2017 PRODUCTION HANDBOOK



2017 PRODUCTION CALENDAR

TERIVI 1		
Wednesday February 15	Cast Auditions – Session 1 (by signup only)	3.30pm – 7pm
Thursday February 16	Cast Auditions – Session 2 (by signup only)	3.30pm – 7pm
Friday February 17	Dance Call	3.30pm – 5.30pm
Monday Feb 20	Advance Dance - by request	Lunch
Thursday February 23	Callback Auditions – by request	7pm – 9pm
Friday February 24	Casting – Direction Team	ТВС
Wednesday March 1	${\sf Cast\ published-\underline{www.rscproduction.com.au}}$	5pm
	Applications for non-cast positions open	5pm

^{**}The following rehearsals are scheduled to get a head start on some of the more time-consuming aspects of the production. Please note: Not all cast will be required for the Term 1 rehearsals**

Monday March 6	Specialist Dance Rehearsal 1	Lunch
Tuesday March 7	Ensemble Singing Session 1	3.30pm – 5.30pm
Monday March 13	LABOUR DAY	
Tuesday March 14	Ensemble Singing Session 2	3.30pm – 5.30pm
Monday March 20	Specialist Dance Rehearsal 2	Lunch

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Tuesday March 21	Ensemble Singing Session 3	3.30pm – 5.30pm
Monday March 27	Specialist Dance Rehearsal	Lunch
Tuesday March 28	Ensemble Singing Session 4	3.30pm – 5.30pm
TEDM 2		
TERM 2	Rehearsal 1 – Full Cast	2.200 00 (.200 00
Tuesday April 18		3.30pm – 6.30pm
To a sile of Appell 25	Full Cast Meeting and Parent Info Night	7pm – 7.45pm
Tuesday April 25	ANZAC DAY - NO REHEARSAL	
Monday May 1	Specialist Dance Rehearsal	Lunch
Tuesday May 2	Rehearsal 3	3.30pm – 6.30pm
Monday May 8	Specialist Dance Rehearsal	Lunch
Tuesday May 9	Rehearsal 4	3.30pm – 6.30pm
Monday May 15	Specialist Dance Rehearsal	Lunch
Tuesday May 16	Rehearsal 5	3.30pm – 6.30pm
Monday May 22	Specialist Dance Rehearsal	Lunch
Tuesday May 23	Rehearsal 6	3.30pm – 6.30pm
Monday May 29	Specialist Dance Rehearsal	Lunch
Tuesday May 30	Rehearsal 7	3.30pm – 6.30pm
Monday June 7	Specialist Dance Rehearsal	Lunch
Tuesday June 6	Rehearsal 8	3.30pm – 6.30pm
Monday June 12	QUEENS BIRTHDAY HOLIDAY	
Tuesday June 13	Rehearsal 9	3.30pm – 6.30pm
Monday June 19	Specialist Dance Rehearsal	Lunch
Tuesday June 20	Rehearsal 10	3.30pm – 6.30pm
Monday June 26	Specialist Dance Rehearsal	Lunch
Tuesday June 27	Rehearsal 11 and Sitzprobe	3.30pm – 9pm
TERM 3		
Wednesday July 19 –	Production Camp	12pm –
Friday July 21	Mt Evelyn Recreation Camp	1.30pm
Tuesday July 25	Stage Rehearsal	3.30pm – 6.30pm
Friday July 28	Stage Rehearsal	8.50am – 3.15pm
Tuesday August 1	Stage Rehearsal	3.30pm – 9.00pm
All cast will be requ	uired for an agreed 20 minute costuming call at some stag	e over this weekend.
Saturday August 5	Technical Bump-in	As required
	Costume Working Bee and Checking	
Sunday August 6	Tech Bump-in and Light Plotting (no cast)	As required

	Costume Working Bee and Checking	
Monday August 7	Tech and Stage Crew Rehearsal (no cast)	3.30pm – 9pm
Tuesday August 8	Full Dress Rehearsal 1 (5pm)	3.30pm – 9pm
Wednesday August 9	Full Dress Rehearsal 2 (7pm)	6pm – 10pm
Thursday August 10	Performance 1 – Preview Performance (12pm)	8.50am – 3.15pm
Friday August 11	Performance 2 – Opening Night (7.30pm)	5.30pm – 10.30pm
Saturday August 12	Performance 3 – Matinee (4.30pm)	2.30pm – 7.30pm
Sunday August 13	Performance 4 – Matinee (2.30pm)	12.30pm – 5.30pm
Wednesday August 16	Performance 5 (7.30pm)	5.30pm – 10.30pm
Thursday August 17	Performance 6 (7.30pm)	5.30pm – 10.30pm
Friday August 18	Performance 7 (7.30pm)	5.30pm – 10.30pm
Saturday August 19	Performance 8 (7.30pm) – Closing Night	5.30pm – 11pm
Monday August 21	Bump out (Years 7-10 only)	9am – 11.30am

After the sailing success of Anything Goes in 2016, Ringwood Secondary College is delighted to launch the long awaited and theatrically electrifying – **CHICAGO**.

This show has never been staged at Ringwood Secondary College and we are beyond exited to introduce students and the entire school community to this classic Broadway musical.

ABOUT THE SHOW

CHICAGO is an iconic Bob Fosse American musical with music and lyrics by classic writing partners John Kander and Fred Ebb who also wrote (Sweet Charity, Cabaret, Curtains, Kiss of the Spider Woman) Set in Prohibitionera Chicago, the musical is based on a 1926 play of the same name by reporter Maurine Dallas Watkins about actual criminals and crimes she reported on. The story is a satire on corruption in the administration of criminal justice and the concept of the "celebrity criminal."

The original Broadway production opened in and ran for 936 performances until 1977. Bob Fosse choreographed the original production, and his style is strongly identified with the show. Following a West End debut in 1979 *Chicago* was revived on Broadway in 1996, and a year later in the West End.

The Broadway revival holds the record as the longest-running musical revival and the longest-running American musical in Broadway history. The 2002 film version of the musical won the Academy Award for Best Picture and revamped the Movie-Musical genre.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

In the mid-1920s in Chicago, Velma Kelly is a vaudeville performer who murdered both her husband and her sister when she found them in bed together. Velma eventually is arrested for her crime. Meanwhile, we hear of chorus girl Roxie Hart's murder of her lover, nightclub regular Fred Casely.

Roxie convinces her husband Amos that the victim was a burglar, and Amos cheerfully takes the blame. However, when the police mention the deceased's name, Amos belatedly puts two and two together. The truth comes out, and Roxie is arrested. She is sent to the women's block in Cook County Jail, inhabited by Velma and other murderesses. The block is presided over by the corrupt Matron "Mama" Morton, whose system of mutual aid perfectly suits her clientele. She has helped Velma become the media's top murder-of-the-week and is acting as a booking agent for Velma's big return to vaudeville.

Velma is not happy to see Roxie, who is stealing not only her limelight but also her lawyer, Billy Flynn. Roxie tries to convince Amos to pay for Billy Flynn to be her lawyer. Billy takes Roxie's case and re-arranges her story for consumption by sympathetic tabloid columnist Mary Sunshine. Roxie's press conference turns into a ventriloquist act with Billy dictating a new version of the truth to the press while Roxie mouths the words.

Roxie becomes the new toast of Chicago as she proclaims quite boastfully while planning for her future career in vaudeville. As Roxie's fame grows, Velma's notoriety is left in the dust and in an "act of pure desperation", she tries to talk Roxie into recreating the sister act but Roxie turns her down, only to find her own headlines replaced by the latest sordid crime of passion. Separately, Roxie and Velma realize there is no one they can count on but themselves and the ever-resourceful Roxie decides that faking a pregnancy in prison would put her back on the front page.

A little shy on the arithmetic, Amos proudly claims paternity, but still nobody notices him. Velma tries to show Billy all the tricks she has planned for her trial but he is preoccupied with his more recent cases. Roxie has a heated argument with Billy and fires him. She is brought back down to earth when she learns that a fellow inmate has been executed.

Roxie's trial date arrives, and Billy calms her, telling her if she makes a show of it, she will be fine but when he passes all Velma's ideas on to Roxie, she uses each one, down to the rhinestone shoe buckles, to the dismay of Mama and Velma. As promised, Billy gets Roxie acquitted, but just as the verdict is announced, some even more sensational crime pulls the pack of press bloodhounds away, and Roxie's fleeting celebrity life is over. Billy leaves, done with the case. Amos stays with her, glad for his wife, but she then confesses that there really is no baby, making Amos finally leave her. Left in the dust, Roxie pulls herself up and extols the joys of life. She teams up with Velma in a new act in which they dance and perform "Hot Honey Rag" until they are joined by the entire company.

THE AUDITION PROCESS

General Audition and Dance Call

Auditions for cast are open to any student of Ringwood Secondary College in 2017.

The cast size is capped according to the dimensions of the stage, costuming and administration requirements. Therefore, the audition process is competitive. Auditions are conducted individually and in front of a panel of production team members as appointed by the director. Casting decisions are entirely at the discretion of the production team and are made in accordance with the specific requirements of the show.

Students must select and prepare one song from the list below. For each song, the sheet music and backing track excerpt to be used in the audition can be found on the AUDITIONS page of the production website sometime after **Tuesday February 7, 2016**. (Keep checking back – it might take a while to compile. A Facebook notification will go out when it is ready.)

Students will also be asked to complete a 'cold read' of some dialogue from the show. You will be asked to read the dialogue in an American accent.

Students must sign up for a general audition slot on one of the following afternoons:

- Wednesday February 15 between 3.30pm and 7pm
- Thursday February 16 between 3.30pm and 7pm

Signing up is an online process and must be completed through the website:

www.rscproduction.com.au/auditions.html

This link will be available for use from Tuesday February 7, 2017.

****In addition to the general audition, there will be a dance call on **Friday February 17 from 3.30pm until 5.30pm**. CHICAGO is a heavy dance show and all prospective leads, principal dancers and ensemble members MUST attend. Please note that anyone who attends the dance call only, without signing up for a main audition, cannot be considered for a position in the cast. You MUST attend a general audition on either the Wednesday or the Thursday.

Songs for females	Songs for males
All That Jazz – Velma Kelly	All I Care About Is Love – Billy Flynn
Roxie – Roxie Heart	Mr Cellophane – Amos Heart
When You're Good To Mamma – Mamma	A Little Bit Of Good – Mary Sunshine
Morton	

All candidates will be considered for all roles, irrespective of their song choices at auditions. However, it would make sense to choose a song that gives an indication of your desired role.

Callback Auditions

Following the general auditions, some students will be invited to a subsequent callback audition on **Thursday February 23**. This session will run from **7pm until 9pm**. As always, no inference about casting decisions should be drawn from whether or not students are invited to this audition.

Additionally there will be an 'Advance Dance Callback' on **Monday February 20** at Lunchtime. This will be organized by request only.

Cast Announcement

The cast for 2017's production of **CHICAGO** will be published on the website at 5pm on **Wednesday March 1st**. Those who auditioned unsuccessfully will be afforded priority in joining other areas of the show. We may choose to double cast some principal roles, but this should not be taken as a given.

CASTING REQUIREMENTS – CHICAGO

CHICAGO is a show with a stunning array of lead roles, cameos, acting roles, dance parts and terrific ensemble participation. Prospective auditionees are expected to do some research into the show, its characters and potential interpretations.

The Production Team encourages everyone to relax and do their absolute best in the audition. However, they are also on the lookout for candidates who can demonstrate that they have considered possible interpretations of character and song.

<u>Principal Character Breakdown</u> <u>Ladies...</u>

► Velma Kelly: Sarcastic, sexy, tough, funny. Velma is a former vaudeville perfor.5 mer who also serves as the hostess. She often talks directly to the audience. She killed her husband and her sister after finding them together. Used to being the "headliner" she learns to hold her tongue and make nice to save her vaudeville career. Needs to be a strong actress, singer and dancer.

Vocal Range: Alto-Mezzo Dance: Strong

■Roxie Hart: Innocent, sexy, desperate, selfish. Roxie is not very bright and never thinks about the consequences of her actions before she says or does things. Every move is selfish, every idea foolish and ill-considered, and yet she remains strangely sympathetic because we know her selfishness is not malicious; but childish. All Roxie cares about is getting into Vaudeville. Needs to be a strong actress, singer and dancer.

Vocal Range: Mezzo-Soprano Dance: Strong

■ Matron "Mama" Morton: Strong, funny, powerful and tough. The matron of the Cook County Jail who believes that all favors she gives should be reciprocated or paid for. If Billy is the Agent, Mama would be considered the Manager. Needs to be strong character actor who can sing well. Vocal Range: Alto Dance: Limited

...and Gentlemen

Billy Flynn: Persuasive, manipulative, masculine. Billy is a suave, educated lawyer who can persuade anyone to do anything. Billy will take any case as long as it is sure to put money in his pocket. Billy is a lot like a Hollywood Agent. Needs to be a strong character actor who can sing and dance well.

Vocal Range: Baritone **Dance:** Limited (potential to add more)

■ Amos Hart: Charming, funny, vulnerable, timid man. Amos is an average guy, not very good looking, not very smart. Manipulated easily, Amos is the only character in Chicago whose motives are entirely pure, never selfish and he's the only character who really loses ultimately. Strong character actor who can sing well.

Vocal Range: Baritone Dance: None

■ Mary Sunshine: Sob sister reporter from the Evening Star. Believes there is a little bit of good in everyone and will believe anything she is fed that matches her beliefs. We are looking for a male soprano or counter tenor who can sing legitimately up to a high B flat who must play a woman with the image of a good natured talk show hostess but is actually a high powered gossip columnist. Must be a good comedian.

Vocal Range: Countertenor Dance: Minimal

Other Characters

MURDERESSES:

Liz:

Prisoner at Cook County Jail. She is imprisoned after shooting two warning shots into her husband's head.

Annie:

Prisoner at the Cook County Jail. Murder's her lover after finding out he already has six wives. "One of those Mormons, ya' know."

≝June:

Prisoner at Cook County Jail. After her husband accuses her of screwing the milk man, he mysteriously runs into her knife ten times.

Hunyak:

Hungarian Prisoner at Cook County Jail. The only English she speaks is the phase, "Not Guilty." Which follows her to her grave.

Mona:

Prisoner at Cook County Jail. Murders her lover after he has a round of affairs with other woman, and an occasional man. I guess you could say it was "artistic differences."

ENSEMBLE: Assorted Others:

Fred Casely:

Sleeping with Roxie Hart and is shot and killed. Must play a "regular guy" in the first scene but play an overly dramatic version of himself in the courtroom scene. This person may double as a male/female dancer or may be cast as a cameo role with little rehearsal time.

Sergeant Fogarty:

Assigned to Roxie's case. After asking the right questions, he manages to get Roxie to confess.

Martin Harrison:

District Attorney who is prosecuting Roxie. This actor could double as an ensemble member

Go-To-Hell-Kitty:

Steals the spotlight when she Murders her husband along with three other women, she is wealthy and goes crazy telling everyone to "go-to-hell". Her crimes are labeled "Lake Shore Drive Massacre."

Harry:

Murdered by Go-To-Hell Kitty for sleeping around with three women behind her back.

Aaron:

Court appointed lawyer for Hunyak. He tries to get her to confess to speed along the trial.

Judge:

Judge overseeing Roxie's Trial.

Court Clerk:

Swears people in with their hand on the bible. "Blah, Blah, Truth, Truth. Selp-you God."

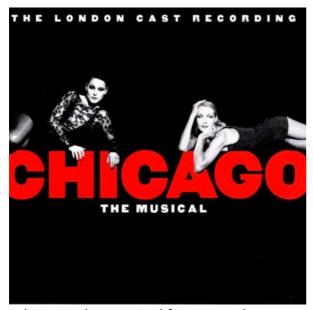
Master of Ceremonies:

This speaking role will be divided up amongst the most outgoing and dynamic ensemble members. Think the ring leader of a circus who announces each act.

RECOMMENDED RECORDINGS

There are a number of cast recordings of CHICAGO floating round in several languages. Please be careful about which one you choose to listen to, as many have substantial differences to the score that we will be using.

Both of the below recordings (available on iTunes) are good to listen to, as they are both pretty faithful to the score that we are presenting. Both recordings are outstanding. However, remember that they won't necessarily match up exactly with what we are going to ask you to perform. Nonetheless, they are essential listening for anyone intending to join our cast.



Chicago The Musical [New London Cast Recording (1997)]



Chicago [1996 Broadway Revival Cast]

The London Cast is more complete recording with less cuts and more dialogue included. Try to avoid watching the 2002 film version. It's very different from the stage musical. As always, there are also a number of interpretations, both amateur and professional, that have illegally found their way onto YouTube – always worth a bit of a look as well.

NATURE OF THE COMMITMENT

Before choosing to audition, it is important to understand the nature of the commitment required. Accepting a position in the cast implies a commitment to the time and cost involved.

TIME

Review the 2017 Production Calendar at the beginning of this document. There is an expectation that everyone is available for the call times as published on this schedule. We are always flexible

when appropriate notification of absence is communicated well in advance. Any potential conflicts must be addressed and resolved immediately.

It is a student's responsibility to organize work, sport, dance and other commitments around our schedule, particularly in Term 3. Failure to honour these commitments or notify of absence in advance is disrespectful to the company as a whole.

There is a further expectation that all cast members will prepare fully for each rehearsal and practice their songs, lines and routines on a regular basis.

Regular rehearsals will always happen on Tuesday afternoons from **3.30pm until 6.30pm**. Please note that leads may be required to remain behind for some additional rehearsal after this. Decisions about this will be finalised early in Term 2. Weekly schedules will be published in advance, and it may be possible that some cast will finish slightly earlier on some weeks. However, we need everyone to be available up until **6.30pm**.

Additionally, there will be several <u>lunch time rehearsals</u> for lead roles and specialist dancers (on Mondays). These will be run to give the attention and focus that a lead role requires.

COST

Cast members are responsible for the following costs:

- Production Levy (Cast) this raises money to offset costs associated with costuming, the Production Hoodie or T-Shirt, one copy of the souvenir DVD (either Friday or Saturday night), copying of rehearsal material and afternoon tea at regular rehearsals.
 - o \$80 per cast member
 - \$65 per cast member if more than one from the same family
- Production Camp compulsory for all cast and orchestra (July 15-17)
 - \$240-\$265 per student cost to be confirmed in Term 1.
- Other expenses may include some basic cast supply costume requirements.

FULL CAST MEETING AND PARENT INFORMATION EVENING

On **Tuesday April 18**, we will be holding our first cast meeting for the season, in conjunction with a Parent Information Evening. This will be the official launch of the company for CHICAGO and is designed to kick start the production in advance of the rehearsal period. In addition to dealing with the basic information and questions, this will also be when scripts and other rehearsal material will be distributed, as well as ensuring that all administrative matters are completed. Opportunities for parent involvement will also be outlined.

EXTRA pARTS

Extra p.Arts aims to support the Performing Arts program of Ringwood Secondary College by providing practical assistance where possible. It encourages parents with an interest in the Performing Arts and the RSC program to contribute their time and skills in an informal, supportive and social environment.

The major operation for this group is in the costume room and there is always demand for anyone who has some time to volunteer. Sewers are particularly encouraged to lend a hand, but all help is valuable and any skills are welcome.

Parent representatives will speak at the Information Evening about how much fun it is to be involved. Certainly, we cannot succeed as we do without this valuable support.

MARKETING AND TICKET SALES

Tickets for CHICAGO will go on sale to members of the company and their families on **Tuesday May 16**. General sales will commence on **Tuesday May 23**. All sales will once again be funneled through the production website, with opportunities to attribute sales to members of the cast. There will be a significant prize draw on closing night for the top ticket sellers. Prices for tickets will be determined during February/March and communicated at the Information Evening.

Marketing the show is the responsibility of every single cast member. To this end, each student in cast takes on the responsibility to generate **at least 20 ticket sales**. If this occurs, we can enjoy another successful season in sales and play to full houses every show. Promotional material is provided to support ticket sales and of course social media will help generate buzz around the show.

Thank you for your interest. We know it's going to be another terrific year and this will be a great production. See you all soon.

<u>Karl McNamara</u> Producer Director	Gaynor Borlase Choreographer	Michael Kent Assistant Director	Michael Phillips Producer Chief Patron
Annmarie Stelfox Production Manager	<u>Kate Tanner</u> Choreographer	Jessikah Jemmeson Assistant Choreographer/ Director	Kevin Bonnett Musical Director

February 2017