

Curriculum Enrichment: Garsington Opera Workshop and Performance 2024

In June 2024, pupils were once again fortunate to take part in a full-day enrichment workshop with Garsington Opera, providing a vibrant and immersive experience that championed creativity, confidence and self-expression. This opportunity reflects our commitment to a broad and balanced curriculum that places high value on the arts and supports pupils' personal development.

Curriculum Intent

Our continued partnership with Garsington Opera aims to ensure that all pupils benefit from high-quality cultural experiences, in line with Ofsted's focus on cultural capital, inclusion and ambition for all learners. Opera offers a powerful medium for pupils to explore emotion, storytelling and performance, while developing communication, teamwork and confidence.

Workshop in School

The Garsington Opera team delivered a dynamic day of workshops, carefully designed to allow pupils to be expressive, bold and creative. Through a range of activities, pupils explored voice, movement and performance in a supportive and encouraging environment.

What made this day particularly special was seeing pupils who are often quieter in the classroom step forward with confidence - some taking on acting roles with enthusiasm, others leading singing or contributing ideas with assurance. The workshop provided safe space for pupils to challenge themselves and discover new strengths.

As part of the day, pupils were given an insight into the opera they would soon be watching live. They learned about the story, characters and music, and were treated to the unforgettable experience of listening to a soprano sing, giving pupils a real sense of the power and emotion of the operatic voice.

Visit to Garsington Opera at Wormsley

In July, pupils visited Garsington Opera at Wormsley to watch a professional production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The visit began with a picnic on the magnificent Wormsley estate, allowing pupils to enjoy the setting and share the experience together before entering the opera house.

Watching live opera in such a prestigious environment brought learning vividly to life. Pupils were able to make connections between the workshop and the performance, deepening their understanding of how music, drama, costume and stagecraft combine to tell a story.

Impact and Personal Development

The impact of this enrichment opportunity was evident in pupils' enthusiasm, confidence and willingness to participate. The experience supported pupils to:

- Build confidence and self-belief
- Develop expressive and communication skills
- Take creative risks in a supportive setting
- Appreciate high-quality live performance

Teachers observed that pupils carried this confidence back into the classroom, particularly in music, drama and spoken-language activities.

Cultural Capital

Opportunities such as this make a vital contribution to pupils' cultural capital, ensuring all children have access to meaningful artistic experiences. By engaging directly with professional performers and attending a live opera, pupils are encouraged to see the arts as accessible, relevant and inspiring.

This enriching experience remains a highlight of the school year and plays an important role in shaping confident, curious and culturally aware learners.

