

# Free yourself, creativity has no boundaries

By Mrs Claire Hindley, *Dance Specialist Teacher and Leader in Secondary Education*



Dance at Sir William Borlase's Grammar school, in Marlow (Buckinghamshire) sits very comfortably within our academic curriculum. All Key Stage 3 students have a one-hour weekly class and in Key Stage 4 and 5 comes the flow yet rigour of the GCSE and A-Level course. Our success can be measured by our examination results, but the real success comes when we see a student develop into an artist within their own right and we have driven this thread for creativity and freedom of expression for the last 2 years. We have discovered that if students can access their frontal cortex of their brain, their creative hub, then the rest can fall into place.

So how do we feed curiosity and creativity at Borlase? Here are our top hints and tips!

- Find stimuli that are inspiring and fun, don't be afraid to take A-level starting points and GCSE professional works to Key Stage 3 students
- Lessons should be aimed to be fun, have humour and a sense of playfulness
- Talk to students about what it means to be creative, the science behind it and how new impulses and connections in the brain when we are thinking 'out of the box'

- Variety is the spice of life; use new and challenging stimuli and encourage students every lesson to change who they work with so this becomes the norm. Part of being creative is stepping out of your comfort zone!
- Using their knowledge and learning in other subjects to generate material - dance can access every area of the curriculum and we work with other departments to do this
- Don't underestimate improvisation and if students don't respond well at first keep going - it is the unknown that we are all afraid of. Start with listening skills tasks as the key here is to listen and follow the guidance to create
- Create a relaxed atmosphere so students can access their 'flow'
- Allow students to be curious themselves and use questioning: 'What do you think?' 'What if?' 'What else?'
- Use real objects! This can be as stimuli or as tools for development such as chance dice and cards to support students who struggle with decision making of which direction to take their piece
- Try to give students the opportunity to work as a visiting teacher / artist to allow them to explore a different way of moving; this encourages students to be independent, innovative and to work collaboratively with staff, artists and each other. One workshop a year can boost their confidence and perspective, and yours! Consider inviting in alumni who have continued their creative studies to lead workshops or share their experiences

In a fast-paced world where students' attention and concentration is sent from one stimulant to the next, we encourage students to stop and take time...it's OK to improvise for an hour and not find anything of value; it is part of their journey of discovery.

One of our alumni summarises:

***"I never learned to settle for anything less than a challenge. Borlase has taught me to be confident in my own way of moving"***

For further information such as our schemes of work, please visit our website or get in touch!

**Find us on Instagram: @borlasedance @borlasearts**

[www.swbgs.com](http://www.swbgs.com)

<https://sites.google.com/swbgs.com/dance>

*Image credit: Harry Elliot*