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Dance Links



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A guide to delivering high quality dance for children and young people



Qualifications and Curriculum Authority



National Dance Teachers Association



Foreword

Dance Links is a dance specific project within Club Links. Its aim is to help improve links between School Sport Partnerships and dance providers. This document *Dance Links – A guide to delivering high quality dance for children and young people* is part of this strategy and aims to help schools build strong links with dance organisations and individuals and identify the benefits of such relationships.

Dance is an art form that has the ability to communicate across cultural and generational barriers. It can bring individuals together and link communities, through both observation and participation. Dance's popularity has inspired many to become involved at all levels and in all forms. We are fortunate, as a multicultural society, to have access to a range of dance styles from classical ballet and South Asian dance, to African and Caribbean dance forms, as well as street dance.

Participation in dance provides enjoyment and promotes fitness and general well-being. Young people see dance as an accessible medium, encouraged by the profile of artists in the fields of hip hop and popular music. Participating in high quality dance can provide youngsters with a wide

range of social skills and benefits not just to counter obesity but also to increase their self-esteem and confidence. These benefits for children and young people in schools can be enhanced by artists willing to share their skills and experience and help inspire a new generation.

The provision of high quality dance will ensure that our young people experience the creativity and artistry of dance as it contributes to their general well-being.



Richard Caborn

Rt Hon Richard Caborn MP,
Minister for Sport



David Lammy

David Lammy MP,
Minister for Culture

The following websites include useful information.

Arts Council England
www.artscouncil.org.uk

Dance Network
www.dancenetwork.org.uk

British Association of Advisers and Lecturers in Physical Education
www.baalpe.org

Department for Culture, Media and Sport
www.culture.gov.uk/sport/school_sport

Department for Education and Skills
www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe

Guidance for Gifted and Talented Pupils
www.creativegeneration.org.uk

Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom
www.pea.uk.com

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
www.qca.org.uk/pess

Specialist Schools and Academies Trust
www.specialistschools.org.uk

Sport England
www.sportengland.org

Youth Sport Trust
www.youthsporttrust.org

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Brookfield Sports College
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East London Dance
Ermine Junior School
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Laban
Lincolnshire dance
Ludus Dance
Nupur Arts
Plashet School
Rebound Dance in Education
Red Marsh School
Stop Gap Dance Company
Specialist Schools Trust

About this guide

This guide aims to support schools to recognise and provide high quality dance for children and young people. It is designed to be used alongside *High Quality PE and Sport for Young People: A guide to recognising and achieving high quality PE and sport in schools and clubs* (DfES/DCMS 2004). It focuses on how dance can contribute to meeting the Government target:

“to enhance the take-up of sporting opportunities by 5 to 16 year olds by increasing the percentage of school children who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum from 25% in 2002 to 75% by 2006 and then 85% by 2008.”

Dance is a creative activity that promotes physical skill and fitness. The diversity of styles available within dance attracts girls and boys from a range of social and cultural backgrounds. Dance encourages children and young people to express themselves. It promotes physical interaction, and allows children and young people to communicate their ideas, emotions and thoughts through performance. It can be an effective means of helping some children and young people with language difficulties to communicate with others.

This guide outlines good practice in dance both within and beyond the curriculum. It identifies how to provide high quality dance for children and young people in the curriculum, in out-of-hours school dance clubs and through dance clubs in the wider community. It gives examples of what schools and dance clubs have done to achieve high quality dance.

The following terms are used in this guide:

Out-of-school dance provider: a dance agency, dance company, private dance school, arts venue or individual dance artist that provides dance opportunities outside school.

Dance club: activity provided by an out-of-school dance provider, such as a youth dance group, weekly dance class or holiday project.

School-club links: a relationship between a school, or a group of schools, and an out-of-school dance provider.



Providing children and young people with high quality dance

Why is it important to provide high quality dance for children and young people?

Dance plays an important role in helping pupils develop personal and physical health, fitness and well-being. It extends the range of choices available to children and young people to take up an active and healthy lifestyle.

“ *My confidence has soared since Year 6. I used to be really quiet but now I am really loud and bubbly! Ask my friends!* ”

Dance club participant

The creative and artistic opportunities offered by dance enable children and young people to express themselves, and to communicate what they think and believe. Dance can provide a context in which they can develop a better understanding of themselves and improve their self-esteem.

A high quality dance education enables pupils to make informed choices about how and whether to get involved in dance, and encourages them to participate in dance beyond school and into their adult life.

High quality dance in the curriculum

While the programme of study of dance is part of the National Curriculum for physical education, dance also has a place in the arts curriculum. It is best experienced when the teaching of dance interlinks the processes of composition, performance and appreciation. It is most effective



when children and young people have the chance to encounter, explore and develop movement and compositional ideas, and when they can share their work and learn to appreciate what they have created and performed.

High quality dance teaching helps children and young people to develop a range of personal, social, physical, artistic, creative and critical thinking skills. A high quality dance education will provide a range of opportunities for pupils such as performing in public, seeing dance performances and working with professional dance artists.



High quality dance beyond the curriculum

Children and young people learn best when they can connect what they learn in the dance curriculum with their own and others' lives outside lessons and school. Those who make the most progress in dance, and who are most likely to remain involved and interested in dance throughout their lives, are those who have high quality experiences beyond the curriculum. These children and young people gain additional time to explore ideas, practice skills and share with others. Many are able to focus on the specific forms of dance that interest them most and have more opportunities to perform and create dance.



There are many ways in which children and young people experience dance outside the curriculum. Dance artists working with dance agencies, dance companies, local theatres and other organisations offer a wide range of dance activities. These include classes in ballet, contemporary dance, creative dance, street dance and other styles delivered through weekly dance sessions, holiday projects and performance groups. There are a large number of private dance schools throughout the country that provide opportunities for participants to learn and take graded examinations in specific dance forms such as ballet, ballroom, Irish dance, South Asian dance or tap.

What are the outcomes of high quality dance?

As stated in *High Quality PE and Sport for Young People*, when schools and clubs provide high quality PE and sport, they see young people who:

1. are **committed** to PE and sport and make them a central part of their lives – both in and out of school
2. know and **understand** what they are trying to achieve and how to go about doing it
3. understand that PE and sport are an important part of a **healthy, active lifestyle**
4. have the **confidence** to get involved in PE and sport
5. have the **skills** and control that they need to take part in PE and sport
6. willingly take part in a **range of competitive, creative and challenge-type activities**, both as individuals and as part of a team or group
7. **think** about what they are doing and make appropriate decisions for themselves
8. **show a desire to improve** and achieve in relation to their own abilities
9. have the **stamina, suppleness and strength** to keep going
10. **enjoy** PE, school and community sport



When schools and clubs achieve these outcomes in dance, children and young people:

1. are **committed** to dance and keen to experience a wide range of dance through participation, observation and discussion
2. know and **understand** what they wish to achieve in a range of dance forms from different cultural contexts
3. appreciate the benefits of dance as part of a **healthy, active lifestyle** and are able to make choices about its role in their lives
4. have **confidence** in their own dance abilities and have high self-esteem
5. demonstrate increased **skills** and physical competence in dance
6. create and perform dances which communicate an artistic intention using a **range** of dance styles
7. **think** critically about dance and communicate effectively about their own and others' work, including professional dance works
8. **show a desire to improve** in dance and celebrate their dance experiences through a range of activities including performances
9. have the **stamina, suppleness and strength** to participate in dance, understanding and applying aspects of safe dance practice
10. **enjoy** dance and are engaged and motivated while dancing.

What makes an effective school-club link?

Effective school-club links in dance should provide opportunities for all children and young people to experience, and enjoy, high quality dance in different ways and in a wide variety of dance forms. Effective links work through collaborations between schools and out-of-school dance providers.

School-club links in dance take one of two forms.

A. Schools work through formal partnerships with out-of-school dance providers to enhance opportunities in dance for children and young people within the curriculum.

B. Schools signpost and support individual or groups of children and young people to access dance opportunities provided in the wider community.

School-club links include:

- dance clubs before school, during lunchtimes or after school
- opportunities to take part in informal dance activities during breaks or lunchtimes
- short-term dance projects leading up to performances in school or for a wider public
- residencies involving dance companies/dance professionals
- performance groups run by out-of-school dance providers
- dance festivals where schools come together to share skills, ideas and performances

- attendance at private dance classes
- activities offered by dance artists working in association with local dance agencies, venues or other organisations

“*I love doing what I do and hope I can carry on for the rest of my life.*”
Dance club participant

School-club links should aim to support children and young people in:

- taking part in a range of dance activities in both the school and the dance club
- understanding how their experiences in school and at the dance club complement each other
- choosing dance clubs that are suited to what they want to achieve
- moving confidently between the school and the dance club
- balancing their commitment to, and involvement in, the school and the dance club



Who are the best teachers of dance?

Teachers that are most effective in delivering high quality dance to children and young people are those who:

- believe in the value of dance and have a passion for sharing dance with children and young people
- understand and meet the different needs of participants of varied abilities, ages, backgrounds and stages of development
- use a range of teaching and learning strategies to meet the pupils' individual learning needs and enable them to reach their potential
- can successfully integrate composition, performance and appreciation
- communicate all aspects of safe dance practice through their own practice
- deliver appropriate and challenging dance activities safely and effectively
- refresh their practice by taking part in continuing professional development
- have knowledge of relevant legislation for working with children and young people

Teachers with these attributes and skills are most likely to enable children and young people to fulfil their potential in dance.

Using visiting dance teachers

Many schools and dance clubs use visiting dance artists with the in-depth knowledge, professional experience and practical skills to deliver high quality dance successfully. Dance artists' skills and

experience are often accredited in one or more of the following ways:

- degree in dance, or dance and another subject
- vocational training at a stage school
- certified courses for working in schools and other community settings
- links with regional and national dance agencies
- registration with a private dance teaching association such as the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD), Imperial Society of Teachers of Dance (ISTD), British Ballet Organisation (BBO)

Visiting dance artists should have Criminal Record Bureau disclosure at an enhanced level and their own public liability insurance.



How do successful dance school-club links work?

Dance links in action: Examples of school-club links



• Before starting the school-club link

School-club links are supported by the whole school and are included in the school's ethos, policy and planning. The school has the resources and knowledge needed to develop the link.

• Getting started

The school identifies the needs of children and young people, and forms a partnership with an appropriate out-of-school dance provider to meet these needs. Aims and objectives for the link are agreed by both partners at the start of the project.

• Staying connected

The role and responsibilities of each partner in the link are identified, agreed and recorded in writing. Effective communication takes place between partners for the lifetime of the link.

• Reflection and progression

Simple and realistic methods of monitoring and evaluation are used throughout the link. The findings and recommendations are used to improve the effectiveness of the link and to inform future development. The benefits of the link are acknowledged and celebrated.

Knowsley Dance Showcase

Brookfield Sports College identified the lack of opportunities for pupils at schools in Knowsley to attend after-school dance activities and perform in large-scale events. The Partnership Development Manager approached Rebound Dance in Education as the company had worked extensively in schools throughout Knowsley. The school-club link was initially funded through the Big Lottery Programme (formerly the New Opportunities Fund) as a three-

Integr-8 Youth Dance Company

Ludus Dance, the national dance agency for the North West, identified opportunities for integrated youth dance in the North West of England. It approached Moorfield School, a special school in Preston for pupils aged 2–19 years, two other special schools and three mainstream schools to take part in a residency with Stop Gap Dance Company. At the end of the project, Moorfield was keen for a weekly dance group to continue and

“*Ludus provides a high quality imaginative, professional approach to dance that has at its centre the desire to include and use the abilities of disabled young people to promote dance as an expression of working together and also great enjoyment.*”

Paul Johnson (Headteacher, Moorfield School)

year programme. Each year, members of Rebound led after-school sessions for 10 weeks in 20 schools, for two families of schools within the School Sports Partnership. The sessions led to the performance of a dance piece created with an artist from Rebound. In 2005, the event was so successful that the performance was held at the Theatre Royal, St Helens. In the future, the aim is to include more families of schools from within the partnership and to develop more youth dance groups for pupils to join following involvement with the project.

offered free space at the school. The link, funded by Preston City Council, focuses on weekly sessions led by a member of Ludus Dance for the members of the dance group, known as Integr-8 Youth Dance Company. Participation is open to young people from both special and mainstream education. Group members evaluate each session as part of an ongoing process. The group have performed in youth dance showcases and regularly perform for parents and care staff. In the future, it is hoped to enlist existing members as support leaders within the group and to develop further performance opportunities for the company.

Social Dance Celebration

Cherry Willingham Community Sports College in Lincoln identified the lack of opportunities for pupils to experience dance forms from different cultures. The School Sport Co-ordinator (SSCo) approached *lincolnshire dance*, the dance development agency for the county, to help identify appropriate dance forms and local dance artists. The SSSCo and the four selected dance artists planned the project. *lincolnshire dance* provided guidance and quality assurance. The link, funded through the Local Network Fund, involved eight primary and one

“ *This is an excellent opportunity to further develop the links with some of our major school and community partners through the medium of dance. It also allows us to extend and enrich the type and range of dance experiences currently available to local children.* ”

David Mills (Headteacher, Cherry Willingham Community Sports College)

special school. Workshops were held over 10 weeks in Brazilian, Egyptian, Israeli and English folk dance. Initially, sessions were led by dance artists, then by Sporting Ambassadors from Cherry Willingham (Year 10 pupils following the Sports Leaders programme) who worked alongside the SSSCo. The link led to a day of performances at the Community Sports College. In the future, the aim is to increase the number of pupils attending community classes and to develop weekly dance clubs in one or more of the dance forms.

Brighton and Hove Dance Development

Dorothy Stringer Sports College, and Brighton and Hove Music and Performing Arts work together on a school-club link which provides opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to study dance beyond the curriculum and for young people to develop leadership skills in dance. The link takes the form of a youth dance company, which has met weekly for the last two years to create and perform dance. Each year, 15 members are recruited through recommendation and audition. Alongside the

company, Year 11 pupils following a Junior Sports Leader Award leadership programme at the school visit the family primary schools and work with small groups of pupils to develop their leadership skills and dance knowledge. In the future, the aim is to establish a number of youth dance groups throughout Brighton and Hove, and involve Young Leaders in the leadership of the youth dance groups.

Urban Street Vibes

East London Dance, the dance development agency for East London, approached Plashet School, an all girl secondary community school, to form a dance school-club link providing after-school dance activities for young women of Asian and Somali origin who would not normally engage in physical activity. The link is part of Urban Vibes, a larger programme offering access to free dance activity in London, and is funded by Newham Healthy Living and Sports Team. Weekly after-school classes are offered over a 12-week term. Each session includes a warm-up, a street dance routine and a creative element. At the end of each term there is an informal sharing for friends and family. All participants are invited to join half-term and Easter dance projects and given opportunities to perform at school events such as assemblies.

“ *I am keen to promote dance at Plashet School. East London Dance has assisted Plashet School to raise the achievement in dance and also the enthusiasm for dance at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.* ”

Mrs Bushra Khanum Nasir
(Headteacher, Plashet School)



Useful contacts

The four organisations below have websites that are easy to navigate and provide information about out-of-school dance providers.

Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET)

CDET is the national standards body of the professional dance industry and holds the directory of teaching societies whose syllabuses have been inspected and approved by the Council.

Tel: 020 7240 5703

www.cdnet.org.uk

Go to 'directories of dance teachers'. Select your county and a list of registered teachers within private dance schools will be displayed.

Foundation for Community Dance (FCD)

FCD is the national development agency for community dance in the UK. It works for the development of community dance and for the greater access to high quality community dance for all.

Tel: 0116 251 0516

www.communitydance.org.uk

Go to 'dance directory'. Enter your geographic region and details of dance organisations, companies and key individuals within the region will be displayed.

National Dance Teachers Association (NDTA)

NDTA is recognised as the national voice for dance education. It supports teachers at all key stages of the National Curriculum as well as GCSE, AS/A Level, GNVQ and in initial teacher training

Tel: 01543 308 618

www.ndta.org.uk

Go to 'national/regional dance and arts agencies, associations and councils'. Scroll through the list until you find an agency in your county or region.

Youth Dance England (YDE)

YDE is the national agency to connect young people and dance. It seeks to create new partnerships between those providing and supporting dance activities for young people to increase the number and quality of opportunities available.

Tel: 020 7924 7167

www.yde.org.uk

Go to 'what's going on'. Select a dance activity and click on your region on the map. A list of dance providers in your area will be displayed.

