

Drama: expanded programme

September 2006 saw a dramatic new chapter open at Brandeston Hall. Drama is now firmly in place on the timetable for children in Years 3–8. During the year a wide range of skills have been covered as part of the new curriculum; from simple mime, role-play and still image work, to performance poetry, monologue and debating tasks. Children regularly work in groups of differing size, encouraging co-operation and communication skills. Performance is a key aspect of the subject, and children build confidence performing to their peers, and also as part of school assemblies when appropriate. As the curriculum develops and grows in the coming years, the children will be able to use key drama skills will enhance their learning across the school, and increase their personal development as well.

Junior Production

Pupils in Years 3–5 participated in a striking celebration of dramatic talent for this term's Junior Production of Walt Disney's "The Jungle Book". Lively, colourful and enthusiastic performances were very well attended. Staff on the production team were most impressed by the way the actors rose to the challenge of performing in the round. Our thanks and congratulations to all concerned.

Play in a Day: 'Wind in the Willows'

On Tuesday, 4th October, 'Splats' entertainment company visited the school. During the day, all children in Years 3 to 6



took part in workshops led by 'Splats' staff, in which they each rehearsed a scene from the story.

While not rehearsing, the children were busy preparing props and scenery for the show with their tutors. The children made huge wheels, leaf garlands, enormous flower heads and beautiful sign posts; all of which they used during the afternoon performance.

By linking the 4 scenes together, the children performed their version of "Wind in the Willows" to each other and an audience of proud parents. It was a wonderfully entertaining performance, involving over one hundred children in co-ordinated, practical drama.

Thanks must go to the staff for their efforts with prop creation, and to all the children involved for their enthusiastic participation.

Year 6 Summer Shakespeare Spectacular 2007

With a break in tradition, I decided to set this terrific event on and around the beautiful terraces of Brandeston Hall itself. All Year 6 pupils were involved in presenting 14 pieces of Shakespeare, taken from nine of the Bard's finest; as well as a sixty second version of Macbeth!

The scene was set and the audience enjoyed picnics, Pimms, and live music on the lawn.

The performances by all children on the evening were tremendous; heard by all, and drawing praise for their clarity and use of expression. As the audience moved around the terrace, so the backdrop for each piece changed, creating a rich, most atmospheric set.

Well done to the children of Year 6, and to the production team; Mme Goodin, Mrs Gibbons, and extremely useful assistant director, Mimi O'Neill of Year 8.

Mr C Parker, Director, Head of Drama

LEFT: JUNIORS IN 'THE JUNGLE BOOK'.
RIGHT T-B: CHARLIE O'NEIL AS HENRY V,
ELLEN HUTSON AS MACBETH, SUZIE AS
PUCK, AND FLORENCE ELSON AS JULIET.





LEFT: CURTAIN CALL. ABOVE: KATIE RUTHERFORD AND BELOW, CHRISTINA WELSH PERFORM AT THE ARTS FESTIVAL

Senior Production 2007 'Macbeth'

Setting about tackling this complex piece was always going to be something of a challenge for the cast of forty senior pupils. Several spent time in the holidays learning lines, demonstrating early dedication, with the main rehearsals beginning at the start of the Autumn term.

Considerable rehearsal time was spent working on the meaning and purpose of each scene, creating an underlying understanding of the text.

All cast members showed a real enthusiasm for the play and worked incredibly hard during rehearsal, resulting in the tremendous performances enjoyed by our audiences.

Both cast and production team were delighted to receive such glowing reviews from audience members. It was also wonderful to see Year 9 from Framlingham College at the dress rehearsal.

It was truly a cast performance of note, but special mention must go to the two leads; Mimi O'Neill, as Macbeth, and Emily Higgins, as Lady Macbeth. Both girls absorbed an incredible amount of text, and delivered their lines with a maturity beyond their years.

The use of ICT to generate the constantly changing images of the set provided a modern day backdrop to this Shakespearian classic.

Mr Parker and Mme Goodin would like to thank all involved behind the scenes, helping to make this such a successful Senior Production.

Mr C Parker, Director, Head of Drama

...GLOWING REVIEWS FROM AUDIENCE MEMBERS.

House Senior Drama Challenge 2006-'07

The first House Senior Drama Challenge took place this Autumn term as part of the Arts Festival. Five senior pupils from each House gathered in the Hobbies Room to begin the

Challenge. It was to select one pupil from within each House group, to learn, rehearse, and then perform a monologue, in front of the judging panel, parents, and the school.

All challengers learnt a piece as part of the selection process, and competition within each House group was fierce. Mr Parker and Mme Goodin were extremely impressed with the standard of delivery.

Eventually the finalists were selected. It was to be; Christina Welsh for Constable, Katie Rutherford for Constable, Lewis Myers-Allen for Gainsborough, and Alice Baller for Britten. All four finalists did themselves proud, showing a sample of the drama talent within the school. The judging panel chose Lewis Myers-Allen of Gainsborough as the overall winner for his terrific interpretation of the 'little brother' piece. Congratulations to all who took on the Drama Challenge!

Mr C Parker, Head of Drama

