



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Schools in North London Jump at the Chance to Dance

The Jack Petchey Foundation and Royal Academy of Dance have launched a pilot dance programme in four London boroughs – ***Step into Dance***

World leaders in Dance Education, Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) are proud to announce the new and exciting dance initiative ***Step into Dance***, an open access pilot dance programme in the four London boroughs of Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington. The programme is led by the RAD and funded by The Jack Petchey Foundation.

The £65,000 project aims to provide a fully inclusive dance programme open to all secondary schools within the pilot areas, at no financial cost to the school, in order to widen participation in dance. The programme is designed to introduce extra curricular dance classes for 11-16 year old male and female students, regardless of previous dance experience or ability and whether or not they already have existing dance teaching provision. The programme offers a diverse range of dance including ballet, jazz, street dance, capoeira and creative. Andrew Billington, Director of The Jack Petchey Foundation, remarked;

“We want to encourage more schools in London to take up dance. This pilot project gives girls and boys a chance to take part and enjoy the experience. It’s an exciting project and the showing of work will be a revelation.”

Many schools took part in taster sessions in November and December last year and the programme was then tailored by Project Manager Anita Wadsworth to suit the requirements of each of the schools ensuring that everyone can take part.

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Step into Dance launched in January 2007 and is currently running in 24 schools. Over 400 students are participating and more schools are set to start the programme after Easter. Due to demand, the RAD has extended the programme to include more schools and there is a waiting list of schools across London wanting to participate in the programme.

In Haringey at Fortismere School just one of the participating schools in that borough the project has given students the opportunity to learn about different dance genres. Their teacher, Claire Dohk-Olsen, comments;

“As far as the sessions with Heather have gone both myself and the students have been really pleased, the girls are creating some really interesting and challenging choreography and are feeling much more at ease with contemporary dance. As a result my intake at GCSE has trebled!! Due to the continuity of the sessions I can see a real improvement in the students’ fluidity of movement, general technique and flexibility.”

The training takes place until July when students will have the opportunity to *step into the spotlight* and perform in front of their peers, friends, family and the local community at an end of term performance at the Bloomsbury Theatre, Saturday 14 July. Enthusiasm was the only criterion for application to the *Step into Dance* programme.

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Notes for Editors

The Royal Academy of Dance is one of the world’s leading dance education providers and is a prominent contributor to the global dance community. The Royal Academy of Dance promotes knowledge, understanding and practice of dance internationally. It seeks to accomplish its mission through promoting dance, educating and training students and teachers and providing examinations to monitor and reward achievement. It has approximately 13,500 members in 79 countries, approximately one third of its members are RAD Registered Teachers, training and inspiring young people every day. Although classical ballet is at its core the Academy offers a far wider range of dance and forms and works with renowned teachers and choreographers on a regular basis to ensure that delivery is always of the highest standard.

The Jack Petchey Foundation, established in 1999, offers grants to programmes and projects that benefit young people aged 11 – 25 in London and Essex. The Foundation is eager to help young people take advantage of a range of opportunities and to play their part in society.

Grants are given through different programmes including: Achievement Award Scheme, Leader Award Scheme, Projects Grants and Sponsorship

- So far, through its various funding schemes, the Foundation has given over £30 million and has a £12 million grants budget for 2007
- Over 1,000 achievement award programmes are running in schools and youth organisations
- The foundation operates in London, Essex and Portugal. As well as the successful Achievement and Leader Awards Scheme the Foundation is also funding other projects including dance, public speaking, young enterprise, overseas adventures and community schemes, out of school hours learning programmes, the London wide Summer Uni initiative. It has recently formally joined London Legacy 2020 and allocated £10 million to support programmes related to opportunities created by the Olympics. Part of this sum will be channeled through initiatives supported by the East London Business Alliance (ELBA).
- Examples of a few of their current partners include the Hampstead Theatre Group, The University of East London, The Scout Association and London Youth (the federation of London youth groups)

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