

13+ Drama Scholarship Information

September 2026 entry

Through our Drama Scholarship programme at Oundle School, we aim to nurture pupils who have shown an early creative spark in theatre. They will be dedicated to honing their craft and will aspire to creating theatre of the highest standard. We are looking for passionate and creative individuals who are not afraid to challenge themselves, to take risks and explore theatre in its widest context. Potential candidates will, of course, be ambitious and will probably have flourished on your school stages, but they will also be interested in fostering leadership within the Arts.

We value individuals who will be good role models for others, who will lead by example, seize opportunities and lead their own projects through their full involvement in our Scholars' Studio. The Stahl Theatre is an excellent resource, and we expect Drama Scholars to take full advantage of all the opportunities on offer, be those onstage, backstage or as a member of the audience.

Scholarship Assessment: what to expect

The assessment will involve a morning at Oundle working practically on our Stahl Theatre stage with the Head of Drama and the Director of the Stahl. There are four assessment components:

1. Taking part in an improvisation workshop with the other candidates, led by the Head of Drama.
Here we are looking for good creativity. People who can clearly present their own ideas, to listen and respond to the ideas of others and to think inventively in response to a given stimulus.
2. Performing a short, prepared speech.
In this task we are assessing how the pupils communicate the role using effective performance skills (voice, movement and use of space)
3. Redirection of the speech.
By doing this, we are aiming to assess how flexible pupils are, how well they know the play and the character. We are interested to see how, as performers, they process directorial notes.
4. An interview. We encourage candidates to talk about productions they have been involved in and other work they have enjoyed. Some candidates will also have portfolios of work they have been in or seen, and this is the perfect time to talk these through.
This is an excellent opportunity for us to gain a more rounded understanding of the individual and often where a pupil's true passion for the theatre comes through most acutely.

Scholarship Assessment: what to prepare

We know that selecting an appropriate speech for an audition can be challenging and to help we have compiled a list of monologues which we feel are appropriate.

These are available for download within the Drama Scholarship section on our dedicated web page for feeder schools. Candidates are also welcome to choose their own speech – it is important that pupils perform material they are comfortable with.

A note about Shakespeare. Whilst, of course, Shakespeare provides a wealth of material in terms of speeches and soliloquies, we often find that young people who attempt Shakespeare are so focused on getting the language right that they struggle to process the notes that we give them. For this reason, we would advise against a Shakespeare speech.

We ask candidates to learn the speech so that they can perform on the day with confidence and with a full range of movement.

Naomi Baker

Director of the Stahl Theatre

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