



ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL
A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

DANCE CURRICULUM

DANCE CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

The Dance Department at St. George's seeks to nurture a community of graceful, confident, and compassionate dancers. Rooted in the Christian values of dignity, hope, community, wisdom, humility, and kindness, our curriculum is designed to foster creativity, expression, and artistry. Through the study of movement and musicality, our pupils are encouraged to embrace their individual strengths and find joy in movement and performance. As they explore the rich history and diverse styles of dance, they also learn to appreciate the beauty and power of human expression. Our goal is to empower pupils to use their talents to bring light, joy, and hope to their communities and beyond, as they continue to grow in wisdom, humility, and grace in their faith and walk with God.

In dance children learn the cooperative effort necessary to produce a high-quality work of art. Every child benefits from quality dance training. Long-term learning goes far beyond practical applications in dance. Dancers enter society with the ability to maintain the uncompromising high standards nurtured during their dance training.

Creative thinking skills are developed through dance, as well as learning the value of discipline, commitment and work ethic. Self-confidence develops as young people overcome challenges to master new goals, learning to apply themselves and accomplish any task put before them. Dance teaches children about music, rhythm and beat. Pupils also have a better understanding of spatial relationships and learn to think with both sides of their brain. All these skills enhance a child's academic performance, as well as their physical well-being.

Dance is also a key component to bettering a pupil's fitness. Dance teaches the importance of movement and fitness in a variety of ways through a variety of disciplines. As well, dancers learn to coordinate muscles to move through proper positions. Dance is a great way to build invaluable social skills. Much more importantly however, it is an opportunity to teach a pupil the importance of being part of something larger than themselves. Dancers learn to take turns, to share attention, and to cooperate with others as they work within a group. Much like team sports, dance for children can teach some invaluable and important lessons that go much beyond practical application.

'Human beings are born with the instinct to express themselves through movement. Even before he could communicate the words, primitive man was dancing to the beat of his own heart.' Bob Fosse.

In order to achieve a true understanding of dance, topics have been intelligently sequenced based on the following rationale:

- The KS4 curriculum influences, captures and challenges pupils from all backgrounds.
- We instil the desire to become aspirational in dance with the intent that this becomes second nature to them across the curriculum.
- We are passionate about pupils engaging in Dance and actively engaging in learning through both group work and independent work.
- Fundamentally, the curriculum has been sequenced to allow pupils to gradually build a mastery of dance through the application of procedural and declarative knowledge in a wide range of dance contexts. These encompass societal and political issues from throughout history and will be explored through choreography and performance.
- pupils participate in, experiment with, choreograph and create their own works of dance. Using bespoke resources, and engaging in research tasks pupils build a holistic and broad Dance education.
- We consistently demonstrate the academy's values and culture to ensure pupils personally express themselves through dance.
- An exceptional Dance pupil will develop: physical skill; a range of performance skills; a deep understanding of choreography; and an ability to apply all of these aspects in a range of creative contexts.

The Dance curriculum will address social disadvantage by addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills:

- The KS4 curriculum is designed to engage pupils in all aspects of the dancing process. Without studying Dance in school, pupils' opportunities are often limited due to a range of constraints; we aim to close this gap and ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to access Dance from year 7 onwards.
- pupils have the opportunity to access funded, high-quality dance lessons through KS3 PE delivered by a Dance specialist. These opportunities will encompass a wide range of dance styles in order to allow pupils to access the opportunities that are often reserved for pupils from privileged backgrounds.
- The focus on regular group ensemble performance from KS3 will help pupils to develop their self-confidence and their ability to communicate with groups of others in a public setting. The self-confidence that privileged pupils develop in independent and grammar schools is often evident in their engagement with public speaking and performance. By ensuring that performance (in lessons and public) is normalised, we also develop self-confidence in pupils and provide access to the opportunities that follow.
- The curriculum will cover a broad spectrum of Dance from different musicals and productions, including: West Side Story, Ghost Dances, Chicago, The Greatest Showman, Grease and High School Musical. This will ensure that pupils are simultaneously equipped with the powerful knowledge necessary for higher-level study of Dance with a deep understanding of the global, evolutionary nature of dance as an art-form.
- pupils will be exposed to the same ambitious curriculum, which will prioritise high-quality practical dance choreography, technical mastery

and depth of dance understanding. Differentiation will filter downwards from high-level objectives, measuring progress against those objectives.

- A wide-ranging co-curricular and extra-curricular programme will allow all pupils, including those without the means at home, to access high-quality dance and choreography in a broader context, to explore their dance interests in more depth and advance their specialisms further outside the classroom.
- Rigorous, ongoing tracking of progress will be analysed with regard to gender, disadvantage, English as an additional language and SEND to ensure early intervention can be put in place to close attainment gaps. Curriculum and teaching practices are systematically reflected on and adapted in relation to any patterns evident from this tracking.

We fully believe dance can contribute to the personal development of pupils at St George's:

- The confidence and self-esteem of pupils is nurtured through the opportunity to participate in performances from KS3 onwards – all pupils will learn to feel comfortable being ‘put in the spotlight’ and sharing their work with classmates and the wider community. Pupils will develop broader social skills through dance; the collaborative process of dance choreography, through performance and skill, will allow them to learn fundamental teamwork and communication skills. The range of collaborative experiences that they have in dance will allow them to develop and apply those skills in varied contexts. There are many and varied benefits of dance development: *“Dancing requires not only balance, strength, and endurance ability, but also cognitive ability: adaptability and concentration to move according to the music and partner, artistry for graceful and fluid motion, and memory for choreography,”* (Jamie Ducharme, 2018). This rigorous training in vulnerability, self-discipline, and physical resilience directly fosters our students' character development.
- The creative process of choreography and physical expression directly links to critical thinking and decision-making. Students must continuously evaluate spatial design, select movement motifs that communicate specific narratives, and make rapid, real-time adjustments when working with music and partners. This process trains them to analyse feedback, problem-solve collaboratively, and make informed artistic and physical decisions under pressure.
- Dance nurtures the development of tolerance and empathy. Exposure to a range of unfamiliar cultures and traditions will encourage them to understand and respect others and an emphasis will be placed on the equal value of all dance cultures with the social message inherent in that. This celebration of diverse cultural traditions and the promotion of the equal value of all people naturally links to our core Christian values, fostering a deep sense of inclusivity, mutual respect, and community harmony, whilst encouraging every student to cherish their God-given creative talents.

Through all key stages, our belief is that exam preparation, practice and home learning revision should be interleaved with revisited powerful knowledge that has been modelled and taught in lessons. This knowledge is recalled and applied through a range of tasks, from low-stakes quizzing to extended practice.

Opportunities are built in to make links to the world of work to enhance the careers, advice and guidance that pupils are exposed to:

- Pupils will develop transferable skills that would equip an individual to work within the Performing Arts Industry which covers all singing; acting; performing; cast and crew. These performance and rehearsal structures systematically build crucial employability skills, including rigorous project management, verbal and non-verbal communication, time management, and the high-level collaborative teamwork highly prized by employers across both creative and corporate sectors.
- The Dance department plans to develop links with the Preston College of Dance and already has links with the Rossall Secondary School Dance Department and the Blackpool Theatre Collective College to provide further opportunities for pupils to work with students and professionals in higher education.
- These collaborative links bridge the gap to specific education routes and courses. The strong knowledge foundation we provide prepares students for GCSE Dance, BTEC Tech Awards in Performing Arts, and A-Level Dance. In further and higher education, it opens pathways to BA (Hons) degrees in Dance, Choreography, Musical Theatre, and Performing Arts, alongside vocational diplomas and Conservatoire training.
- Pupils will have opportunities to take part in 'The Blackpool Dance Festival' and 'Schools Alive' both held at the Winter Gardens each year to expose pupils to performing on stage alongside professionals. This is an excellent opportunity for pupils to build their confidence in performance outside a school setting. The Dance department also plans to develop links with dance schools in the local community. Exposing students to these professional industry settings and higher education frameworks introduces them to a broad range of future careers. Direct professional pathways include roles as a commercial dancer, choreographer, community dance artist, or theatre performer, alongside vital sector roles in dance therapy, arts administration, talent management, lighting/stage crew, and dance instruction.

A true love of dance involves learning about various cultural domains. We teach beyond the specification requirements, but do ensure pupils are well prepared to be successful in BTEC examinations:

- The range of dance exposure experienced within and out of the curriculum (see above) go beyond what is necessary for success at GCSE, but will equip pupils with a breadth of dance understanding. This will enable them to be successful dancers, whether in dance experiences outside of education, and the profession, or in further dance study and/or employment.
- Co-curricular and wider dance opportunities will allow pupils to further explore their interests in a less formal setting beyond the scope of exam requirements, though complementary to them. This will include opportunities to explore dance choreography and production in greater depth, dance styles and a wider range of ensemble and performance opportunities.

CURRICULUM SEQUENCING

All children are entitled to a curriculum and to the powerful knowledge that will open doors and maximise their life chances. Below is a high-level overview of the critical knowledge children will learn in this particular subject, at each key stage from Year 10 through to Year 11, in order to equip pupils with the cultural capital they need to succeed in life. The curriculum is planned vertically and horizontally giving thought to the optimum knowledge sequence for building secure schema.

Unit Sequencing		
Year 10	Term 1	Component One Delivery: Exploring the Arts: Ghost Dances, West Side Story and Chicago.
	Term 2	Component One Summative Assessment and Internal Marking: Exploring the Arts: Ghost Dances, West Side Story and Chicago.
	Term 3	Component Two Delivery: Developing Skills and Techniques in The Performing Arts: The Greatest Showman.
Y 11	Term 1	Component Two Summative Assessment and Internal Marking: Developing Skills and Techniques in The Performing Arts: The Greatest Showman. Component Three Delivery: Responding to a Brief
	Term 2	Component Three External Assessment: Responding To A Brief.
	Term 3	Component Three External Assessment: Responding To A Brief: