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# Dance Education, a guide for Governors and Trustees

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Providing high quality  
dance education in schools



**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



National  
**Governors'**  
Association



**One  
Dance  
UK**  
The UK Body  
for Dance

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“Studying cultural education subjects, such as art and design, dance, drama and music, sparks creativity across the curriculum, encouraging young people to be inquisitive, disciplined and determined. Wherever children start in life, a high quality cultural education in every school should be a right, not a privilege.

Alongside literacy and numeracy, another skill needed in our workforce today is creativity. Cultural education subjects help young people to unlock their innate creativity, enabling them to become more rounded and confident human beings.

All of our children deserve a rich cultural education, but not all of them are getting it. The Arts Council has launched the Cultural Education Challenge in response to this to encourage educational settings, arts organisations and other partners to work together in giving our children and young people the best start we can.

This guide has been developed in partnership with Arts Council England, One Dance UK and the National Governors Association as a resource to support you in your role as governor and critical friend.”

Darren Henley OBE  
Chief Executive, Arts Council England

# Context Setting and Vision



In schools, dance is a compulsory activity within the National Curriculum for PE. It is also regularly offered as an after school activity, and contributes to the life and culture of the whole school. Dance as a subject is unique, in that it blends artistic practice with physical activity. Dance has an affirmative impact on young people's education and learning and offers opportunities for all young people to perform in school and in local, regional and national events. When compared to sport and academic activities, dance exhibits more positive changes in well-being. High quality dance also promotes whole school improvement through influencing the culture of the school, raising aspiration and enhancing the profile of the school in its community.

Dance remains one of the most popular art forms amongst young people. Surveys show that dance is the second most popular physical activity following football, and is a very attractive cultural form through which young people of all learning abilities can express their own identities and cultures. Dance enables young people to gain artistic skills and discipline, as well as developing their ability in physical interaction, team working, problem solving, observing, evaluating, verbal and non-verbal communication. Through dance young people collaborate with other art forms, and make connections with design in space, musicality and creativity. Dance can improve self-esteem and confidence; it can widen aspiration and help tackle obesity and other health issues.

In primary schools the School Sport Premium has had a positive impact on young people's access to dance. An independent report carried out by NatCen Social Research and published by Department for Education in November 2015, demonstrated that the funding has been used by schools to increase dance provision, with dance being one of the most commonly mentioned new activities in the PE curriculum since the introduction of the premium.

The continued study of dance in the secondary school provides young people with a positive, lifelong relationship with the arts and physical activity, particularly some girls and young women, who may be resistant to participating in competitive sport, and boys who may never be exposed to dance outside of the school environment.

Governors and senior leaders can be key advocates in promoting access to high quality dance for all children and young people in their school, and ensuring it remains an entitlement within the curriculum in both primary and secondary schools.

## Links:

Dance in and Beyond Schools (new edition) available for free to One Dance UK members [www.onedanceuk.org](http://www.onedanceuk.org)

Dance in Schools: [www.onedanceuk.org/programme/children-young-people/dance-in-schools/](http://www.onedanceuk.org/programme/children-young-people/dance-in-schools/)

Callanan, M et al; NatCen Social Research, The PE and sport premium: an investigation in Primary Schools [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/489477/DFE-RR489\\_PE\\_and\\_sport\\_premium\\_an\\_investigation\\_in\\_primary\\_schools\\_-\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/489477/DFE-RR489_PE_and_sport_premium_an_investigation_in_primary_schools_-_final_report.pdf)

Physical Activity – Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/486622/Sporting\\_Future\\_ACCESSIBLE.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486622/Sporting_Future_ACCESSIBLE.pdf)

Commissioning Dance for Health and Wellbeing – Jan Burkhardt/Jo Rhodes [www.ahsw.org.uk/userfiles/files/vid\\_15997\\_Commissioning\\_Doc\\_Jan\\_Burkhardt\\_V6Final1V3.pdf](http://www.ahsw.org.uk/userfiles/files/vid_15997_Commissioning_Doc_Jan_Burkhardt_V6Final1V3.pdf)

Sport England: Towards an Active Nation [www.sportengland.org/media/10629/sport-england-towards-an-active-nation.pdf](http://www.sportengland.org/media/10629/sport-england-towards-an-active-nation.pdf)

## Acknowledgements

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# Key questions

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## Key questions for Governors

- **Are you aware of dance's place in the curriculum?**  
Find out which Key Stages have dance as a compulsory activity on page 4.
- **Does your school have a dedicated policy for dance?**  
See page 4 to discover how a dance policy can benefit schools.
- **Does your school have an Artsmark Award?**  
Artsmark celebrates schools that champion the arts. To find out more see page 4
- **How is the quality of dance teaching being monitored in your school?**  
Page 6 lists a number of CPD opportunities for both specialist and non-specialist teachers.
- **Does your school provide the pupils with the opportunity to gain a dance qualification?**  
There are a range of qualifications suited to pupils of all ages, see page 5 for further details.
- **Are your dance facilities safe and fit for purpose?**  
Links on page 6 include guidance on safe dance studios.
- **How are funds allocated to support the development of dance in your school?**  
See page 6 for some suggestions for resourcing dance.
- **Do you know what partnership organisations can support the delivery of dance in your school?**  
See page 7 for details of the types of organisations that can help.

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# Values and Ethos



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## What value does your school place on dance?

- Is dance genuinely valued by the school? Is that value reflected in curriculum allocation, resources, funding and opportunities?
- Is dance appreciated in all its varied and diverse forms?
- Does your school have an overall arts provision, of which dance is a part?
- Artsmark award celebrates schools that champion the arts and strive for excellence in their provision. Does your school have Artsmark? Does dance contribute to this award? Visit [www.artsmark.org.uk](http://www.artsmark.org.uk) for further information

## Are you aware of dance's place in the curriculum?

- Dance is a compulsory activity within the PE National Curriculum at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

- Dance should also be an integral part of the Early Learning Goals.
- Pupils in Key Stages 4 and 5 should have the option to study dance either for qualifications at GCSE, A/AS Level, or through vocational routes within Applied General Qualifications.
- A high quality dance experience should be inclusive, coherent, purposeful and progressive and enable children and young people to experience the roles of creator, performer, audience, critic and leader.

## Does your school have a dedicated policy for dance?

- A dance policy allows you to clearly establish the value that the school places on dance and communicate this vision to staff, pupils, parents, partners and the wider community.
- An effective policy for dance will ensure that all pupils have access to a high-quality dance education, encompassing the key elements of performing, composing/choreographing and appreciating.

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# Teaching

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## Are pupils given the opportunity to engage with a full range of dance activities in lessons?

- In order to achieve high quality outcomes in dance, pupils should have sustained opportunities to engage practically with both creating and performing dance, and use observation, oracy and literacy to communicate about what they do and see during their learning experiences.
- Is dance taught through a Performing Arts provision or through Physical Education? Are cross-curricular approaches embraced with subjects across the school? Are pupils developing a cultural understanding and awareness through the rich and diverse genres of dance?
- Is the dance experience at KS3 facilitating progress onto KS4 dance qualifications?

## How are pupils assessed in dance?

- Does your school's assessment policy take into account the needs of dance learning? i.e. are teachers considering the creating, observing, oracy and literacy

as well as the performative? Dance may be assessed alongside other activities for PE or performing arts. Is there an opportunity to comment on dance explicitly?

- Do teachers have sufficient training and experience to accurately and confidently assess their pupils in dance?

## How is the quality of dance teaching being monitored in your school?

- Are dance lessons observed and appraised? Are the staff conducting lesson observations suitably confident in evaluating the quality of this work?
- Are teachers given access to high-quality CPD in dance? Professional development is available for both specialist and non-specialist teachers. (See Links to CPD in Resources section)
- Is your school a member of a dance organisation who can support the delivery of high-quality dance in your school through access to resources and CPD e.g. One Dance UK (the Subject Association for Dance in schools), regional and national dance organisations. (Also refer to Partnerships section)

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# Opportunities

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## **Does dance take place in your school?**

- Is dance present both within the curriculum and as an after school activity?
- Is there a member of staff who takes lead responsibility for the quality of dance provision? Does this subject leader feel confident in their knowledge and understanding of how to support the teaching of dance in its artistic form? Do teachers know who to make best use of dance in their lessons?
- Is the provision for dance inclusive to all? Does it encourage and inspire both boys and girls? Are pupils with special educational needs and disabilities given the same opportunities for learning in and through dance? Do pupils from all religious and cultural backgrounds have the opportunity to take part in dance?

## **Does your school provide the pupils with the opportunity to gain a dance qualification?**

- There are a range of dance qualifications suited to pupils of all ages. Arts Award at all its different levels can be delivered through dance in both Primary and Secondary Schools.
- Secondary schools should consider GCSE Dance, A and AS Level Dance and Applied General Qualifications in performing arts, which can have a specialist route through dance at both levels 2 and 3. Examples of these include the Pearson BTEC in Performing Arts, University Arts of London Diplomas in Performance and Production Arts and OCR Cambridge Technical Diplomas in Performing Arts.

## **Does your school provide pupils with the opportunity to have additional dance provision?**

- Is there an extra-curricular dance programme on offer? Do students have access to a wide range of dance styles within this offer?
- Are pupils with talent in dance identified, and given opportunities to extend and develop their abilities further, whether this be within school, or signposted to other activity beyond the school? Are there opportunities for boys to be encouraged and excel in dance, as well as girls?
- Do pupils have opportunities to watch live, professional dance performances in local arts venues?

## **What opportunities do your pupils have to perform to an audience?**

- Giving children and young people the experience of presenting their work to an audience builds self-esteem and confidence, and can raise aspirations; alongside developing skills in physical interaction, collaborative working, verbal and non-verbal communication of ideas and emotions.
- Performance opportunities may be in school to peers, in assemblies or school events, and to parents and visitors. It could also be in other schools or venues as part of local or regional dance partnerships and events.
- Are there opportunities in your school for pupils of all abilities to perform their dance work to different audiences? Do these performances also inform discussions, reviews or creative writing in classroom activities? Are dance performances celebrated in your school? Are photographs of performances part of the display in public areas of the school?
- Has your school collated any evidence of the value and impact that the dance performances have had on the participants and audience members?

# Resources



## How is dance staffed in your school?

- Who teaches dance? Are they a specialist dance teacher, a PE specialist, or a teacher with a particular interest in dance?
- Do you employ specialist dance teachers from outside the school? What qualifications do you look for when appointing a dance teacher for your school? Dance teachers, artists and practitioners have varied training, experience and qualifications. Find out what qualifications you should look for here: [www.onedanceuk.org/programme/children-young-people/dance-in-schools/](http://www.onedanceuk.org/programme/children-young-people/dance-in-schools/)
- Do you have local networks which support the staffing of dance such as County Sports Partnerships, families of schools or secondary school academies who may have specialist dance teachers? (Also refer to Partnerships section.)

## Are your dance facilities safe and fit for purpose?

- What facilities does your school have to support a safe, high quality dance experience?
- Does the dance space have a clean floor, free of obstacles? Are changing facilities available nearby? Do the school guidelines ensure dance kit is safe and appropriate for the activity? Are there facilities to playback sound and video for teaching and are these housed safely?
- What other access to media is there available to support the teaching, learning and assessment of dance? (e.g. video cameras, Smart Boards, internet access, iPads). Dance is a transient art form and it is important for students and teachers to be able to capture work for analysis, evaluation and assessment, as well as observe professional works as part of a high quality learning experience.

## How are funds allocated to support the development of dance in your school?

- How are funds allocated for dance from the school budget? What is the funding used for? i.e. resources, materials, props, music, employing specialist dance teachers.
- For primary schools – are you using your School Sports Premium (SSP) to support and extend the teaching of dance in your school? What percentage of your SSP has been used to develop dance teaching and learning?
- Are you providing your staff with opportunities to access high quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in dance?

### Links:

One Dance UK: How to identify high quality dance provision in schools  
[www.onedanceuk.org/programme/children-young-people/dance-in-schools/](http://www.onedanceuk.org/programme/children-young-people/dance-in-schools/)

### CPD opportunities in dance

AQA (GCSE & A-Level Dance)  
[www.aqa.org.uk/professional-development](http://www.aqa.org.uk/professional-development)

One Dance UK [www.onedanceuk.org](http://www.onedanceuk.org)

CDET  
[www.cdet.org.uk/additional-study/continuing-professional-development](http://www.cdet.org.uk/additional-study/continuing-professional-development)

PEARSON (BTEC)  
<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/training-from-pearson-uk.html#step1>

University of the Arts London [www.arts.ac.uk/cpd/](http://www.arts.ac.uk/cpd/)

OCR  
[www.cpdhub.ocr.org.uk/desktopdefault.aspx](http://www.cpdhub.ocr.org.uk/desktopdefault.aspx)

Keynote [www.keynoteeducational.co.uk/](http://www.keynoteeducational.co.uk/)

Arts Council England's Quality Principles provide a useful framework to raise the standard of work for children and young people  
[www.artscouncil.org.uk/quality-metrics/quality-principles](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/quality-metrics/quality-principles)

### Safe dance spaces:

Guidance on safe dance studios (Free PDF download)  
[www.onedanceuk.org/resource/dance-studio-specification/](http://www.onedanceuk.org/resource/dance-studio-specification/)

[www.onedanceuk.org/programme/healthier-dancer-programme/industry-standards/improving-dance-floors/](http://www.onedanceuk.org/programme/healthier-dancer-programme/industry-standards/improving-dance-floors/)

# Partnerships

## Do you know what partnership organisations can support the delivery of dance in your school?

In schools, dance is represented by One Dance UK, which is a membership organisation and recognised by the Council for Subject Associations (CfSA). PE is represented by the Association for Physical Education (AfPE). Both of these organisations will signpost teachers to resources and specific CPD for dance. Examination boards for dance will also provide professional development for teachers specifically related to qualification requirements.

Dance partnerships may be developed between your school and:

### (1) Professional dance organisations

National and regional dance organisations can connect you with local dance teachers and community artists appropriate to your needs; they may be able to involve pupils in performance projects or could host dance events for schools and groups in your region. Collaborative projects between dance artists and teachers also support the development of teacher confidence, skills and understanding. You can find the nearest dance organisation to you, by using the link on this page: [www.onedanceuk.org/programme/u-dance/u-dance-regional-partners/](http://www.onedanceuk.org/programme/u-dance/u-dance-regional-partners/)

### (2) Community organisations

Community organisations may have particular skills in the teaching of different dance styles, and be able to provide the context for dance and arts-related work from specific countries and cultures.

Are there parents or other family members in your school community who have expertise you can use to bring new dance forms to your pupils?

### (3) Professional dance companies

Links can be made with dance companies, many of whom have an education provision and specialist dance artists who lead work with children and young people in schools. You can find out from your local theatre venue which dance companies are coming to perform and connect to them via their company websites. An allocation of your budget may be very useful for this purpose, particularly for KS4 and Post-16 qualifications.

### (4) Other Schools, FE and HE organisations

Do you belong to a family of schools where you can network with specialist dance teachers and share resources and professional development?

Dance can be used to positively support the transition of pupils between primary and secondary schools.

Secondary schools may also offer Dance Leaders awards, Gold Arts Award or community modules where students lead dance activity for younger participants. Are you able to create initiatives such as these which connect your schools?

Are there Further and Higher Education institutions in your locality who have dance students? Often undergraduate dance students want experience of working in education, or may have performance work they could bring to your school; this can generate renewed inspiration to your pupils, staff and the dance curriculum.

Have you connected to HE organisations and teaching schools, who are offering post graduate training in dance? This may enable further opportunities to inject new ideas into the dance teaching and learning in your school.

## How effective are these partnerships and who monitors them?

It is essential that all partnerships have a clear focus and that both parties agree the aims, roles and responsibilities that they have within it.

How will partnerships be monitored?

What is their sustainability for dance teaching and learning in your school?

The following information and guidance can be found on: [www.onedanceuk.org/programme/children-young-people/dance-in-schools/](http://www.onedanceuk.org/programme/children-young-people/dance-in-schools/)

- Case Studies about schools delivering high quality dance and naming links with dance organisations
- Find the nearest dance organisation to you, downloadable PDF listing organisations across England
- Information on finding dance artists for your school can be found via the link on this page

Partnerships for Learning: A Guide to Evaluating Arts Education Projects – Developed by Felicity Wolf and published by Arts Council England.

U.Dance framework (free resources and guidance when registering dance events): [www.onedanceuk.org/programme/u-dance/](http://www.onedanceuk.org/programme/u-dance/)



Partners:

[www.onedanceuk.org](http://www.onedanceuk.org)

[www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

[www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)



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