

Inclusive Arts.

Connected Communities.

Creative Futures.



OXFORDSHIRE FESTIVAL

OF SPEECH , DRAMA &
MUSICAL THEATRE

21ST – 22ND NOVEMBER 2026

Corn Exchange, Witney

A new, welcoming festival celebrating speech, drama and musical theatre – bringing performers, families and communities together across Oxfordshire.

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WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

www.woxpaf.org

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CORN EXCHANGE
WITNEY

Dear Performers, Parents, Teachers, Directors and Supporters,

Welcome, and thank you for being part of the inaugural Oxfordshire Festival of Speech, Drama & Musical Theatre!

At WOXPFAF, we believe that everyone should have the opportunity to experience the joy, confidence and personal growth that the performing arts can inspire. Whether you are stepping onto a stage for the very first time or are an experienced performer, this festival has been created to provide a welcoming and encouraging environment in which to learn, develop and celebrate your achievements.

This festival is not about winning. It is about performance, participation and personal growth. It is about sharing your voice, telling stories, developing skills and challenging yourself in a supportive environment. Above all, it is about celebrating the talent that exists across Oxfordshire and bringing people together through a shared love of the performing arts.

Over the course of the festival, you will have opportunities to perform, receive constructive feedback from experienced adjudicators, participate in workshops, and connect with others who share your passion for speech, drama and musical theatre. We hope you leave not only with new skills and experiences, but also with new friendships, greater confidence and renewed inspiration.

Most importantly, we want every participant to feel welcome, respected and proud of their contribution. Every performer brings something unique, and it is that diversity of talent, experience and creativity that makes our performing arts community so special.

We invite you to explore the following syllabus, learn more about the classes on offer and find the opportunities that are right for you. If you have any questions or would like to get involved beyond performing, please get in touch. We look forward to welcoming you in November!

Warmest wishes,

The WOXPFAF Team



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL



Classes 2026

Classes are available for children, young people and adults, providing opportunities for performers of all experience levels to develop their skills, receive constructive feedback and share their work in a supportive and welcoming environment.

Participants may enter one or multiple classes, and all performances are adjudicated with a focus on personal development, confidence, creativity and communication.

The following is our provisional timetable, subject to change depending on interest in specific classes.

Saturday 21 st November	
09:00 - 09:30	Registration and Welcome
09:30 - 12:20	Junior & Intermediate Individual Performance - R1 Junior Recital - R2 Intermediate Recital Morning break - A1 Junior Solo Acting - A2 Intermediate Solo Acting
12:20 - 13:20	Lunch
13:20 - 16:10	Senior & Adult Individual Performance - R3 Senior Recital - R4 Adult Recital Afternoon break - A3 Senior Solo Acting - A4 Adult Solo Acting
16:10 - 16:30	Break
16:30 - 18:30	Junior & Intermediate Collaborative Performance - D1 Junior Duologue - D2 Intermediate Duologue - GS1 Junior Group Scene - GS2 Intermediate Group Scene
19:30	Community Showcase

Sunday 22 nd November	
09:00 - 12:00	Junior & Intermediate Musical Theatre - MT1 Junior Solo - MT2 Intermediate Solo Morning break - MT5 Junior Duet/Ensemble - MT6 Intermediate Duet/Ensemble
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
13:00 - 16:00	Senior & Adult Musical Theatre - MT3 Senior Solo - MT4 Adult Solo Afternoon break - MT7 Senior Duet/Ensemble - MT8 Adult Duet/Ensemble
16:00 - 16:30	Break
16:30 - 18:30	Senior & Adult Collaborative Performance - D3 Senior Duologue - D4 Adult Duologue - GS3 Senior Group Scene - GS4 Adult Group Scene
19:00 - 20:30	Festival Farewell with awards, and performances by festival participants invited by our adjudicator or committee.

Understanding the Age Categories

To help participants perform alongside others at a similar stage of development, Festival classes are divided into age categories. Age is determined as of 1 September 2026. For duologues, ensembles and group performances, entries should be made in the age category of the oldest performer.

Category	Typical Focus
Junior (7-10)	Building confidence, communication skills, creativity and enjoyment of performance.
Intermediate (11-14)	Developing characterisation, storytelling, audience engagement and performance technique.
Senior (15-18)	Exploring interpretation, dramatic intention, character development and performance quality.
Adult (19+)	Developing interpretation, communication, creativity and performance skills at any level of experience.

A Note for New Performers

The focus statements throughout the syllabus are intended as helpful guidance rather than minimum requirements. They highlight some of the skills participants may wish to explore and develop, but performers do not need to demonstrate every element to take part.

The Festival warmly welcomes participants of all experience levels, including those performing for the first time. Beginners should not feel discouraged from entering a class if they are still developing these skills.

The purpose of the adjudicator's feedback is to support learning, confidence and personal development. Participants are encouraged to use the feedback they receive as a guide to help them continue their performance journey and develop their skills over time.

Festival Adjudication

At the Oxfordshire Festival of Speech, Drama & Musical Theatre, performance is celebrated as an opportunity to learn, grow and share creativity in a supportive environment. As a non-competitive festival, the emphasis is on participation, personal development, confidence-building and constructive feedback rather than competition between performers.

Throughout the Festival, participants will receive written and/or verbal feedback from our adjudicator, recognising strengths, celebrating achievement and offering guidance for future development. Feedback is intended to encourage performers at every stage of their journey, from those taking part for the first time to experienced performers.

Participants may receive a numerical score, grading or assessment category to help them understand their current level of achievement and track their progress over time. These assessments are provided for educational and developmental purposes only and are not used to determine winners and losers. Every participant will receive a certificate of participation.

When providing feedback, the adjudicator may consider:

- Communication
- Interpretation
- Creativity
- Characterisation
- Performance technique
- Musicality (where applicable)
- Audience engagement
- Confidence and personal development

The Festival hopes that every participant leaves feeling encouraged, inspired and proud of their performance, with practical feedback to support their future development.

General Class Requirements

Own Choice Material

All own-choice performances must:

- Be appropriate for the performer's age and experience level.
- Be suitable for a family audience.
- Respect cultural traditions, identities and lived experiences.
- Approach sensitive subjects thoughtfully and respectfully.
- Comply with Festival copyright requirements.

Copies of all own-choice recital, acting and dramatic material must be provided for the adjudicator.

Costumes and Props

- Simple costumes, costume accessories and hand props may be used to support storytelling, characterisation and interpretation.
- The use of costumes and props is entirely optional and participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged by choosing to use, or not use, them. Adjudication focuses on the quality of the performance rather than technical presentation.
- Large scenery, staging, furniture (other than Festival-provided chairs) and complex set changes are not permitted.

Performance Space

- A limited number of standard chairs will be available for use in the performance space.
- Where chairs are required, performers are responsible for ensuring they are placed and removed promptly and safely. This may be done by the performer or by an accompanying parent, carer, teacher, group leader or other responsible adult.

Group Entries

- Where age groups are mixed, duologues, ensembles and group performances should be entered in the age category of the oldest performer.
- All performers must have a meaningful contribution to the performance.

Accompaniment

- Where musical accompaniment is permitted, performers may use either:
 - Live accompaniment
 - Backing tracks
- The Festival does not provide an official accompanist.
- Entrants wishing to use a live accompanist must arrange and pay for them independently and must notify the Festival when submitting their entry so that appropriate planning and scheduling can take place.
- Participants using backing tracks are responsible for providing the track and any information regarding playing (e.g. on cue) in advance of the festival.

Individual Entry

- Individuals may only enter each class once, unless in different group entries. Excessive group entries will be reviewed before being accepted.

Recital Classes

Recital classes give performers the opportunity to explore and communicate a text through spoken performance. Performers are invited to present a memorised recital of their choice.

This may be:

- A poem
- A prose extract
- A Shakespeare speech
- A verse selection
- A spoken word performance

The focus is on communication, interpretation and engagement with the audience.

A copy of own-choice material must be provided for the adjudicator.

Set texts may be offered as an alternative option and will be published separately.

	Class	Focus for Participants	Time Limit	Fee
R1	Junior Recital (Ages 7–10)	The performance should demonstrate clear communication, confidence and engagement with the audience.	3 minutes	£8
R2	Intermediate Recital (Ages 11–14)	The performance should demonstrate effective communication, an understanding of the chosen text and engagement with the audience.	4 minutes	£9
R3	Senior Recital (Ages 15–18)	The performance should demonstrate thoughtful interpretation, confident delivery and effective communication of the meaning and mood of the chosen text.	5 minutes	£9
R4	Adult Recital (19+)	The performance should demonstrate clear interpretation, strong communication and engagement with the audience through a considered and convincing presentation of the chosen text.	5 minutes	£10

Solo Acting Classes

An own-choice solo performance from a published play, novel adaptation, examination board syllabus or other published dramatic source.

Simple costume items and hand props may be used where they support the performance, but they are not required and will not influence the adjudication.

A copy of the script must be provided for the adjudicator.

	Class	Focus for Participants	Time Limit	Fee
A1	Junior Solo Acting (Ages 7–10)	The performance should demonstrate confident communication, clear storytelling and engagement with the audience.	4 minutes	£8
A2	Intermediate Solo Acting (Ages 11–14)	The performance should demonstrate developing characterisation, effective vocal and physical expression, and engagement with the audience.	5 minutes	£9
A3	Senior Solo Acting (Ages 15–18)	The performance should demonstrate convincing characterisation, a clear understanding of the scene and strong communication with the audience.	6 minutes	£9
A4	Adult Solo Acting (19+)	The performance should demonstrate convincing characterisation, clear storytelling, engagement with the audience and a strong understanding of dramatic intention.	6 minutes	£10

Duologue Classes

An own-choice scene for two performers drawn from a published dramatic source.

Both performers should have a meaningful contribution to the performance.

Simple costume items and hand props may be used where they support the performance, but they are not required and will not influence the adjudication.

A copy of the script must be provided for the adjudicator.

	Class	Focus for Participants	Time Limit	Fee
D1	Junior Duologue (Ages 7–10)	The performance should demonstrate confident communication, positive interaction between the performers and clear storytelling.	5 minutes	£12
D2	Intermediate Duologue (Ages 11–14)	The performance should demonstrate effective characterisation, developing relationships between characters and engagement with the audience.	6 minutes	£12
D3	Senior Duologue (Ages 15–18)	The performance should demonstrate believable character relationships, a clear understanding of dramatic intention and strong communication between performers.	7 minutes	£14
D4	Adult Duologue (19+)	The performance should demonstrate convincing characterisation, effective interaction between performers and a strong understanding of the scene and its dramatic purpose.	7 minutes	£15

Group Scene Classes

A scene for 3–6 performers from a published dramatic source.

Performances should demonstrate effective ensemble working, storytelling, characterisation, use of performance space and communication with the audience.

Every performer must have a meaningful role within the performance.

Simple costumes and hand props may be used where they support storytelling and characterisation. Their use is optional and will not influence the adjudicator's assessment.

	Class	Focus for Participants	Time Limit	Fee
GS1	Junior Group Scene (Ages 7–10)	The performance should demonstrate confident communication, clear storytelling, effective teamwork and engagement with the audience.	8 minutes	£18
GS2	Intermediate Group Scene (Ages 11–14)	The performance should demonstrate developing characterisation, effective ensemble working, clear storytelling and engagement with the audience.	10 minutes	£18
GS3	Senior Group Scene (Ages 15–18)	The performance should demonstrate convincing characterisation, effective ensemble interaction, clear storytelling and a strong understanding of the scene and its dramatic purpose.	12 minutes	£20
GS4	Adult Group Scene (19+)	The performance should demonstrate convincing characterisation, effective ensemble communication, clear storytelling and a thoughtful interpretation of the dramatic material.	12 minutes	£20

Musical Theatre Solo

An own-choice song from a stage musical or musical film.

The emphasis is on storytelling through song, communication and performance rather than purely vocal technique.

Performers may use live accompaniment or backing track. See General Class Requirements.

The entrant is responsible for providing all accompaniment. Performers using a live accompanist must notify the Festival at the time of entry.

Costume items, rehearsal costumes and simple props may be used to support characterisation but are not required.

	Class	Focus for Participants	Time Limit	Fee
MT1	Junior Musical Theatre Solo (Ages 7–10)	The performance should demonstrate confident communication, clear storytelling through song and engagement with the audience.	4 minutes	£8
MT2	Intermediate Musical Theatre Solo (Ages 11–14)	The performance should demonstrate effective characterisation, communication of the lyrics and engagement with the audience.	5 minutes	£9
MT3	Senior Musical Theatre Solo (Ages 15–18)	The performance should demonstrate convincing characterisation, clear storytelling through song and a strong understanding of the character and context.	5 minutes	£9
MT4	Adult Musical Theatre Solo (19+)	The performance should demonstrate convincing characterisation, effective communication of the lyrics and a strong connection between song, character and audience.	5 minutes	£10

Musical Theatre Duet and Ensemble

An own-choice musical theatre performance for 2–6 performers taken from a stage musical or musical film. Performances may be presented in concert style or staged format. All performers should have a meaningful contribution to the performance.

The emphasis is on storytelling through song, communication and performance rather than purely vocal technique.

Performers may use live accompaniment or backing track. See General Class Requirements.

Costume items, rehearsal costumes and simple props may be used to support characterisation but are not required.

	Class	Focus for Participants	Time Limit	Fee
MT5	Junior Musical Theatre Duet/Ensemble (Ages 7–10)	The performance should demonstrate confident communication, clear storytelling through song, effective teamwork and engagement with the audience.	5 minutes	£12
MT6	Intermediate Musical Theatre Duet/Ensemble (Ages 11–14)	The performance should demonstrate developing characterisation, effective ensemble working, clear communication of the lyrics and engagement with the audience.	6 minutes	£12
MT7	Senior Musical Theatre Duet/Ensemble (Ages 15–18)	The performance should demonstrate convincing characterisation, effective ensemble communication, clear storytelling through song and a strong understanding of the characters and their relationships.	7 minutes	£15
MT8	Adult Musical Theatre Duet/Ensemble (19+)	The performance should demonstrate convincing characterisation, effective ensemble communication, strong musical storytelling and a clear connection between song, character and audience.	8 minutes	£15

What Next?

Our online application platform will be launching very soon. Through the platform, you will be able to enter the classes you wish to take part in, upload any required scripts or backing tracks, and view your personalised timetable for the festival weekend.

Applications will remain open until **1 November**.

We will also be announcing our exciting programme of workshops in the coming weeks. Expect practical, skills-focused sessions exploring audition technique, improvisation, an introduction to Shakespeare and more, with something to suit performers of all ages and experience levels. These will be running throughout the weekend, alongside our adjudicated classes. If there is a workshop you are keen to participate in, but it would clash with a performance class – please reach out to us and we will do our best to schedule things so you can do both.

Awards

While the Oxfordshire Festival of Speech, Drama & Musical Theatre is a non-competitive festival, a range of awards will be presented at the Festival Farewell to recognise and celebrate the many qualities that contribute to a positive performing arts community.

These awards are not solely focused on performance ability or experience. We also want to recognise qualities such as perseverance, creativity, kindness, community spirit, personal growth, teamwork and a positive attitude towards learning.

A full list of awards, together with their criteria, will be included in the Festival Programme.

If you or your organisation would be interested in sponsoring an award, whether in recognition of a particular skill, value or achievement, or in memory of a loved one, we would be delighted to hear from you and discuss the possibilities.

Community Showcase

The Community Showcase brings together performers and performing arts groups from across Oxfordshire for an evening of entertainment, celebration and connection, showcasing the talent, creativity and diversity of our local performing arts community.

Festival Farewell

To conclude the festival, the adjudicator and WOXPAP Trustees will invite a selection of performers to take part in the Festival Farewell Performance on Sunday evening. Invitations will not be based solely on performance standard, but will also recognise qualities such as creativity, personal growth, commitment, community spirit, positive attitude and performances that have made a particular impact during the festival.

Inclusion

The Oxfordshire Festival of Speech, Drama & Musical Theatre is designed to be inclusive at its heart. We don't want financial or accessibility concerns to be a barrier for anyone who wants to participate. Please see below for information on how we can support you with joining us for this festival.

Bursaries

Thanks to the generosity of Witney Town Council and other supporters, we are pleased to offer fee waivers for individuals who may otherwise be unable to participate due to financial circumstances.

To apply, please complete the bursary application form on our website by 1 November. We do not require evidence of financial need, although you are welcome to provide any additional information you feel may be helpful.

Applications will be reviewed by the Trustees after the closing date, although demand will be monitored throughout the booking period. While we cannot guarantee support for every class or workshop requested, we will seek to distribute available funding fairly and maximise participation across the festival. For example, it may be possible to support attendance at two classes and two workshops rather than four classes and four workshops.

If you have any questions about the bursary scheme, or would like to contribute to our bursary fund, please do get in touch.

There will also be a number of 'pay what you can' tickets available for the Community Showcase

Accessibility

The Oxfordshire Festival of Speech, Drama & Musical Theatre is open to participants of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, and we are committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone. We believe that every person should have the opportunity to participate, develop their skills and enjoy the benefits of the performing arts. If there is anything we can do to support your participation, whether that relates to accessibility requirements, adjustments to the festival environment, communication needs or any other individual circumstances, please get in touch. We will work with you wherever possible to understand your needs and identify ways to ensure you can take part fully and confidently in the festival.

GET INVOLVED

There are many ways to be part of the **Oxfordshire Festival of Speech, Drama & Musical Theatre**, and every contribution helps support an inclusive, welcoming event.

You could:

- **Perform and join our audience**
- **Volunteer your time as part of the festival team**
- **Make a one-off or regular donation**
- **Help by sharing the festival with others**
- **Get in touch if you have skills, ideas, or support to offer**

Whether you perform, volunteer, donate, or simply cheer someone on as part of the audience, you're helping create a space where creativity, confidence, and community can grow.

Join us in creating an unforgettable celebration of creativity, inclusion, and community.

To take the next step, visit our website or email us — we'd love to hear from you and help you get involved!



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