



Elmhurst School

Curriculum Plan

– academic and artistic

February 2010

Mission Statement

The mission of Elmhurst School for Dance is to provide a world-renowned centre of excellence for the training and education of dancers for Birmingham Royal Ballet and other national and international dance companies. This includes giving students a sound knowledge of allied dance genres, a quality academic education and a principled, caring, living and working environment, all combined to provide a solid foundation for their life-long learning.

Characteristics and Aims of Elmhurst School for Dance

The school selects students on the basis of their facility for classical ballet. They are assessed on their performance in ballet class at a preliminary and final audition. The audition takes the form of a visual assessment of the student's physical, musical and artistic ability and perceived potential as a performer. The final audition is supplemented by a physiotherapy/general health assessment.

The school is non selective in terms of academic ability. Within the academic faculty the aim is to provide students with a broad, balanced and appropriate education where they can achieve and indeed exceed their potential. SEN and EAL students are supported through individual lessons and in-class support. The academic curriculum is structured to facilitate the dance curriculum and to this end aspects of design technology are delivered through the art curriculum. Although games are not on the timetable as such boarding tutors make every possible effort to involve students in outdoor activities in the evenings and arrange visits to a wide variety of activity centres on weekends.

The classes are mixed ability in Y7 and Y8. In year 9 there is setting by ability in maths, English, science and French. The composition of the set is arrived at from a combination of objective test data, school examination results, teacher assessment and wide ranging discussions.

Academic Programme

Academic tuition is delivered by an experienced staff of well-qualified, graduate teachers. This aspect of the school's work is of central importance and students regularly achieve outstanding success in public examinations at GCSE and A-level. Form Tutors monitor the progress and welfare of each student, and pastoral care is provided through an extensive network of academic, residential and vocational staff. Internal academic assessment takes place throughout the year, and parents receive regular written reports. As well as the annual parent-teacher evenings for each year group, parents are welcome to contact the school at any time over academic matters.

A-level studies not only complement and enrich Elmhurst's vocational training but, in the event of a career cut short by injury or a change of aspiration, they constitute a reliable insurance policy. If a student decides to go to university after his/her final year of training, every support is given by the Principal and her staff.

Lower School Curriculum For Students Aged From 11 to 16

Key Stage 3

For the first three years (Years 7-9), all students study English, French, Mathematics, Science, Geography, History, PSHE (discreetly), Religious Education, Information Technology, Art, Drama and Music.

Key Stage 4

Students continue to Key Stage 4 by taking a range of subjects leading to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). For these two years (Years 10 and 11), most students take five full GCSE courses in the core subjects, together with Drama. Two further subjects are selected from the list of options. The majority of students will graduate with the equivalent of eight and a half GCSE passes, ranging through a dozen subjects.

Core subjects (full GCSE) English, English Literature, Mathematics, Science (double award), Drama

Optional subjects (two of the following)

Art, Music, Geography, History, French

PSHE / RE

All students study a range of issues which include topics such as animal experimentation, abortion, war and peace, prejudice, environmental issues, the origins of life, arguments for and against belief in God. At the end of the course, there is the opportunity to be entered for Module 2 (Key Beliefs, Ultimate Questions and Life Issues) of a GCSE Short Course in RE.

Upper School - Sixth Form Curriculum : 3 Year Course. (The third year is purely vocational.) For Students Aged From 16 to 19

A-level courses are modular in form, with students taking three modules of study at AS and a further three to attain the full A-level (A2). The school at present offers AS qualifications in Art, English Literature, French and Music. Students may also progress to A2 study in most of these subjects if satisfactorily passed at AS in the first year of the Sixth Form. As an alternative to one of these optional courses of academic study, students may select the course in Office & Administration Skills which has been designed to assist them with their text processing and ICT skills. In Year 6.2, as an alternative to the optional A2 subjects, there may be the opportunity to take the GCSE in Business & Communication Systems.

For those students whose first language is not English, we are able to offer, where appropriate, English as an Additional Language (EAL) in support of their academic and artistic studies. Due to the specialist nature of EAL, courses attract an additional fee of £500 per pupil per term. SEN support is also available for pupils with dyslexia or similar needs.

For students enrolling on 2009-2011 courses, i.e. those students who will be joining Year 6.1 in September 2009, the combination of subjects will be available according to the following option blocks:

	Block A 2009-2011	Block B 2009-2011
6.1	AS English Literature OR French	AS Music OR Art OR Business & Communication Systems
6.2	A2 English Literature, OR French	A2 Music OR Art OR GCSE Business & Communication Systems

Homework

Homework is an integral part of the learning process. It is to be used to help students to reinforce the work undertaken in the classroom and to prepare them for the independent study that will be expected of them in the Upper School. Students in Years 8-11 are scheduled to spend at least one hour each evening in supervised prep (Year 7- 45 minutes) and are also encouraged to spend other times on independent study making use of the IT room and library, reading around their subjects or researching and preparing for coursework and/or final examinations.

Students for whom English is not their first language

Wherever possible, ESOL students at the school are integrated into normal academic lessons following the same curriculum as their peers. Specific support is provided by the ESOL teacher. In certain cases ESOL students may focus on a reduced number of subjects at key stage 4. In the upper school ESOL students may not study traditional AS or A2 subjects but follow a structured programme of study with the ESOL specialist. Students are encouraged to take ESOL examinations where this is considered appropriate.

PSHE and Citizenship

All pupils will be taught a comprehensive PSHE and citizenship programme implicitly. The PSHE and citizenship programme is mapped across all curriculum areas.

Elmhurst School for Dance Lower School Vocational Curriculum For Students Aged From 11 to 16

Throughout the five year course of study in the lower school the intensity and expectation of achievement increases year by year. However, the main aim endorsed by the Artistic Director and all staff is to nurture the love and passion for dance in all students, and encourage and develop the freedom and exhilaration of movement aligned with the principals of classical ballet technique.

Students are assessed at regular intervals. The assessment procedure is clear and fair. Assessment policies and procedures are available to all students.

The lower school offers a five year course in Classical ballet and Related Dance Styles to students from year seven through to year eleven. Students are selected through the audition process for their love of dance, musicality, physical facility and potential. The emphasis of this course is to provide students, through intensive and dedicated training, the opportunity to lay the groundwork to become exceptional classical dancers.

Graduate dance students today, as well as being beautiful classical dancers, have to be versatile and be able to meet the extraordinary demands placed on them by the diverse repertoire and choreography of all major classical ballet companies. For this reason Elmhurst students train in many allied dance styles principally including contemporary and jazz.

This dance educational programme has received government recognition through the DCFS Music and Dance (Aided Places) Scheme which affords training opportunities for gifted students who may otherwise be unable to follow their chosen career path.

Throughout their training students are given performance opportunities in the School's productions in its own specially designed theatre and other venues. Lower School students may, from time to time, be selected by Birmingham Royal Ballet to appear in their productions at the Hippodrome Theatre in Birmingham and on National Tours.

All lower School students are encouraged to enter for the annual Choreographic Competition the finals of which are performed to an invited audience in our Elmhurst's own theatre. Year 11 students are coached to enter the School's Solo Competition to be sponsored from 2011 by Birmingham Royal Ballet.

Upon completion of the fifth year of training students have an automatic audition entry, if they so wish, into the Upper School course.

Summary of Course

Duration of Course: five years full time

Entry: Application, Audition and Interview

Minimum Acceptance age 11 years

Funding Status: Students may be either self funded or offered a DCFS Music and Dance award.

External Qualifications (optional) Royal Academy of Dance Vocational Graded Examinations.

Curriculum Lower School

YEARS 7&8	Classical Ballet Pointe Work (girls) Choreography Coaching Creative Dance Dance Studies Dance Styles Tap (year7) Jazz/Tap (year 8) Sthenos
YEAR 9	Classical Ballet Pointe Work (girls) Choreography Coaching Dance Styles Dance Studies Jazz/Tap Sthenos
YEAR10	Classical Ballet Pointe work (girls) GCSE Dance Choreography Coaching Dance Styles Dance Studies Jazz/Tap Sthenos Flamenco
Year 11	Classical Ballet Pointe Work (girls) Repertoire/Solos Contemporary Choreography Upper Body (boys) Supported Adage Dance Styles Virtuosity boys) Dance Studies Jazz/Tap Sthenos Flamenco

Elmhurst School for Dance Upper School Vocational Curriculum For Students Aged From 16.

CLASSICAL BALLET TECHNIQUE

Level I (6.1)

Students are required to:

Execute all required vocabulary with technical accuracy and confidence.

Demonstrate a suitable level of coordination and control.

Have a sense of sound timing, and movement dynamics.

Demonstrate versatility of movement quality.

Have a sense of performance and the ability to communicate / interact effectively with an audience.

Respond well to direction.

Be aware of safe dance practice within the studio and the theatre.

Be aware of applied anatomy and the physiological mechanics of the body as an instrument of performance.

Demonstrate commitment and discipline.

Demonstrate appropriate grooming and professional conduct.

Achieve an appropriate level of professional development.

Level II (6.2)

As above with the following additions;

Integrate technique with stagecraft and performance skills to a greater extent.

Demonstrate sound execution of virtuoso vocabulary at an appropriate level.

Achieve a suitable degree of contextual knowledge of dance related subjects..

Level III (6.3)

As above with the following additions:

Demonstrate a technical and artistic standard appropriate to that required by the profession for employment.

Demonstrate the ability to interact professionally in all circumstances.

Demonstrate self awareness and suitable self management skills.

The classical ballet curriculum is supported by Mat Mattox based jazz technique and Cunningham/Graham based contemporary technique.

Students are assessed at regular intervals. The assessment procedure is clear and fair. Assessment policies and procedures are available to all students.

Elmhurst School for Dance aims to produce excellent classical dancers with the emphasis on purity of line, musicality, artistry and a strong technique. Most world class classical ballet companies have a repertoire which includes strong elements of all dance disciplines. It is not sufficient for dance students to be proficient in classical ballet alone. For this reason Elmhurst offers a comprehensive programme to include Contemporary, Jazz and Flamenco. Students also study intensively Pas de Deux, Solos, Upper Body for male students, Pointe Work for female students and, in conjunction with Birmingham Royal Ballet, Repertoire.

Sixth formers study for the National Diploma in Professional Dance, awarded by Trinity College London. This is a level six qualification, which is recognised on the new Further Education Qualification Framework as the vocational equivalent of an honours degree. It consists of modules that are assessed both internally and externally and moderated externally throughout the three year course.

Students auditioning for this course are accepted for their physical facility, technique and musical aptitude. In their final two years of training students may be selected to dance with Birmingham Royal Ballet in its productions in Birmingham and on National and International tours.

All Upper School students are intensively coached on a one to one basis in preparation for entering the annual Solo Competition the finals of which are performed to an invited audience in our theatre. Additionally the students are encouraged to produce a piece of choreography to be performed in the School's annual Choreographic Competition. During the last two years of study students may be selected to perform in various outreach programmes. This gives students valuable performance experience
Birmingham Royal Ballet's Learning Department are now recruiting sixth formers to assist in their Schools Outreach Programme.

Graduates are given guidance, during their final year, on preparing their Curriculum Vitae with appropriate photographs, DVDs and portfolios prior to auditioning for professional dance companies.

Summary of Course

Duration of Course: three years full time

Entry: application, audition and interview

Minimum acceptance age: 16 years

Funding status: students may be either self funded or offered a Dance and Drama award.

External qualifications (optional): Royal Academy of Dance Vocational Graded Examinations

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Upper School Curriculum

Classical Ballet and Related Dance Styles

FIRST YEAR	Classical Ballet Pointe work and virtuosity (Women) Virtuosity (Men) Classical Repertoire and Solos Pas de Deux Contemporary Choreography Jazz Technique and Styles /Tap Musical Theatre workshops Flamenco Sthenos Upper Body - Men Integrated professional studies Benesh Notation
SECOND YEAR	Classical Ballet Pointe work and virtuosity (Women) Virtuosity (Men) Classical Repertoire and Solos Pas de Deux Contemporary Choreography Jazz Technique and Styles /Tap Musical Theatre workshops Flamenco Sthenos Upper Body - Men Integrated professional studies Benesh Notation
THIRD YEAR	Classical Ballet Pointe work and virtuosity (Women) Virtuosity (Men) Classical Repertoire and Solos Pas de Deux Contemporary Choreography Jazz Technique and Styles /Tap Musical Theatre workshops Sthenos Upper Body - Men Integrated professional studies

All year groups undertake workshops with visiting teachers, dancers and company directors where appropriate.

Qualification undertaken - National Diploma in Professional Dance validated by Trinity College London.