

27th August 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

PERFORMING ARTS AT BOSTON SPA

We have been delighted with the outstanding results at both A Level and at GCSE over the last ten days. I have shared the headlines in the [blog](#), and I will write a separate letter celebrating the phenomenal achievements of our students at the start of the new term.

The purpose of this letter, however, is to share with you exciting developments at Boston Spa Academy in the performing arts, and in particular highlight the introduction of tuition for the LAMDA qualifications in Speech and Drama. A

In September we are thrilled to be opening our post 16 provision as Elliott Hudson College Boston Spa in completely remodelled buildings. This development was identified as the first priority for The GORSE Academies Trust on our conversion last September, and the Trust have honoured this with a £1,000,000 investment in our facilities.

Having made fantastic strides in meeting the first goal, we move to our next, which is the development of the performing arts. The importance of this for our students cannot be underestimated and it is an absolute priority for which Governors have already agreed a strategic plan. This plan includes new facilities for the teaching of Music and Drama, made possible by further financial investment from The GORSE Academies Trust.

In addition a new team of highly experienced, enthusiastic and committed colleagues, Mrs Forrayn, Miss Miller, and Mrs Taylor will be joining our staff to add to the full-time appointments of two of our new teachers, Miss Panayioti and Mr Girardi. These colleagues will be working to offer a wide array of opportunities for student participation, each with a clearly focused plan for its continuous development over the subsequent years.

MUSIC AND DRAMA LESSONS

The weekly Music lessons for Year 7 and 8 will be taught by Mr Girardi, to which we are adding a weekly one hour Drama lesson for Year 7, taught by Miss Panayioti. These will follow an energetic, fast paced and highly practical curriculum, enabling our students to develop confidence, team working skills and creativity.

OPPORTUNITIES IN MUSIC

While maintaining our popular Soul Band Mr Girardi will also introduce a new Samba Band; participants his group will require little previous Musical experience. On Thursdays Mrs Taylor will introduce a school choir. These ensembles will continue to rehearse weekly, and will be celebrated with performances at our Christmas concert on 11 December.

Peripatetic music lessons are of course continuing to be offered at the school for any pupil, whether it is with a new or existing instrument. Currently this offer includes clarinet, flute, saxophone, voice, brass, woodwind, guitar, percussion and keyboard. These are subsidised lessons, costing £55 a term, and if you wish to add your daughter or son to the list of students receiving music tuition please contact Mrs Taylor.

SCHOOL PRODUCTION

We are also offering all students in Years 7, 8 and 9 the opportunity to be involved in a Drama enrichment activity after school on a Thursday which will continue until 4.30pm. This will culminate in an exciting full-scale production at the end of the academic year, being performed not only to parents, pupils and staff but also to feeder Primary schools.

SHAKESPEARE PLAY

After Christmas, Year 10 and 12 pupils will also be offered the opportunity to perform, as Boston Spa Academy will enter an original Shakespeare adaptation into the GORSE Shakespeare Festival in July 2020. Rehearsals for this will also run on a Thursday evening after school.

TOURING THEATRE

In November we will welcome the touring production of 'The Odyssey', performed by A Level students from Elliott Hudson College. This will allow pupils to witness the high quality of theatre that is happening within our Trust, as well as experiencing live theatre. This will be followed by a Q&A with the directors and cast who will share their journey of producing a touring production.

All these events will be supported by a highly experienced team of staff from schools across The GORSE Academies Trust who will be working at Boston Spa every Thursday. They will be focused on implementing these new initiatives and sustaining an ambitious long term performing arts programme.

LONDON ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND DRAMATIC ARTS QUALIFICATIONS

The initiative which may require your immediate attention is our decision to offer LAMDA Speech and Drama lessons from September 2019. The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA) is one of the country's most prestigious Performing Arts Schools and has its own examination series, equivalent to the ABRSM Music Exams. These highly valued exams offer candidates the ability to take graded exams, from 1-8, with Grades 6,7 & 8 being awarded UCAS points, helping students gain entrance into University.

There are several different disciplines in which students can take examinations, including acting, musical theatre, devising drama, Shakespeare and speaking in public. A student can take multiple elements if they so wish. LAMDA qualifications demonstrate not only a pupil's ability to be resilient, perform confidently, study hard and be disciplined. It is also an excellent accolade to include on a CV or other application, showing that the pupil has interests outside their routine lessons and an ability to commit to succeeding.

As with peripatetic music lessons, students will take their Speech and Drama lesson on the same day each week, but at a different time in order to avoid students missing the same school lesson each week. The lessons will last 30 minutes and be in a group of around 3.

We are extremely pleased to announce that our new private LAMDA teacher will be Michelle Ruse. She has over 20 years' experience as a LAMDA teacher and is a senior examiner for the board, meaning her knowledge of the exam series is outstanding. She always aims to ensure that students sit on average two exams each academic year. As well as teaching exam material Michelle also works on developing pupils' projection, confidence, sight reading, listening, diction and listening skills. You can find out more about Michelle and her training at her [website](#)

Boston Spa Academy will subsidise the lessons, meaning that the fee for Speech and Drama lessons is £75 per term, covering 10 lessons. This must be paid in full at the start of each term. Pupils will be required to also pay for exams when they are ready to sit them. Places are limited to 21, but are open to students in all year groups and will be offered on a first come first served basis.

If you would like your child to participate in private LAMDA Speech and Drama lessons please reply by email to info@bostonspa.leeds.sch.uk, with the subject heading 'LAMDA.' Your email should include your child's name, their date of birth and your mobile telephone number. Payment for the lessons will be accepted through ParentPay, however places in the lessons will not be confirmed until the first term's payment have been received

If you have any questions about the new performing arts programme please contact the school marking your email for the attention of Mrs Forryan (regarding the LAMDA opportunity), or Mrs Taylor if your enquiry is about music.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our events throughout the year and hope your child is able to take the opportunity to become fully involved in the performing arts programme this year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C Walsh", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

CHRISTOPHER WALSH
Principal