



ASPIRE Drama

Future Performers & Future Artists Program
Primary Campus Program Handbook

History and Rationale

Established in 2017, the **Varsity College Primary Aspire Drama Program** supports students who demonstrate a strong passion and aptitude for Drama. As the program continues to grow, it provides an enriched and challenging environment where students develop their performance skills, creativity and understanding of Drama through practical experiences and expert guidance.

Students create, perform, analyse and respond to Drama, working collaboratively with peers, teachers and industry professionals. Opportunities such as workshops, excursions and community performances extend learning beyond the classroom and encourage students to develop confidence, creativity and a strong sense of artistic identity.

The Arts provide powerful opportunities for students to engage, inspire and express themselves. Through Drama, students develop the knowledge, skills and critical understanding to make creative choices, communicate ideas and explore different perspectives. Aspire Drama nurtures these capabilities while challenging students to reach their creative and expressive potential.

Goals and Purpose Aspire Drama: Create, Perform, Inspire

The Aspire Drama Program is an exciting, practical and creative journey designed to build students' confidence, creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking. Through hands-on experiences in creating, performing and responding to Drama, students develop the skills and confidence to express ideas, work effectively with others and engage an audience.

Students explore the Elements of Drama, including role, situation, character, relationships, tension, focus, voice, movement, space and mood, while discovering how these elements combine to create compelling performances. As their skills grow, students progress from Drama games, terminology, improvisation and performance poetry to script interpretation, character development, rehearsal and performance, culminating in the creation of original dramatic works.

Key Personnel

Head of Drama

Tiani Bristow-Wilson tbris3@eq.edu.au

Tiani is the **Head of Drama** at Varsity College, bringing **more than 25 years of experience** in Drama education and performance. She holds a **Bachelor of Arts in Dance and Drama** and a **Bachelor of Education in Secondary**.

Tiani leads the development and delivery of both the **Curriculum Drama and Aspire Drama** programs, overseeing the College's curricular and extracurricular Drama initiatives. She is passionate about creating enriching Drama experiences that **inspire, challenge and engage young performers**, fostering their creativity, confidence and passion for the Arts.

Her teaching philosophy is grounded in providing students with opportunities to experience Drama through **entertainment, education and empathy**, empowering young artists to explore their creativity, connect with others and develop their unique artistic voice.

Program Overview

Students who are successful in the audition process will be enrolled into our Aspire Drama course for one year. They will be removed from mainstream class and attend 2 lessons a week where they will engage in a course of work that will be predominately performance based.

Through this course the students will develop their skills so that they are able to engage in a variety of artistic experiences such as excursions, incursions and competitions as a means of connecting the student to the community and field of the arts

A Four-Term Journey of Discovery

Term 1 – Elements of Drama

Students are introduced to essential Drama terminology and develop foundational performance skills through engaging games, activities, improvisation and performance poetry.

Term 2 – Lights, Camera, Action

Students bring characters and stories to life through scripted scenes. They develop their understanding of character, relationships, tension and focus while strengthening their voice, movement, blocking and stage presence.

Term 3 – Elective

Students choose a theatrical style that sparks their interest, with options such as Collage Drama, Christmas Plays, Musical Theatre, Shakespeare, Physical Theatre or Melodrama. This provides an opportunity to explore different performance traditions and discover their individual strengths.

Term 4 – Mr/Mrs Maker

Students take centre stage as creators. Working collaboratively, they develop an original performance from concept to presentation, applying their Drama knowledge through character, themes, movement, voice, costumes, props and set design.

Skills That Extend Beyond the Stage

Drama offers students far more than performance skills. It provides a dynamic environment in which they can strengthen literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding and intercultural understanding.

Students build literacy through scripts, Drama terminology, performance poetry and oral communication. They develop critical and creative thinking by analysing, interpreting, adapting and creating dramatic ideas, while collaborative performance encourages empathy, resilience, communication, teamwork and self-confidence.

Across the year, students progress from exploring and demonstrating foundational skills to applying, analysing and interpreting dramatic ideas, before ultimately creating, developing, manipulating, organising, communicating and presenting their own work to an audience.

Aspire Drama is an opportunity for students to find their voice, discover their creativity and experience the excitement of bringing ideas to life on stage.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

In addition to the extension offered throughout the Aspire Drama, students will have the opportunity to participate in

- Book week
- Under 8s Day
- Gold Coast Eisteddfod
- College Productions and Events
- Discipline Workshops/incursions
- Performance excursions

*Please note: This list is not exhaustive and additional opportunities for student enrichment may arise throughout the academic year.

Aspire Drama Application Process

The Aspire Drama selection process is designed to provide applicants with the opportunity to demonstrate their individual performance skills, creativity, collaboration and commitment to Drama. There are two stages to the process.

Stage 1 – Online Application and Monologue

Applicants are required to:

- Complete the online application, providing details of relevant Drama experience.
- Select and rehearse a monologue that best demonstrates their acting ability and performance potential.
- Memorise and perform the monologue, demonstrating clear characterisation through purposeful vocal and physical choices.
- Use the stage space effectively to communicate the character's role, relationships and situation.
- Record the monologue and submit it on a USB by Friday 11th September.

Important: The monologue must be fully memorised and the USB recording must be accessible and able to be played. If the USB cannot be opened or the monologue has not been memorised, the application will not progress to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Workshop Audition

Applicants who successfully progress through Stage 1 may be invited to attend a one-hour interactive workshop audition at Varsity College Primary Campus. During the workshop, applicants will work with a Drama text as a stimulus to collaboratively devise and develop a polished performance for presentation in small groups.

The workshop provides applicants with an opportunity to demonstrate:

- Performance and acting skills
- Creativity and ability to develop dramatic ideas
- Characterisation and expressive choices
- Communication and confidence
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Leadership and initiative
- Ability to respond creatively to direction and new challenges

The workshop is designed to be energetic, collaborative and engaging, allowing applicants to demonstrate not only what they can do as performers, but also how they work, create and communicate with other.