be a mixture of practical exploration and written analysis
- You will be expected to make notes on the practical work and reflect on your development as a performer
- You will be expected to play an active role in all workshops and rehearsals

What will my independent study involve?

- There is an expectation that you complete research and exploration of theatre practitioners and styles outside of lessons. This may include reading extracts of plays, reading reports or journals on material or watching performances through our theatre subscription packages.
- You will also be expected to rehearse practical work outside of lesson time and learn lines leading up to a performance.

How will I be assessed?

Percentage exam assessment: 58%	Percentage coursework assessment: 42%

Assessment	**Details of assessment**
Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners' Work (25%)	You will be set a question by the exam board and you will have a four week period to research and prepare work for the exam. The written exam will then take place for three hours after this research period.
Unit 2: Developing skills and techniques for performance (25%)	This unit is internally assessed – no examination. You will submit a range of both written and practical work that will be marked by your teacher and then a sample of work will be sent to an external examiner for checking.
Unit 3: Group Performance Workshop (33%)	You will be set a stimulus by the exam board and will complete milestone log entries of your development and exploration of your performance as well as an evaluation. These will be word processed under controlled timed conditions. You will then perform your group performance to an audience; this will be filmed and sent to an external examiner.
Optional Unit (17%)	This unit is internally assessed – no examination. You will submit a range of both written and practical work that will be marked by your teacher and then a sample of work will be sent to an external examiner for checking.

How do I know this is the right course for me?

You will need:

- a passion for performing arts and a willingness to attend trips within the subject area to watch a wide range of theatre
- a Level 2 qualification in Drama or Performing Arts
- confidence in performing in front of others and a commitment to after school rehearsals for performance work

- to be willing and able to commit to the Performing Arts Faculty Enrichment programme – supporting and leading sessions in ‘Edge’ or ‘Drama Limelights’ and supporting the school production either on stage or behind the scenes.