

Dance Curriculum Overview

Context of the department

Current figures for GCSE Dance are: Yr11-22 Yr10-23 Yr9-23 and students are taught for five hours per fortnight. There are two members of staff at this key stage who willingly give up their time for intervention to all pupils regardless of ability to ensure high standards of teaching and outcomes are maintained. 60% of the course is practical and is marked and then externally verified by AQA. 40% of the course (1.5hr written exam) is marked externally.

Intent at KS4

Dance provides the opportunity for pupils to develop thoughts and feelings about the world around them through the experience of performing, planning and evaluating dances. It offers a unique contribution to the pupils' physical, moral and cultural education and easily goes hand in hand with other curriculum subjects. We aim to allow our most talented dancers a pathway to achieve a qualification at the highest standard whilst encouraging all abilities to access Dance, even if when not studied outside of school. The study of the anthology of professional works develop the students' ability to critically appraise dances of different styles and cultural influences, providing a springboard for engaging practical tasks.

During the process of all practical units, we intend that students' work is informally assessed weekly, focussing upon an area of the assessment criteria for the unit, and given WWW and EBI comments so the student is aware of the assessment criteria and can improve for the summative assessment. This is to be recorded by either the teacher or the pupil in the booklet for the relevant unit, adhering to the whole school policy of using the icons for WWW, EBI and student response/action.

Our aim is for excellence in engagement for the subject; pupils to be challenged and driven. High standards of effort and focus are expected by both staff and the results reflect this. To prepare our students for further training and beyond, the Dance department works closely with local dance organisations and professionals. Many of our past pupils have gone on to study at dance conservatoires and now, as professionals, regularly return to deliver workshops for our pupils. We firmly believe in working with professional artists to give a wide and enriching dance programme as possible and we provide advice on their suitable pathways. We also have strong links with: Matthew Bourne – New Adventures, Lynton Academy, NSCD. Many of our pupils have gone on to study at Dance Conservatoires, as well as well-respected universities and are currently perform professionally. Others, despite studying Dance to A Level have gone on to do Dentistry, Bio-Mechanics and Economics.

We aspire to seize every opportunity to perform dance within school and in our wider community. Within school, pupils are given the opportunity to dance in the school production, within liturgies, at Arts Evenings and curriculum performances.

Implementation at KS4

The GCSE course is taught over three years, using this time to improve in all areas of the course and pupils are assessed in all theoretical and practical units throughout Yr9 so they can identify areas for progression in subsequent years. Physical skills, composition and dance analysis are new to some students, so key principals must be embedded in the first two years of study. Consequently, when students begin Yr11, only one practical unit, and two dances from the anthology are left to teach,

therefore pupils are confident in such areas and Yr11 is a year of consolidating and excelling. Each term, all three years are formally assessed in either a practical or theoretical component.

Extended curricular opportunities we offer are among the local context. We have performed at our feeder primary schools, The Great Yorkshire Show, local churches & cathedrals, The Yorkshire Schools Dance Festival and Disneyland Paris. An annual trip to London is offered so that students can see Dance's prominent position in our capital city. In addition, pupils in Yr9-11 are encouraged to dance in GCSE and A-Level group compositions so that they experienced the experimentation, development and refining of composition. It also improves their performance experience under exam conditions.

As Dance is a practical subject, verbal and physical feedback is the most commonly used to effectively ensure that pupils continue to progress. Video recordings are used to support verbal feedback and this is supported by written comments from the teacher. Such comments are stored with the unit booklets. DIRT time is built into practical lessons for students to write down the verbal feedback given by teachers to improve their work.

Practical and theoretical units are marked every term in all years. Composition and Performance Feedback Sheets are used for summative assessments, which contain the assessment criteria grid, which is highlighted, and WWW and EBI comments written by the teacher. The students then have DIRT time after every summative assessment where they will watch their performance back (for practical) and write student response comments based on the teacher feedback and mark awarded.

Differentiation is achieved by the assessing the breadth of the assessment criteria, driven by a student's target grade. Often, gifted students exceed their target grade by as much as two grades above.

Differentiation is also provided within groupings and theoretical materials. By the very nature of the course, composition tasks in Yr11 call upon researching topics across the curriculum. We invite subject teachers from history, art and science to deliver lessons to increase our understanding of and accuracy to further our compositions. Often through composition and dance analysis, theoretical, religious and cultural diversity is discussed and explored. We teach our dancers to interpret and communicate their feeling with eloquence and respect for others.

Dance, by its very nature is a physical demanding course and self-discipline is expected at all times. The four mental skills (movement memory, confidence, commitment and concentration) are included on the AQA specification. We remind our pupils that we are constantly assessing them in these skills as a final mark is submitted in Yr11. Pupils adhere to such high standards of drive and behaviour. Detentions are few and "on-call" is never used. We pride ourselves on the excellent relationships which are formed with our dancers.

Reflection and metacognition are included within feedback assessment forms and specific metacognition reflection worksheets. At Yr9, we deliver lessons on a variety of revision methods and review this in subsequent years.

Impact at KS4

Our results are outstanding for 2018: 100% 9-4 (A*-C), % 9-7 and (A*/A)72.2%

2018 GCSE results FFT05. 100% 5-9 whereas similar centres achieved 53%. Average point score of 7.

In the written paper we achieved an average of 57% whereas similar centres achieved 43%. In practical units, we achieved an average of 83% whereas similar centres achieved 58%.

Our strength as a centre is choreography which prepares them for the continuation onto the A-Level course. Recruitment for A-Level Dance in sixth form is healthy.

To support gifted dancers, students successfully audition for the following national and local initiatives: Centre for Advanced Training, Pheonix Youth Leeds, York Scholars, BBO, English Youth Ballet.

Opportunities (such as successfully auditioning to perform at Disneyland Paris), Yorkshire Schools Dance Festival, qualifying to perform at "Fresh" along with our annual musicals at all key stages provides experience, and discipline for hundreds of students from a variety of backgrounds.