

# 1. Intent

*“Scientists are aware that all the lab-rat tests in the world, once compiled, can tell us only how lab rats act when tested, and that is how we must begin to view school: all that you can learn in a school classroom is what goes on inside a school classroom.”*

- Anne Elizabeth Moore, [\*The Manifesti of Radical Literature\*](#)

Moore’s perception of the modern classroom is demonstrative of someone who has never taught in one. However, what Moore does highlight is the need for subjects that, and teachers who, are willing to push the boundaries of the classroom by exploring learning in such a way that students can understand and apply it directly to their own world experiences; Media Studies curriculum has unequivocal real world impact and relevance. The world has changed: Covid-19 has certainly ensured this, but the digital age and age of technology are far from over and continue to advance day by day. Equally important is the need to be discerning with any information being presented to the audience or consumer – whether it’s the news, music videos, magazines, political rhetoric or a Hollywood film, questions such as ‘who is making this?’ and ‘how do they want me to respond?’ have, sadly, become more important; Media Studies is key in building awareness of these areas through a medium that students can readily engage with. It is important that students are given the option of Media Studies to ensure that they can be exposed to wider skill sets that will benefit them in later life and in an ever-changing world.

Media is a course that, at its core, utilises the interpretive skills and precise analytical skills of English as well as the understanding of directorial intent, the importance of performance and the final commercial product essential to both Drama and the Performing Arts. Media Studies also utilises the core analytical skills, judgement of sources, and attention to detail of History, the creativity of Art, the logical and critical thinking of Design and Maths, the patience and vision of Textiles, the editing and design skills of Commercial Art, and the awareness of audience so important in English and the Performing Arts. In essence, Media Studies is a course that utilises and builds upon the numerous skills adopted and learned by students across KS3 and KS4, and allows these skills to be honed within a single subject area.

## **Our Vision**

Our vision for the Media Studies Curriculum at Thornden is:

- To prepare students for the real world
- To enable students to become critical, intelligent consumers of the mass media
- To foster an understanding of the power of the media, and its ability to shape and define our concepts of identity, reality and our social values
- To empower and inspire students to express themselves through the construction of creative, original and thought-provoking media products.

Additionally, we want our students to experience the world of Media first-hand and offer a range of experiences, workshops and trips to enhance their learning experience and expose students to cultural capital. It is imperative that students are given the real tools of media (website design, camera equipment, etc.) and experience them directly in order to expand their cultural horizons and to prepare them for careers in media and real-world application.

The Media Studies course at Thornden will offer:

- Teaching of Adobe Creative Cloud software (Photoshop, InDesign, Dreamweaver)

- Professional workshops from university lecturers and practitioners in Adobe Creative Cloud software
- Video editing and camera-handling workshops
- Visit to Winchester University
- Visit to Warner Bros. Studios (inclusive of on-site lesson)

In short, the Media Studies GCSE course at Thornden is an opportunity to demonstrate to Moore that the classroom is not simply that - a room which is removed from the real world – but that it is, instead, just the beginning. There isn't just a skylight in our classrooms – we break down the walls.

### **Intent in Summary**

To develop the students' understanding of media products and to be able to analyse their purpose and impact on audiences. To consider the construction of media and the connotations which create meaning for the audience. To use these skills to understand how the media is communicating and manipulating the target audience.

## **2. Implementation and sequencing**

### **What we do and why**

The Media Studies curriculum is planned and sequenced to drive student learning of the key media areas across the two-year course. Key concepts and terminology is revisited across units with clear interconnections made explicit to students; this enables students to recognise the purpose and significance of their learning, and provides them with the ability to assess, discuss and evaluate various forms of media effectively.

Students are actively encouraged to participate in class discussions and paired work. Additionally, students are provided with the training in, and access to, Adobe Creative Cloud and Microsoft Publisher to facilitate their own media creations and understanding; this access to professional grade software allows students a greater breadth and depth of understanding in terms of media creation and media language, and also offers an insight into professional practice for future study and careers.

Our expert teachers impart knowledge explicitly, modelling complex information and strategies to support access for all learners, thus maximising learning outcomes. Additionally, our teachers are proficient in the software used, and are able to guide pupils in their practical learning. Furthermore, students are actively encouraged to utilise the cloud-based software even further by accessing it and downloading it at home, allowing them to further their own skills and interests in their own time.

Media Studies lessons adopt a discursive approach and utilise Cornell note-taking. This method of knowledge capture is a university strategy (thus providing students with a life-skill, and a preparatory step ahead of further and higher education) and also permits a level of independence and freedom, whilst sitting within a clear lesson framework. Students are provided with a clear learning focus (via a learning question) and are tasked with summarising their learning in a short paragraph form at the end of the lesson; this builds a clear revision bank for students and condenses learning into something that can be easily revisited throughout the course.

Students are assessed in both a summative and formative way. Students are provided with meaningful target-based feedback to further progression; students will be tasked with applying their targets to improve work, and to reflect upon them in the creation of new work. This reflective approach allows students to visibly see their progression, and to constantly improve.

Across KS4, teachers follow the same scheme of work and pre-prepared lessons which have been built from shared resources, reflective discussion and the needs of the curriculum

as provided by OCR; teachers have a level of autonomy to personalise and adapt the centralised lessons and resources in order to cater for the specific needs of their class – the benefit of this being a consistent approach across all Media Studies lessons whilst ensuring all students are supported. This centralised approach allows for content to be delivered by appropriate end-points, but also allows scope for teachers to add to the bank of lessons available, thus ensuring that the course and content is fresh and relevant to our learners. All lessons and resources are stored centrally and updated live through the use of Microsoft OneDrive.

Our curriculum is a responsive one as we are constantly reviewing, reflecting and improving on our offering. This constant review is based upon evidence-based research and current best practice to ensure that all students access a curriculum and course that ensures that a student's best learning outcomes can be achieved.

### **Philosophy of pedagogy**

- Coherent, cumulative curriculum – shared endeavour and shared ownership by the department. Shared lessons and resources.
- Mixed-ability classes at KS4
- Teaching is structured and scaffolded with research-supported practice (e.g. Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, EEF, etc.)
- Cultural Capital – student as a future citizen informs planning. Additional experiences catered for student understanding of subject and as exposure to new experiences relevant to the course.
- Preparation of students for the wider world – teaching is more focused upon independent learning (own folders, manage resources, note-taking, Cornell notes). Consideration of college and university practice.
- Encourage and enable critical thinking

### **How do you know?**

Shared resources

Informal meetings and discussion

Observations and learning walks

Folder checks

Data collection

Collaborative working