

Best Practice at Trinity School

By **Amy Gale**, *Head of Dance at Trinity School Newbury*

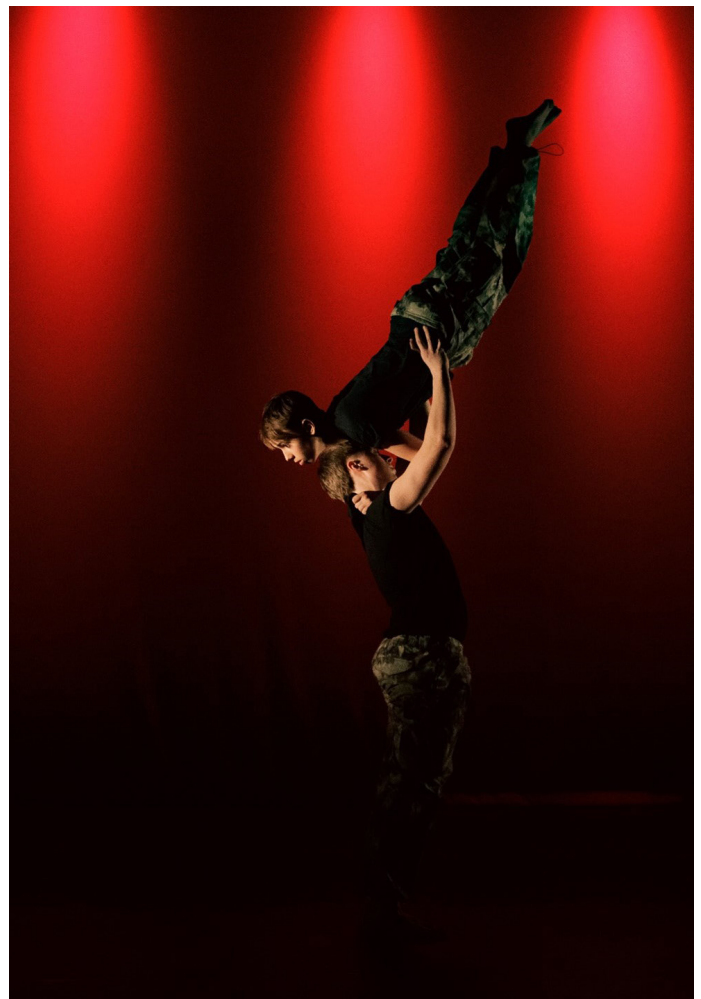
“Inclusivity, building relationships and performance are the heart of our best practice in Dance at Trinity School, Newbury”

Trinity School is a comprehensive school in Newbury, Berkshire, with a total role of just over 1000 students. Previously a Specialist School of Performing Arts, we are privileged to have excellent facilities, supportive staff and senior leaders and a dance culture within the school which is simply second to none. I could not be prouder of my post as Head of Dance at Trinity.

Dance here at Trinity School is taught at one hour per week at Key Stage 3, followed by offering GCSE Dance and BTEC Level 3 Extended Certificate in Dance in our 6th form, and has an outstanding level of uptake from our students. Our consistent and engaging Key Stage 3 Units inspire our students love of dance and our numbers at GCSE are currently at over 70. Of these, many achieve extremely highly. In our 2022 Year 11 cohort, 40% of our students achieved top grades of 7-9, who then continued their studies into 6th form and beyond.

The school also have a number of successful alumni, from Lewis Cooke (professional dancer @relaxtoerupt) to Jordan Fish, Synths player from Bring me the Horizon. Our students often progress to schools such as NSCD, LSCD, Bird College, Arts Institute Barcelona and LIPA and work professionally in industry.

At Trinity, students are encouraged to build their passion and love of dance through a diverse, challenging and carefully selected curriculum. Led by a first-class faculty, the philosophy of my department is to produce versatile, creative, artistic and technically accomplished young people who show versatility and determination in an ever-changing world, whilst providing them with the knowledge and skill base to have the choice to successfully pursue a career in dance, should they choose. I strongly believe that if our students learn to express their emotions through movement, alongside the focus that dance demands, this can help them find greater stability in their lives and form stronger self-identities.



Dance is most fulfilling for all when staff and students are thinking and acting as performers and choreographers; and creative conversations, explorations and teamwork are where we thrive. The dance journey that students take at Trinity builds a strong foundation of core dance knowledge and skills (to perform, develop technique, developing movement memory alongside physical, expressive and mental skill, and to create and choreograph using devices and relationships) that students revisit, build upon and develop with increasing sophistication, contextual understanding, complexity and technique.

In addition to our highly engaging classroom and studio learning we also offer a wealth of extra-curricular and enrichment activities for all students. We strive to deliver an engaging extra-curricular offer, currently leading 7 dance companies for both genders (both staff and student run, inclusive and audition based) a dedicated G&T programme with two dancers in residence, workshops and performances through external professionals, opportunities with national scale dance platforms and competitions and two full scale dance shows every year. Through these opportunities we are able to nurture and develop dance talent across all avenues. Thanks to the dedication, enthusiasm and passion of our staff, performance opportunities are always highlights of the school calendar and are considered in high regard within the local community. Boys dance is exceptional at Trinity School, and together we have created a culture of 'boys dance too'. We currently have two all-male dance companies, and a strong uptake of boys dance into KS4 and KS5.

High performing specialist dance teachers guide students in their dance voyage through promotion of their subject knowledge and passion for dance and complete dedication to the subject, whilst being able to model high quality practical work and guide students confidently and effectively to achieve both excellent end results and a sense of personal achievement.

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