manACTco

manchester actors company



For the 2025/2026 Academic Year we are touring With FOUR CLASSIC SHOWS for Primary Schools

TOURING 29th SEPTEMBER 2025 TO 21st NOVEMBER 2025: 'POETRY IN MOTION

The Poetry you teach in school comes alive in your school hall where Poetry Slam meets all-action physical theatre to create a fast-moving performance, filled with fantastic sounds and colour, breathing life into these fantastic word-pictures, Created especially for all children aged 3 to 11, our professional actors will transform the words into a fun-filled, dynamic display of immersive physical theatre, celebrating all kinds of poetry, and showing our young audiences just how much fun poetry can be.

TOURING 24th NOVEMBER 2025 TO 18th DECEMBER 2025:

'A CHRISTMAS CAROL' for Keystage 2

Charles Dickens' classic ghostly gothic tale of Christmas is vividly brought to life, with the tale of a bitter and despised old miser, Scrooge, and his transformation into a gentler, kindlier man after visitations by four ghosts on the night before Christmas.

TOURING 20th JANUARY 2026 TO 1st MAY 2026:

'MACBETH' for Keystage 2

William Shakespeare's dazzling action-and-adventure tragedy is dramatically brought to life, as we perform this tale of ambition, and the evils we will go to in order to get what we want.

TOURING 24th FEBRUARY 2026 TO 1st MAY 2026: 'ROMEO & JULIET' for Keystage 2

 William Shakespeare's dazzling action-and-adventure tragedy is dramatically brought to life, as we perform this tale of ambition, and the evils we will go to in order to get what we want.

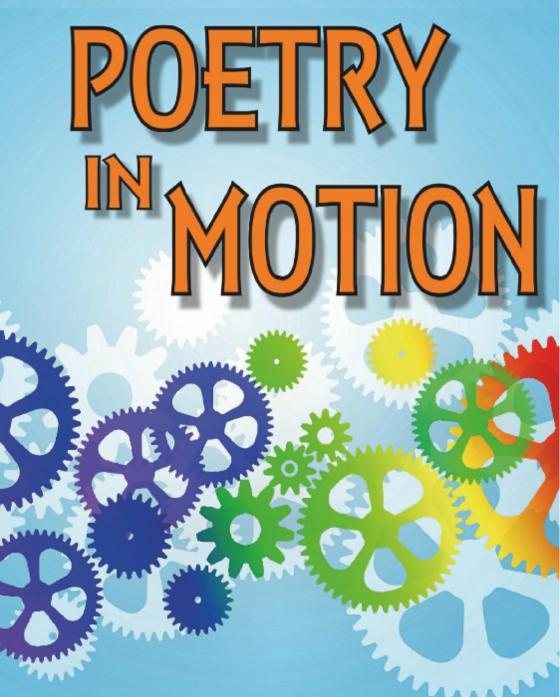
KEY INFORMATION ABOUT OUR PRESENTATION IN SCHOOLS

With 'POETRY IN MOTION' we present a series of well-known poems that are generally taught to both Keystage 1 and Keystage 2 pupils in schools, and the poems are presented in their entirity, with our actors giving voice, context and characterisation to the words, bringing them alive for the audience to enjoy. Each presentation lasts 60 minutes of non-stop poetry, and a fun-filled, colourful, dynamic display of immersive physical theatre The play is presented IN THE ROUND, with the action taking place in the middle, whilst the children sit in a circle around the performance area. This is extremely popular both teachers and children alike.

For our Keystage 2 Plays ('A Christmas Carol', 'Macbeth' and 'Romeo & Juliet'), we present a concise abridged version of the entire text of each book or play. concentrating on key scenes, speeches and incidents within each of the stories, and flowing seamlessly as a complete play in itself, and is not a series of individual, unconnected scenes. The performance lasts 60 minutes, accurately capturing the drama and suspense of the text, and lifting the words off the page, enlivening the story, giving a voice to the characters, adding context to the scenes, and in turn creating a strong, lasting impact with the audience. This is a live theatre event in your school that will bring the story and characters vividly to life. Following the performance we have a Q&A workshop, lasting a maximum of 30 minutes, which is a face-to-face interactive discussion, guided by our actors, where the young audience can ask any questions they may have to better understand the play. The session includes the opportunity to 'hot-seat' the main CHARACTERS, and is a unique opportunity for pupils to examine their contrasting personalities and motives, and help to explain/expand/explore the text farther. This session can also allow the audience to actively discuss the play with the actors and to examine the impact and meaning of different ways of performing and staging drama, and also understand the choices made for our presentation. These presentations are staged front-on to the audience, and we will perform in the school hall.

We use an ensemble of highly skilled professional actors, and we are well known for our energetic, well-acted, vigorous physical theatre performances where close attention is paid to the language, bringing each performance alive as a dynamic, well-acted, well-spoken display of theatre. We have an outstanding reputation for clear and accessible interpretations of these texts, in which the vitality of the words is complemented by bold staging and strong characterisation to bring the play alive for our young audiences. We do not need the school to provide any special sound or lighting equipment, and we will bring everything we need with us.

TOURING 29th SEPTEMBER 2025 TO 21st NOVEMBER 2025



WATCH AS POETRY COMES ALIVE

'POETRY IN MOTION'

TOURING FROM 29th SEPTEMBER 2025 TO 21st NOVEMBER 2025

Join our three performers as they embark on a non-stop quest for poetry, and they encounter some life-changing poems on their journey.... Encountering a non-stop stream of vivid, colourful poems to inspire your children's imagination, and a seemingly never-ending stream of colourful characters appearing out of the poetry... there will be famous poems that everyone will recognise straight away, and some brand-new poems that your audience may not have heard before. Although 'POETRY IN MOTION' addresses the range of poetry outlined in the National Literacy Strategy, we've taken things farther by delving deeper for our resource material - expanding to include a full range of subjects. Some are there simply for the sheer pleasure in the sound of the words; others are more puzzling and intriguing...... so, in 'POETRY IN MOTION' you will find fragments of classic poems rubbing shoulders with well-known school verses: a collision of the simple and the sophisticated.

A diverse collection of writers has been assembled, to create an abstract collage of words. The overall effect, we hope, should be that of watching a dynamic piece of physical theatre, whilst at the same time listening to what seems to be one long, seamless poem. (Can you spot Shakespeare, Edward Lear, Benjamin Zephaniah, Spike Milligan, John Foster, Alfred Noves, A.A. Milne, Dylan Thomas, or other popular rhymes in there?) The fabulous words and the colourful characters within them will turn our visit into a unique theatrical event that will delight your children: a vibrant, colourful, all-action show that is filled with poetry; with drama, comedy and audience participation. The performance conveys the happiness, sadness, fun and MAGIC of poetry, and brings the words to LIFE! With this show we have created a visually-stunning, celebration of theatre for schools: a fabulous excuse to meet some great characters and enjoy some dramatic, humorous and inventive poetry - everything held together by our performers. Especially created for Primary Schools, each performance has a guarantee of great fun, thrills and adventure.

This is a well-acted, well-spoken theatre, with great poetry, memorable characters, great costumes, and bursting with sound and colour... an hour-long theatrical extravaganza that primary school children will love to experience first-hand...AND... carefully constructed to provide a valuable resource for many follow-on activities in the classroom. This show lasts long in your children's memory, and is the perfect springboard for Keystage 1 and Keystage 2 classwork, concentrating on the imaginative use of language and vocabulary. Guaranteed to entertain, inform, inspire and excite our young audiences.

TOURING 24th NOVEMBER 2025 TO 18th DECEMBER 2025

A WORKING GUIDE TO

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

for Keystage 2
By Charles Dickens

'A CHRISTMAS CAROL' for Keystage 2

- Charles Dickens

TOURING 24th NOVEMBER 2025 TO 18th DECEMBER 2025

"....no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunity misused!"

In November we start touring with our lively Keystage 2 presentation of Charles Dickens' most famous novella 'A CHRISTMAS CAROL' which will vividly bring to life the stream of larger-than-life characters, ghostly apparitions, and incredible incidents that makes this atmospheric ghostly tale at Christmas so compelling to watch, and such a wonderful theatrical experience for your students to enjoy....

It's a bitterly cold, bleak, Christmas Eve and the old miser Scrooge is in his counting house, hard at work, untouched by the Christmas spirit out on the streets. Scrooge hates Christmas ('Humbug!' He calls it). "Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner!" It was observed. Condemned forever to be seen as hard and sharp as flint.... Yet here starts the story of this bitter old miser and his spiritual transformation into a gentler, kindlier man after visitations on the night before Christmas of the ghost of his former business partner, Jacob Marley, and also the ghosts of Christmases Past, Present and Yet to Come. There is high drama, great sadness, despair and regret, but also some comedy, warmth and, ultimately, great joy, as Scrooge endures his epiphany. The parade of ghosts brutally show him the error of his ways, just in time for his joyous redemption on Christmas Day.

For our latest production of 'A Christmas Carol for Keystage 2' we have created a clear, condensed working guide to Dickens' famous novella, aimed particularly at Keystage 2 pupils. This is an abridged verson of the entire story, and includes all of the key scenes, characters, confrontations and original dialogue, and flows seamlessly, creating a strong, lasting impact with the audience. Beautifully drawn Dickensian characters are brought vividly to life by our professional actors, and this fantastic ghostly tale unfolds out of the gothic gloom in a way that will delight everyone who watches. The plot and characters are lifted off the page, and so too the themes of the need for charity, the Christian concept of redemption, and the requirement for personal moral conscience.

Our performance is tight and compelling, packing quite an emotional punch for the young audience: accurately capturing the tense drama of Dickens' original novella, which was created primarily to shock the public into positive action against Want and Ignorance.



A WORKING GUIDE TO

MACBeth

FOR KEYSTAGE 2

by William Shakespeare



'MACBETH' for Keystage 2

- William Shakespeare

TOURING FROM 20th JANUARY 2026 TO 1st MAY 2026

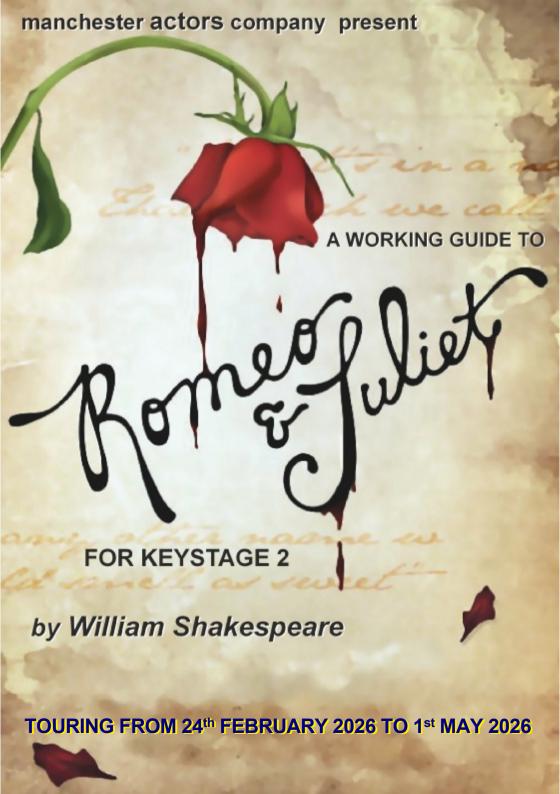
".....Something wicked this way comes...."

In early January 2026 we start touring with a brand new, sparkling Keystage 2 presentation of Shakespeare's dazzling action-and-adventure tragedy **MACBETH**, which has universal themes that can be understood in any culture and time: a bloodthirsty tale of ambition, and the evils we will go to in order to get what we want.....

MACBETH is Shakespeare's shortest, darkest, and bloodiest tragedy, and tells the story of an heroic Scottish general who receives a prophecy from a trio of witches that one day he will become King of Scotland. Consumed by ambition and spurred to action by his wife, Macbeth murders King Duncan and takes the throne for himself.... But his reign is soon racked with guilt and paranoia, and he becomes a tyrannical ruler as he is forced to commit more and more murders to protect himself from enmity and suspicion. The bloodbath swiftly takes Macbeth and Lady Macbeth into realms of arrogance, madness, and death. The play dramatises the corroding psychological and political effects produced when its protagonist chooses evil as the way to fulfil his ambition for power. He commits regicide to become king and then furthers his moral descent with a reign of murderous terror to stay in power, eventually plunging the country into civil war. In the end he loses everything that gives meaning and purpose to his life, before losing life itself.

For this production we have created a clear, condensed, working guide to Shakespeare's dark tragedy. This is an abridged version of the entire story, concentrating on the key scenes, characters and confrontations, and flows seamlessly. Brace yourself for a spellbinding performance filled with witchcraft, ghostly apparitions, dark despair, and breathtaking sword fights. All the key scenes of this magnificent tale are included in our performance, and this detailed dramatic overview of the play will create a strong, lasting impact with Keystage 2 pupils; lifting the story off the pages, and bringing vividly to life the plot, the characters, and the themes of the corrupting power of unchecked ambition, use of the supernatural and superstition, and the guilt that sits like a permanent stain on the consciences of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, one that hounds them to their graves.

Shakespeare's plays demand to be seen and heard, and felt, and our production of 'MACBETH' will allow Keystage 2 pupils to have a much greater understanding of this bloodthirsty tale of ambition and murder.



'ROMEO & JULIET' for Keystage 2

- William Shakespeare

TOURING FROM 24th FEBRUARY 2026 TO 1st MAY 2026

".....These violent delights have violent ends...."

In late February 2026 we are returning with our latest presentation of William Shakespeare's enduring classic tragic romance 'ROMEO AND JULIET', which contains some of Shakespeare's most beautiful and lyrical love poetry, and some of his best-loved characters. The romance is played out against a background of gang-warfare and street-fighting as the bitter long feud between the Montague and Capulet families disrupts the city of Verona, and causes tragic results for the young lovers, Romeo and Juliet. Revenge, love, and a secret marriage force the young star-crossed lovers to grow up quickly, and fate causes them to commit suicide in despair.

ROMEO AND JULIET is probably Shakespeare's most famous play, set against a long history of family feuding between the Montagues and the Capulets, and when Romeo Montague falls hopelessly in love with Juliet Capulet, from the very beginning fate has decided that the two of them are doomed.... The couple have a feeling that things will go badly for them: Romeo thinks something is 'hanging in the stars', whilst Juliet says a 'faint cold fear thrills through my veins'. They believe their love can conquer their families' hate, but it is proven to be too fragile, and because of their ill-fated star-crossed love a series of events, both comic and tragic, unfolds in a very short space of time as true love leads to tragedy. The play explores love either as spiritual friendships, or the romantic love between the main characters, but entwined within the love is death, conflict, loyalty, and fate.... for fate has badly treated the lovers and their brief affair.

For our presentation we focus throughout on the two main protagonists, concentrating on key scenes, characters and confrontations, and flows seamlessly. This dramatic overview of the text will create a strong, lasting impact with Keystage 2 pupils; and brings the plot, the characters, and the themes of love, fate and death vividly to life. The presentation packs an emotional punch: accurately capturing the tense drama of the play, which explores the effect that fate plays in all our lives. Our version will have a strong and lasting impact on anyone reading this great play, and will bring the text vividly to life.

After the performance, the young audience will have the opportunity to 'hotseat' any of the fascinating characters in our performance, and ask any questions they may have to expand their awareness of the motives of the characters, and to have a greater insight into this classic story of intense, ill-fated teenage love.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who are these shows suitable for?

Our Poetry Show - 'Poetry In Motion- is suitable for all pupils at Keystage 1 and Keystage 2, whereas the Keystage 2 presentations are devised specifically for Keystage 2 pupils only, and are suitable for all school children in years 3,4,5 & 6.

Do you have a limit to the numbers in the audience?

We have an upper limit of 300 to the number in the audience for the Poetry Show, whereas for the Keystage 2 shows we have an upper limit of 240. Experience has shown that with any more in attendance then the presentation loses its impact for everyone watching.

What space and equipment do you need the school to provide?

We will perform in the School Hall. The Poetry show is presented in-the-round, with the audience sat in a large circle, with the performance taking place in the middle. The performers will help to arrange the audience at the time.

The Keystage 2 performances are presented front-on to the audience. If there is a stage available then we will use that as a preference; otherwise we will perform on the floor and we will arrange the audience to be sat on 3 sides of the performance area.

We DO NOT need the school to provide any special lighting or sound equipment, and we will bring everything we need with us. There is no set nor lighting equipment to erect. Set up time is approx. 25 minutes and, for safeguarding reasons, we would need the space to ourselves for this preparation.

What are the timings of our visit?

We can perform either a morning or afternoon session. Our morning POETRY shows usually start at 9.30am (finishing at 10.30am), whereas our Keystage 2 presentations usually start at 9.15am (finishing at 10.45am). Our afternoon POETRY shows usually start at 1.45pm (finishing at 2.45pm), whereas our Keystage 2 presentations usually start at 1.30pm (finishing at 3.00pm). Our actors will aim to arrive with you no later than 35 minutes before the agreed start time, leaving them time to sign in at reception and then set up ready for the presentations.Once completed, our group will take an average of 15 minutes to pack up and leave the premises.

What can we expect from the presentation?

For the POETRY SHOW, the performance last 60 minutes, and is packed with well-known poems, most of which are usually taught in Primary Schools to Keystage 1 and Keystage 2 pupils. The performance will bring these poems ALIVE for the audience, giving voice, context and characteriation to the poems, and making them more accessible for the audience.

The KEYSTAGE 2 presentations ('A Christmas Carol'; 'Macbeth' and 'Romeo & Juliet') lasts a maximum of **90 MINUTES**. The performance lasts (approx) **60 MINUTES**, and is a concise, abridged version of the entire story, performed by our ensemble of talented, professional actors. Concentrating on key scenes, characters and confrontations, and flows seamlessly, Our detailed dramatic overview of these compelling stories is constructed to create a strong, lasting impact with pupils, to bring the plot, characters, and themes vividly to life. We are well known for our energetic, vigorous, physical theatre performances where close attention is paid to the language, bringing the performance ALIVE and will have a lasting impact on anyone studying these stories, and will vividly bring the text to life, lifting the words from the page, and giving a voice and character to the sparkling dialogue. Immediately following the performance there is an **INTERACTIVE Q&A SESSION** (lasting a maximum of 30 minutes). The whole presentation will last a full 90 minutes.

What can we expect from the Q&A session?

The Q&A session is a discussion guided by our actors, where the audience are encouraged to talk directly to the fascinating CHARACTERS in the play by 'hot-seating' them, and asking any questions they may have. This is a unique opportunity for pupils to examine the characters' personalities and motives, and helps to explain/expand and explore the text much farther. This allows the audience to better understand the motives of the main characters, and to clarify any parts of the story that they may otherwise not fully understand.

Are your actors all DBS checked?

Yes, they are all recently DBS checked to ENHANCED LEVEL, and are instructed to have their DBS certificates and some form of Photo-ID with them for inspection when they visit you.

Do you provide resource material to accompany the presentation?

In advance of our visit to you we will Email you with access to a 'PERFORMANCE INFORMATION PACK' for you to print. This pack maximises the impact of our visit: containing interesting background information to the play; a full list of the scenes included in our performance on the day; individual character profiles; a detailed analysis of the story; and some suggested follow-on activities for teachers and pupils to use after our visit has ended.

How does this presentation help our audiences?

A live performance of a printed text has a great impact on learning, and stays in the pupils' minds long afterwards. Our shows concisely lift the words off the written page and bring the text vividly to life, giving voice, context, substance and character to the words, making it easier to understand the plot, characters, themes, language and style of the stories, whilst the Q&A workshop after the performance allows the audience the chance to unlock the story even more by quizzing the characters and examining their motives.

CONTACT US

We are taking bookings NOW for ALL of our 2025/2026 presentations. If you would like to make a booking, receive a price quote, or get more information about any of our shows, then please contact us as early as you can, before all the dates have been taken.

EMAIL us on:

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OR

TELEPHONE us on:

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and speak to BRIAN

