

English Martyrs' Catholic School

Dance Curriculum Statement

Key Message / Curriculum Intention

The Dance department aims to instill a great love of dance, whilst inspiring self-confidence, discipline and respect for the performing arts. Our curriculum provides a solid foundation for the developing dancer. We appreciate that the heart of a dancer is born into many different bodies and the love of dance can take on many different styles. Our specialist dance teachers are skilled at identifying the specific needs of each student. We believe in an enriching education and we recognise that every student has something to offer the arts and the arts has something to offer the student.

Within our curriculum, we encourage students to strive daily for their personal best, as well as to support one another in fostering a sense of teamwork in the classroom. Our teaching enables students to express their own ideas through choreography and further demonstrating their understanding of key skills through performance and writing.

We are fully devoted to providing dancers within years 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 an encouraging environment where they are given the opportunity to grow and excel in their education through the various enrichment activities that are available to them. To complement the learning that takes place in Dance lessons, students have access to perform in many shows throughout the year and compete in national competitions. The department is proud to celebrate the many successes and achievements of our dance students.

It is clear that the discipline, focus and artistic enlightenment of dance creates success in all aspects of life. Dance education contributes to the development of responsible, dedicated, determined, confident and creative young people in society.

Serving all students equally-

All teachers deliver lessons that inspire students to demonstrate their unique talents and abilities and encourages them to fulfil their potential, but teaching also includes adapted teaching methods to ensure that this is achieved. Students who require additional support in lessons are provided with teaching assistant support and differentiated material / tasks where appropriate.

The heart of our teaching within the dance department aims to develop an awareness and understanding of other cultures, which are integrated within schemes of work and dance styles studied throughout the curriculum. This is further demonstrated within the shows that the students produce and perform in each year, highlighting the diverse community we have within the school.

Core message 1 - Sequential Approach

When students arrive in year 7, they are keen to learn more about dance at English Martyrs. We aim as a department to develop a fun and positive experience for them, building on a strong foundation on prior learning from KS2. Furthermore, to develop new skills and knowledge not accessed in KS2 and teach those new styles and techniques that are later required to address the curriculum in KS4.

In the dance department, we use a systematic approach in that we build foundational skills and techniques over the five years. Throughout years 7 and 8, students follow set schemes of work that focus primarily on the three key strands; performance; choreography and appreciation. Students learn a variety of different styles and are assessed continuously in lessons through both teacher but also peer and self-assessment methods. Students' progress and indicators are shown through assessment A, B and C as well as progress updates.

In year 9 students can choose to study BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Performing Arts in Dance and continue this through to KS4. Students taking BTEC Dance are required to demonstrate knowledge of professional repertoire and a variety of other styles and also a more comprehensive understanding of the choreographic process and the performing arts industry and performance analysis. They are assessed both practically and theoretically and are expected to rehearse and work independently outside of lessons to help develop key skills.

Core message 2 - Teaching Approaches

Our aim as a department is to inspire and motivate students within all KS3 and BTEC dance lessons, through both lessons, shows and other enrichment activities.

Our lessons are delivered with a variety of resources, effective use of ICT with the intention to engage all students. Deep learning is utilised by teachers in lessons through regularly revisiting prior learning and encouraging students to acknowledge this in future tasks. Learning objectives and group discussions are based around the use and integration of technical dance language and key vocabulary that is required throughout the whole curriculum.

Interleaving, differentiation and various methods of questioning are widely used throughout lessons in dance to ensure students are able to demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding of key skills and performance.

Homework and coursework based tasks are regularly set within BTEC dance to further develop skills and ascertain student individual learning and acquisition of technical dance skills. Within year 7 and 8, homework projects are set throughout the year to challenge student's prior knowledge of styles and key vocabulary learnt throughout the year and to help further develop analytical skills when comparing and contrasting professional works and choreographers.

Core message 3 - Development of the Whole Child

Our curriculum impacts positively on the personal development of students through utilising social skills; teamwork, communication, listening. Engaging in problem solving, developing confidence in their own abilities when learning independently and demonstrating creativity and imagination through choreography.

Within BTEC dance lessons, students learn about the performing arts industry and research and develop knowledge, skills and understanding of professional dancers and choreographers and other non-performance based roles within the industry. They also have the opportunity to visit the West-End where they get to view a professional performance and also attend a dance workshop which further enhances their dance skills and techniques. External companies and choreographers also on occasion run workshops within the school for the students, which enable students to develop a realistic understanding of the requirements of a professional dance role and in turn, this enhances and underpins their understanding for later examinations and also discussions about careers within the performing arts industry.

Core message 4 - Focus for change

Each year within department reviews, we use data and evidence from the previous year to chart progress and identify areas for focus and change. Recently as a department we have changed specifications to the new BTEC Tech Award. All staff work collaboratively and share practices and teaching strategies to enrich the curriculum. We continue to work on developing more challenging resources and learning opportunities for our HPA's and often share good practice with other departments within the wider community.

This year, in light of evidence from exam results we are focusing on developing analysis of professional works and also the historical context of different genres of dance that is taught to all year groups. Furthermore, a focus upon the external examination which is taken within year 11 on the written aspects of the exam and encouraging independent learning and development of resources for this.