

## Why try Dance?

Dance is expression through movement, using physical, mental, creative and technical skills in almost limitless possibilities. To dance is to develop fitness, communication, confidence and perseverance as well as a creative and collaborative voice. The dance programme at Millfield is designed to build a strong foundation in relevant styles, to build community and a sense of creative adventure as well as provide opportunities to extend the students creativity, physicality and enjoyment.



## Who can do it?

Dance is open to all students as part of the sport programme, with most students choosing at least three sessions from over 35 classes per week. We offer specialist tuition in contemporary dance, ballet, street dance and musical theatre with options to take graded exams in RAD Ballet and Rambert Contemporary. Additionally, there are weekly sessions in jazz, contemporary ballet, choreography, dance fitness, pointe work, commercial, and dance repertoire. For those looking to dance at a high level, we offer performance groups in street dance and Year 9, GCSE dance, three auditioned dance companies, a vocational group and a mentor programme, with the option to be dancing for 8-12 sessions per week. The programme is structured along three pathways: open classes for all, development classes for those with some experience and specialist classes for those already dancing at a high level. Individual development plans for those looking to specialise in dance are offered, with tailored private tuition and support available.



## Highlights from 2023-24

- **Frankenstein Dance Show** performance, an adaptation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Taking inspiration from Mark Bruce's production, the performance featured over 40 of our full-time dancers.
- The dance, drama and music departments came together for the fabulous student performance of *Legally Blonde*.
- **Staged - An Evening of Dance and Drama**. In February, our students presented a variety of short pieces, ranging from GCSE, A level, LAMDA scripted and devised work.
- Throughout the year, the department held Tea and Performing Arts events to the public, allowing students to share works in an informal setting open to the public.

**Director of Dance and Drama:** Rhian Fox

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**Specialist Dance Coaches:** Robert Guy, Miranda Speed, Lucy Turner, Rebecca Varley



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## Performance programme

At the start of each year, students audition for a place in one of the three dance companies, Bazique, La Volta and Veleta. All company members attend technique classes in at least two styles, plus company sessions in which performance work is choreographed through a mix of teacher-led and workshop style sessions.

For those students considering further dance training, the Aspire Dance Programme explores current dance practice through high-level dance study of choreography, key works and repertoire as well as developing the precision and complexity of performance work.

Performance projects run throughout the year, including the annual full-scale dance show, collaborations with music and art departments for wider school events, evenings of drama and dance and the informal 'Tea and Dance' performances. Companies also participate in regional and national dance platforms and the school hosts workshops and performances from visiting dance artists, aiming to extend the students' dance experience.



*"Since joining Millfield dance, I have seen noticeable progression not only through my movement and technique but also within my confidence on stage. The wide variety of classes available from RAD graded ballet though to street dance allows everyone to possess the ability to become a versatile dancer."*

*On top of this, we have the opportunity to participate in inspirational workshops from companies such as Mark Bruce. My favourite moment has to be when we perform in our annual dance show as it is the time when we can showcase our hard work and perform as a team".*

- Bo Edwards

## Success stories and future stars

Noah joined Millfield on a dance and athletics scholarships in Lower Sixth, following a multi-sport programme in dance, athletics and playing a vital role in the 1st XV rugby team. He studied contemporary dance, musical theatre and ballet and was a key member of Bazique and Aspire Dance companies. He played the Prince in 2022 production of Cinderella and was dance captain in his final year. Noah represented England at the prestigious 2023 Dance World Cup in Portugal, and gained a scholarship to St Mary's College of California to continue dance and rugby at university level.



Ilaria combines dance with gymnastics, having represented both the London region and the Southwest in regional and national competitions, including winning the British silver medal in the WG Youth category 2022. She follows a specialist dance programme, training in ballet, contemporary and choreography as well as being a dance mentor and captain. She achieved a level 9 in GCSE dance and was selected to attend the Bolshoi Ballet Summer Intensive 2023.