

“Rooted and grounded in Love”.

# A Level Drama





## Intent – ‘**Rooted** and grounded in Love’

The curriculum is deliberately structured to ensure **progression from foundational knowledge to sophisticated application**. Students move through a coherent sequence of learning that builds **disciplinary expertise in drama**:

### 1. Knowledge Foundations

Students begin by securing:

- understanding of **dramatic conventions, genre and theatrical terminology**
- knowledge of **historical, social and cultural contexts**
- introduction to practitioner methodologies (Stanislavski, Brecht, Frantic Assembly)

This stage emphasises **explicit teaching and modelling**, ensuring all students have the vocabulary and conceptual understanding needed for high-level study.

### 2. Application and Skill Development

Students then apply this knowledge through:

- **practical exploration of practitioner techniques**
- rehearsal processes that develop **acting, movement and ensemble performance skills**
- structured analytical writing using subject-specific terminology

Learning is carefully scaffolded so that students can:

- make **informed creative decisions**
- connect theory to practice
- refine performance through feedback and reflection

### 3. Synthesis and Independence

In the final stage, students demonstrate deep learning by:

- creating **original devised theatre** with clear artistic intention
- performing and interpreting complex texts (*Small Island, Home, I’m Darling, The Book of Dust*)
- producing **extended written analysis** that evaluates live and scripted performance

At this stage, students work with increasing independence, applying their knowledge critically and creatively.

## Disciplinary Thinking in Drama

The curriculum recognises Drama as a **rigorous academic discipline** as well as a practical subject. Students are taught to think like theatre-makers and critics by:

- analysing how meaning is constructed through performance
- evaluating artistic choices and their impact on audiences
- understanding theatre as a product of social, political and historical contexts

Set texts are carefully chosen to support this:

- *Small Island* → encourages analysis of **race, identity and historical context**
- *Home, I'm Darling* → explores **social expectations and constructed realities**
- *The Book of Dust* → examines **power, morality and authority**

These texts are revisited and deepened over time, ensuring **knowledge is embedded and built upon**, not simply encountered once.

## Practitioner Knowledge as a Spine of Learning

The study of **Stanislavski, Brecht and Frantic Assembly** provides a conceptual spine for the curriculum:

- **Stanislavski** → builds understanding of naturalism, character and emotional truth
- **Brecht** → develops critical awareness of theatre as a tool for social commentary
- **Frantic Assembly** → strengthens physical theatre skills and ensemble collaboration

Students return to these practitioners repeatedly across the course, enabling **deep, connected understanding rather than superficial coverage**.

## Ethos: Rooted and Grounded in Love

Within this rigorous academic structure, the curriculum remains firmly **rooted in the school's Catholic ethos**.

Students learn to:

- approach performance and discussion with **respect and empathy**
- collaborate with patience, generosity and integrity
- represent characters and experiences with **care and sensitivity**

Catholic Social Teaching underpins this ethos, ensuring that students:

- recognise the dignity of all individuals
- engage thoughtfully with issues of justice and inequality
- consider the moral and social impact of theatre

In this way, high academic expectations are held alongside a commitment to **human development and moral responsibility**.

### Preparation for Future Pathways

Through this ambitious and structured curriculum, students become:

- **confident performers and articulate analysts**
- **independent thinkers capable of sustained critical reflection**
- **collaborative and resilient learners**

They are equipped for:

- further study in drama, theatre and the arts
- careers requiring creativity, communication and teamwork
- active participation in society as thoughtful and empathetic individuals

### Final Intent Statement

The KS5 Drama curriculum is designed to ensure that students leave with:

- **secure and deeply embedded knowledge**
- the ability to **apply, analyse and evaluate theatre at a high level**
- a strong sense of **personal, social and ethical responsibility**

Rooted in love and driven by academic rigour, the curriculum enables students not only to succeed in their examinations, but to understand theatre as a powerful means of exploring and shaping the world around them.



# A Level Drama

## Year 12



De Lisle College  
A Catholic Voluntary Academy

### Curriculum Outline

#### Link to Catholic Social Teaching:

##### ... Human Dignity

- Students devise work exploring identity, ensuring respectful representation of all individuals
- Analysis of how characters are treated within society
- Exploration of injustice, discrimination, and moral responsibility
- Small Island explores racism, prejudice and the experiences of the Windrush generation, encouraging students to recognise the inherent dignity and worth of every person.
- Home, I'm Darling examines identity, gender expectations and the pressures placed upon individuals by society.
- Character development in performance work requires students to portray experiences with empathy, respect and authenticity.

##### ... The Common Good

- Ensemble work requires shared responsibility and cooperation
- Students learn that success depends on supporting others and working towards a collective outcome
- Students examine how societies in plays function (or fail)
- Discussion of moral choices and consequences for the wider community
- Students evaluate how communities function in Small Island and how social attitudes can either support or marginalise individuals.

#### Participation

- Emphasises the importance of each individual's role in a community
- Students contribute actively to rehearsals, performances, discussions and evaluations.
- The devising process ensures that every student has a creative voice and responsibility within the theatre-making process.
- Live theatre analysis encourages engagement with contemporary cultural and social issues.
- In Home I'm Darling the play explores what happens when individuals feel disconnected from meaningful participation in modern society.

### ... **Solidarity**

- Devised pieces often explore social issues (e.g. injustice, inequality, marginalisation)
- Students are encouraged to tell stories that stand with those who are overlooked or oppressed
- Performance choices can highlight empathy for oppressed characters
- Students consider how audiences are encouraged to respond to injustice
- Small Island develops understanding of migration, belonging and social exclusion, encouraging students to reflect on the experiences of others.
- Brecht's Epic Theatre encourages audiences to question injustice and develop awareness of social responsibility.
- In Home I'm Darling students can examine how social pressures around gender and success create isolation and misunderstanding.

### **Option for the Poor and Vulnerable**

- Stimuli can include real-world issues (poverty, discrimination, conflict)
- Students evaluate how performance can raise awareness and provoke change
- Students explore how theatre can give voice to marginalised communities and challenge inequality.
- Analysis of characters who experience discrimination in Small Island promotes discussion of fairness and moral responsibility.

### **Stewardship (Care for Creation)**

- Encourages responsibility for environmental impact in theatre-making
- Students make thoughtful and sustainable design choices when considering set, costume and props.
- The study of theatre design encourages efficient use of resources and awareness of environmental impact within the performing arts industry.
- Creative problem-solving develops an appreciation of responsible decision-making in artistic practice.
- Pullman's world places significant emphasis on humanity's relationship with the wider created order. Discussion can focus on responsibility, ethical decision-making and care for the world and its inhabitants.

### **Brecht (Epic Theatre)**

- Links to **Option for the Poor & Solidarity**
- Encourages audiences to question injustice and systems of power

### **Frantic Assembly / Physical Theatre**

- Links to **The Common Good**
- Emphasises trust, collaboration, and shared creation

### Rehearsal Process

- Students reflect on:
  - fairness in contribution (**Justice / Common Good**)
  - respect in feedback (**Human Dignity**)

### Devising Stimuli

- Topics linked to CST:
  - poverty → Option for the Poor
  - climate change → Stewardship
  - migration → Solidarity
  - identity → Human Dignity

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| <b>Advent 1</b> | <b>C1 &amp;3 Theatre History</b><br><b>C3 - Small Island Context and study Act 1</b><br><b>C3 - Theatre Design</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Advent 2</b> | <b>C1- Frantic Assembly Workshop</b><br><b>C3 - Small Island Act 2 study - introduce exam practice</b><br><b>C1 – Script exploration and selection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Description     | Students are introduced to the foundations of A Level Drama through the study of theatre history, key theatrical movements and stage design. They begin exploring Small Island by examining the social, historical and cultural context of the play and analysing Act 1. Students develop their use of dramatic terminology and learn how performance, design and context combine to create meaning for an audience. | Description     | Students explore the working methods of Frantic Assembly through practical workshops that develop physical theatre and ensemble skills. Study of Small Island continues with detailed analysis of Act 2 alongside the introduction of examination-style responses. Students also begin script exploration and selection, considering how texts can be reinterpreted creatively for contemporary audiences. |

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| <b>Lent 1</b>      | <b>C1 Reinterpretation performance development, script writing and rehearsals.</b><br><b>C1 Begin writing creative log coursework</b><br><b>C3 Small Island directing, acting and designing approaches</b><br><b>C3 How to structure exam answers</b>                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Lent 2</b>      | <b>C1 Reinterpretation EXAM</b><br><b>C1 Continue writing creative log coursework</b><br><b>C3 Home I'm Darling introduction</b><br><b>Live theatre review</b><br><b>MOCK EXAMS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Description        | Students develop and rehearse their reinterpretation performances, refining acting, directing and script-writing skills while beginning their creative log coursework. Through the study of <i>Small Island</i> , learners explore acting, directing and design approaches and learn to structure analytical exam responses. Reflection and feedback support increasingly independent artistic decision-making. | Description        | Students complete and perform their reinterpretation assessment and continue developing their creative log coursework. They are introduced to <i>Home, I'm Darling</i> and begin exploring its themes, context and theatrical style. A live theatre review develops evaluative writing skills, while mock examinations provide opportunities to assess progress and identify areas for improvement. |
| <b>Pentecost 1</b> | <b>C1 Complete creative log coursework</b><br><b>C3 Home I'm Darling introduction Act 1</b><br><b>C2 Theatre Practitioners exploration– Brecht and Stanislavski</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Pentecost 2</b> | <b>C2 Devising – Stimulus Exploration</b><br><b>C3 Exam practice</b><br><b>C3 Home I'm Darling Act 2</b><br><b>Live theatre review</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Description        | Students complete their creative log coursework and begin detailed study of Act 1 of <i>Home, I'm Darling</i> . Practitioner work focuses on Brecht and Stanislavski, allowing students to compare contrasting approaches to performance and theatrical meaning. Practical exploration is combined with analytical discussion to strengthen links between theory and practice.                                  | Description        | Students begin the devising process through exploration of a range of stimuli and contemporary issues, developing original ideas for performance. Study of <i>Home, I'm Darling</i> continues through Act 2 alongside regular exam practice and another live theatre review. Students are encouraged to apply practitioner knowledge creatively while developing their critical analysis skills.    |

# A Level Drama

## Year 13



**De Lisle College**  
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| <b>Advent 1</b> | <b>C3 The Book of Dust introduction and study</b><br><b>C2 Devising development, script writing</b><br><b>C2 Epic Theatre Style and Techniques</b><br><b>C3 Live Theatre Review</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Advent 2</b> | <b>C3 The Book of Dust study</b><br><b>C2 Script Exploration and text selection</b><br><b>C2 Character development and research</b><br><b>C2 Stanislavski Theatre Practitioner</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Description     | Students begin advanced study of The Book of Dust, analysing themes, characters and theatrical interpretation. Devising work is developed through script writing and rehearsal, while the techniques and conventions of Epic Theatre are explored in practical and written contexts. Live theatre analysis further develops evaluative and critical thinking skills required for the written examination. | Description     | Students continue detailed study of The Book of Dust while selecting and exploring texts for Component 2 performance work. Character research and development support deeper artistic interpretation, and the work of Stanislavski is revisited to refine understanding of naturalistic performance. Students are expected to make increasingly independent creative and analytical decisions.                |
| <b>Lent 1</b>   | <b>C2 Performance Development</b><br><b>C3 Play text revision</b><br><b>C3 Directing revision</b><br><b>C2 FINAL EXAM</b><br><b>MOCK EXAMS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Lent 2</b>   | <b>C3 Text revision</b><br><b>C3 Design approaches revision</b><br><b>C3 Exam board extract release for The Book of Dust – focused study</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Description     | Students refine and complete their Component 2 performances, demonstrating sophisticated performance and interpretative skills. Revision of set texts, directing concepts and performance approaches supports preparation for assessments. Mock examinations and the final practical examination allow students to evaluate their progress and strengthen examination technique.                          | Description     | Students focus on intensive revision of set texts, design concepts and performance interpretation. The release of the examination extract from The Book of Dust provides an opportunity for focused analysis and rehearsal of exam-style responses. Students consolidate knowledge and develop confidence in applying context, practitioner theory and theatrical understanding under examination conditions. |

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| <b>Pentecost 1</b> | <b>C3 Exam Preparation</b><br><b>C3 acting approaches revision</b><br><b>Immersion Sessions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Pentecost 2</b> | <b>COURSE COMPLETED</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Description        | Students undertake a comprehensive programme of examination preparation, revisiting acting, directing and design approaches across all set texts. Immersion sessions provide targeted support, extended practice and retrieval of key knowledge. Students refine their analytical writing and critical evaluation skills to ensure they are fully prepared for the final examinations. | Description        | The course is completed and students sit their final examinations. Learning across the two-year programme is consolidated, celebrating students' development as performers, theatre-makers and critical thinkers who are equipped for further study, employment and active participation in society. |