



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 students 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 students 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.** Students 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 student'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 student 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** students 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 students engaging in Dance and actively engaging in learning through **both group work and independent work**.
- Fundamentally, the curriculum has been sequenced to allow students 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**.
- Students participate in, experiment with, **choreograph** and **create their own works of dance**. Using bespoke resources, and engaging in research tasks students build a **holistic** and **broad Dance education**.
- We consistently demonstrate the academy's values and culture to ensure students personally **express themselves** through dance.
- An exceptional Dance student 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 students' knowledge and skills:

- The KS4 curriculum is designed to engage students in all aspects of the dancing process. Without studying Dance in school, students' opportunities are often limited due to a range of constraints; we aim to close this gap and ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to **access Dance from year 7 onwards**.
- Students 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 students to access the opportunities that are often reserved for students from privileged backgrounds.
- The focus on regular group ensemble performance from KS3 will help students to develop their **self-confidence** and **their ability to communicate with groups of others in a public setting**. The self-confidence that privileged students 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 students 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**.
- Students 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 students, 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 students at St George's:

- The **confidence** and **self-esteem** of students is nurtured through the opportunity to participate in performances from KS3 onwards – all students will learn to feel **comfortable being 'put in the spotlight'** and sharing their work with classmates and the wider community.
- Students 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.
- **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.
- 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)***

At KS2, KS3 and KS4, our belief is that homework should be an interleaved revision of powerful knowledge that has been modelled and taught in lessons. This knowledge is recalled and applied through a range of low-stakes quizzing and practice

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

- Students will have opportunities to take part in **'The Blackpool Dance Festival'** and **'Schools Alive'** both held at the Winter Gardens each year to expose students to performing on stage alongside professionals. This is an excellent opportunity for pupils to build their confidence in performance outside a school setting.
- Students 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.
- The Dance department plans to develop links with **dance schools** in the local community. This will provide students with broader opportunities to build on their **dance outside of a school setting**.
- The Dance department plans to develop links with the **Preston College of Dance** to provide further opportunities for students to work with students and professionals in higher education.

A true love of dance involves learning about various cultural domains. We teach beyond the specification requirements, but do ensure students 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 students 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 students 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 students 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.

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