

Access and Participation Statement July 2019

Elmhurst Ballet School, in Association with Birmingham Royal Ballet, is committed to the innovative, world-leading education of talented, passionate and committed young ballet dancers, regardless of their ethnic or socio-economic background. The school takes a holistic approach to specialist training; believing that for students to thrive in a specialist environment, the three components of Live, Dance and Learn are equally important. We aim to create elite classical ballet dancers who are healthy, inquisitive and grounded people.

Elmhurst is committed to improving access, success and progression for students from all backgrounds. The School sets about doing this in a number of ways. This Access and Participation Statement summarises the work that Elmhurst does to address this ambition.

Characteristics of the School

Young people (approx. 85% of whom receive financial assistance to train at the School) join Elmhurst from eleven years of age and graduate following a three year Upper School programme at nineteen. Most students are new to boarding when they join Elmhurst. Up to 125 students live on-site, and up to a further forty-seven students live nearby at The Elms, students in Graduate Year; Elmhurst Ballet Company live independently in the locality.

The School aims to admit as many UK students as possible but enjoys having a number of overseas students who add value to the school community through their differing cultural backgrounds as well as high standards of dance. In the academic year 2018/19; 22% of Elmhurst's students were from the Midlands; 19% from the London & South East, 19% from the South West, 22% from the North, 1% from Scotland, 3% from Wales and 14% from overseas including; Singapore, Italy, Spain, Germany, Japan, France, Norway, Australia, South Africa and China.

6% of students are from different ethnic backgrounds. The School is keen to increase the ethnic diversity of its population as we believe that ballet should be accessible to everyone who has the potential and interest.

In 2018/19 we had 26/183 (14.2%) pupils from households with income less than £21k and typically around 93% of students would attend their local state school if they were not at Elmhurst.

Funding to Support Access & Opportunity

There are various ways in which Elmhurst is able to support young people wishing to join to school. With the School's ethos that 'talent is classless' we are able to provide bursary support to enable places.

There are 112 MDS assisted places (means-tested and enables students from households with income less than £13,000 to pay no fees at all and receive additional support for uniform, travel).

Upper School students benefit from Dance & Drama Awards funding which is administered by the Education Funding Skills Agency, this scheme is also means-tested.

In addition to the government schemes the school works hard to fundraise for bursary support. The School has its own means-tested bursary programme and also offers one Governor Scholarship per year for an Upper School student who is exceptionally talented and would not otherwise be able to afford to take up a place at the school.

As part of the School's extended provision there is a weekend Young Dancers pre-vocational programme for which the School also provides bursaries of up to 90% for low income households.

Fair & Effective Admissions Policy

The School has a clear admissions policy and audition procedure and fee structure which are made available to prospective students.

In accordance with our Admissions Policy, applicants to Elmhurst Ballet School are chosen solely on the basis of their talent and potential to develop the skills required to become a professional ballet dancer.

Students are admitted to the school following an audition process. Students who complete the Lower School at Elmhurst are required to re-audition for entry to the Upper School. The School abides by the admission conventions of the DFE *Music and Dance Scheme* (MDS) and the Education Funding & Skills Agency's *Dance and Drama Award* (DADA). No preference is given in the admissions process to siblings of current students, children of former students or children of members of staff.

Elmhurst works with other national dance programmes such as Birmingham Royal Ballet's Dance Track, a programme which runs in state schools in areas of high deprivation across Birmingham city. Students from this programme are signposted to audition for Elmhurst and Elmhurst staff visit the programme to work with teachers to identify talented young people with the potential for full time ballet training.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

We encourage students to tell us about any special educational needs and disabilities as early as possible so that we can offer appropriate support. The school supports young people with SEND and EAL as necessary and within the resources available to the school.

The SEND specialist works with academic and artistic teams to ensure pupils with additional needs are provided with the necessary support in both academic and dance lessons in order

that they can reach their full potential, with differentiation in teaching and learning and one-to-one support where appropriate.

Outreach

Elmhurst is committed to working with young people from diverse and less advantaged backgrounds to widen participation in dance, encourage more diversity of students interested in vocational training, grow audiences for dance and identify young people with potential to take up vocational dance training. The Outreach programme is led by final year students in Elmhurst Ballet Company which provides students with excellent early teaching experiences and involves them in the development of the programme and its delivery. In 18/19 students worked with approximately 450 young people in a local Primary & Secondary state schools with high levels of deprivation and diversity. The School is keen to develop its outreach programme further and, in the future, hopes to raise funds to build a community studio to bring groups from different communities to Elmhurst as well as travelling to them. The School is not in receipt of any funds to support its outreach work and therefore does as much as it can with limited resource.

In addition 240 young people take part in weekend dance classes on Elmhurst's Young Dancers Programme which take place in Birmingham, Sunderland, Manchester and Plymouth. Entry to this programme is by audition and many of the young people who join it go on to full-time vocational dance training.

Equality & Diversity

The School has an Equality and Diversity Policy which is reviewed annually.

The promotion of equality and diversity is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Elmhurst Ballet School. Elmhurst is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's race, sex, disability, religion or belief, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity or any other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Diversity enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. We concentrate on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish. We believe that the educational experience can only be enriched if young people are exposed to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are developing.

Elmhurst Ballet School's aim is for our workforce and student body to be truly representative of all sections of society and our wider school community, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best. We welcome applications from prospective students and staff from diverse backgrounds.

Objectives 2019-20

To continue to secure improvements for access, success and progression for students from all backgrounds Elmhurst will:

- Develop a national auditions programme to ensure cost of travel isn't a barrier to auditioning for full time training.
- Continue to raise funds to support student bursary's to enable access to training.

- Build on existing relationships with local state primary and secondary schools through its outreach programme to engage with more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Continue to work with Birmingham Royal Ballet and the Royal Opera House to seek out talented young people with the potential for specialise training regardless of their background.
- Grow the number of male students studying in Year 7 and the Upper School through targeted marketing.
- Aim to increase the number of BAME students attending the school through the above activity from 6% to 8%.

Review and Evaluation

The School reviews and evaluates all of its activity through an annual self-evaluation process which is reported in the Self Evaluation Form. This form is shared with appropriate statutory bodies as well as with internal staff. The effectiveness of the School is also reviewed through Independent School Inspectorate and OFSTED inspections as well as validated by the Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre. Actions to secure further improvements are sought through these processes.

This Statement will be reviewed annually. The next review will take place in June 2020 ready for academic year 20/21.

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