

## Curriculum Enrichment: Garsington Opera Workshop and Visit 2023

In 2023, our pupils once again benefited from a high-quality arts enrichment opportunity through our work with Garsington Opera, building on our commitment to providing a broad, creative and culturally rich curriculum. This experience combined professional expertise, live music and pupil performance, giving children an authentic insight into the world of opera.

### Curriculum Intent

The intent of our partnership with Garsington Opera is to ensure pupils have meaningful access to the performing arts, supporting Ofsted's focus on cultural capital, creativity and personal development. Opera provides a unique platform for pupils to develop confidence, teamwork and expressive skills, while deepening their understanding of how music, movement and storytelling combine in live performance.

### Workshop in School

The Garsington Opera team delivered a highly engaging workshop in school, led by professional practitioners and featuring live music and a baritone opera singer. From the outset, pupils were immersed in the world of opera through practical, hands-on activities designed to develop both skill and confidence.

During the workshop, the children:

- Took part in vocal warm-ups and learned how singers prepare their voices
- Explored stagecraft and movement, understanding how performers use space and gesture
- Learned elements of dance and physical expression
- Worked collaboratively to assemble and perform the opening of *The Barber of Seville*

In addition to performing professionally written music, pupils were challenged creatively by being supported to compose their own song, experimenting with rhythm, lyrics and melody. This compositional element gave pupils ownership of their learning and encouraged creative risk-taking.

### Sharing and Performance

A highlight of the day was the opportunity for pupils to perform all they had learned and created for Fox Class. Presenting both the opening of *The Barber of Seville* and their original composition allowed pupils to celebrate their achievements and experience the excitement of performing for an audience. This performance element strengthened pupils' confidence and reinforced key personal development skills such as resilience, communication and teamwork.

### Visit to Garsington Opera at Wormsley

Following the workshop, pupils were invited to visit Garsington Opera at Wormsley, allowing them to experience opera in a professional setting. Seeing live performance in such a prestigious venue enabled pupils to connect classroom learning with the real world, deepening understanding and appreciation of the art form.

The visit reinforced learning from the workshop and gave pupils valuable insight into the scale, collaboration and professionalism required to stage an opera.

### Impact

The impact of this enrichment opportunity was clear in pupils' enthusiasm, engagement and confidence. Pupils developed:

- Greater vocal and physical confidence
- Improved listening and expressive skills
- Awareness of composition and creative process
- Appreciation of live music and professional performance

Teachers noted a lasting increase in pupils' willingness to participate, perform and collaborate in music and drama lessons following the project.

### Cultural Capital and Personal Development

This experience made a strong contribution to pupils' cultural capital, ensuring that all learners accessed high-quality arts experiences. Working with professional musicians and performers helped demystify opera and showed pupils that the arts are accessible, vibrant and relevant.

Opportunities such as this enrich pupils' education well beyond the classroom, fostering curiosity, creativity and a lifelong appreciation of the arts

