

The Dance Curriculum

Through dance we encourage students to develop their creative, physical, emotional and intellectual capacity through studying a range of dance styles practically and through critically appraising professional dance works. We have an inclusive approach, enabling students of all abilities to access the curriculum. We believe that dance contributes to well-being and heightens students' cultural awareness.

Students in year 9 come with limited and varied dance experience from their Middle schools and for most students this is their first experience of dance. We therefore aim for this to be a positive experience by providing a rich and relevant learning experience which covers the necessary practical and theoretical knowledge and skills to prepare students should they wish to take GCSE Dance as an option. At GCSE and A level we encourage students to become 'thinking dancers' who can make links between the theory and the practical elements of the course. We aim to give sufficient time to each element of the course and to offer all students the opportunity to spend additional time out of lessons where needed to achieve their optimum grade. At A level we promote independent learning for both the practical and theoretical elements.

Year 9

We are currently working alongside Middle school PE leaders to support them with the planning and implementation of their dance curriculum with a view to establishing a through curriculum from reception to Sixth Form.

In year 9 the curriculum is varied covering a range of styles and themes to stimulate all students. (Dance styles include contemporary, contact, street, hip hop, capoeira) Students learn the fundamental theory and key concepts such as Laban analysis through starter activities, plenaries and questioning throughout each lesson. This is sequenced to enable knowledge to build lesson by lesson. Video footage of professional repertoire is used to develop the ability to analyse and discuss dance using subject specific terminology. Through practical tasks students develop fundamental physical and expressive skills over the year. Warm ups and technical movement phrases taught build in complexity and differentiated options are given allowing students to gain confidence and be challenged. Creative tasks are initially guided and throughout the year become more open to allow more creative freedom as choreographic skills develop.

KS4

At GCSE students become familiar with the course content and assessment from the outset as this is clearly identified in a course handbook which they keep in the front of their subject file. The three main areas of study are dance analysis, performance and choreography and these are developed through the theoretical and practical study. The curriculum plan is sequenced for optimum performance, e.g. the six set works are delivered in year 10 allowing the learning to focus on exam technique in year 11. Choreographic skills are developed initially by increasing confidence in the art of improvisation exploring a wide range of stimuli.

KS5

At A-level students are encouraged to develop their ability to work independently through self-evaluation of practical work, independent research of professional works which is used in practical lessons and independent rehearsals. The three main areas of study are dance analysis, performance (Jazz and Contemporary) and choreography and the teaching has a holistic approach with connections between the theoretical and practical study being made continually to emphasise the

relevance of both. The theoretical content includes two areas of study (currently Rambert Dance Company 1966 – 2002 and American Jazz 1940 – 1975) and two set works (currently Rooster, Bruce 1994 and Singin' in the Rain, Gene Kelly, 1952). The areas are studied first to provide students with contextual knowledge for the set work.

The curriculum is sequenced to provide students with the opportunity to perform to their optimum ability in both the theory and practical elements of the course, for example a larger proportion of the theory content is covered in year 12 to allow for time to be spent on essay writing and exam technique in year 13 and also to allow for a revision programme at the end of the course.

Independent written tasks are set weekly and include pre-learning, reviewing, self-evaluating, creating revision resources and responding to set written tasks such as exam style questions.

Enrichment

We offer a varied extra-curricular programme including lunchtime and after school clubs, performance opportunities including an annual dance performance, workshops with professional artists, (e.g. Claire Benson, Motionhouse Dance Theatre), theatre trips, half-termly when possible. Students are given the opportunity to attend a creative careers fayre annually and we have strong links with local university providers such as Arts University Bournemouth who have provided workshops and career orientated events. Sixth form students are given leadership opportunities such as supporting in lower school practical lessons. Opportunities for Middle school students are offered such as the Year 8 workshop in the summer term.