



Arts Award Case Study from Leicester based dance company - Moving Together

Who Are We?

We are Moving Together, a creative dance company based in Leicester specialising in Arts Award delivery for young people age 5-25. Through the various programmes we offer we aim to provide young people with quality dance training alongside achieving a nationally recognised qualification in the arts. As an organisation we recognise the importance of understanding dance in a wider sense; watching live performance, developing personal practice through interlinking with different art forms, researching advanced practitioners and arts organisations, and extending leadership skills through planning, delivering and evaluating projects. The Arts Award provides the perfect platform to contextualise dance in both a practical and theoretical sense, opening up the minds of our participants to the different ways in which they can learn and appreciate the art form.

As an organisation we have been delivering the Arts Award for over 4 years within Leicester and the East Midlands to a wide range of participants. Back in 2013/2014 we were given Good Practice Centre status from Arts Award, and currently are part of the Good Practice Centre Mentoring Programme. We regularly provide Discover and Explore Arts Award programmes to Primary Schools either through weekly workshops or intensively by interlinking with areas of the curriculum. The Bronze, Silver and Gold programmes we offer are available to Secondary Schools and Colleges, as well as through extra-curricular opportunities linked to De Montfort University. The latter is our most long-standing programme where we provide the chance for young people age 11-18 to access their Arts Award classes within the campus facilities.

Since our first Arts Award project in summer 2012, we have supported over 450 children and young people to achieve their Arts Award qualification through our programmes. We currently have over 195 participants accessing our various Arts Award projects during 2015/2016.

Embedding Arts Award

We believe a key to our success in embedding Arts Award within practical dance programmes. Ultimately, the passion for dance and the desire to take part practically in whatever the style is the reason why young people become involved in the projects. As an organisation promoting youth dance opportunities we have been successful in a variety of small and large scale events, our most recent achievement seeing our cohort of Gold participants attending U.Dance 2015 in Plymouth followed by representing England at the first ever youth dance platform in Belfast, Northern Ireland. These fantastic opportunities can most definitely be incorporated within the Arts Award framework, and it is extremely important to continue to capitalise on these achievements in order to embed the award within the practical exploration.

Discover & Explore Arts Awards – Primary Schools

In our Primary School projects we utilise the Arts Award log books that can be purchased on the website (www.artsaward.org.uk). These provide a sound framework for the programme and allow us to plan each session around the content within the award. The Discover and Explore programmes are introductory awards and therefore aim to establish the children's connection with the arts world. There are opportunities to learn about famous practitioners, to practice different dance styles such as Bollywood, Salsa and Contemporary, to perform this work to an audience and to pass on skills to others. We ensure dance is the main art form we focus on throughout the programmes, whilst still introducing links with other art forms such as music and drama.

Bronze, Silver & Gold Arts Awards – Secondary Schools, Colleges and extra-curricular

We tend to offer the Bronze Award over half an academic year, the Silver Award over a full academic year, and the Gold Award between one and two academic years. These Awards which are aimed at young people aged 11 plus, are much more in-depth and particularly at the higher levels, encourage more independent exploration into the arts. After testing multiple methods of delivery, we found it most successful when the classes are split half theory and half practical. There are many practical and theoretical links throughout the Awards, however all practical discovery must be documented so we have found the most effective way to provide time for this is to split the session in half. We see real importance in providing practical opportunities each week to ensure the continued personal development of each of our participants.

Within all of our programmes we ensure we arrange for professional artists to come in to deliver workshops and talks, and try to interlink with a local arts organisation and have a tour around their facilities. We offer performance opportunities and work experience for our young people, as well as taking them to see live shows.

Tips for delivering Arts Award:

1. **INTERLINK** Arts Award within the programmes you are already offering – there will be many opportunities your participants already access that can be directly referenced for their Arts Award.
2. **ALLOW TIME** to complete the necessary theoretical elements of the award. This might be through holding an intensive day where participants can gather all of their work together or by providing drop-in sessions with a specialist Arts Award advisor.
3. **ENCOURAGE** your participants to see the **VALUE** of Arts Award within their day to day lives! Though the award is obviously fantastic for CVs/applying to University etc, it is also an excellent tool in developing a well-rounded, confident and equipped young artist.
4. **EMPHASISE THE IMPORTANCE OF PRACTICAL DEVELOPEMNT**. Often people see Arts Award as a heavily theoretical programme – this doesn't have to be the case! Make sure your participants know how important it is to keep dancing and developing their own practice (this can all be incorporated into the award!)
5. **ENJOY** the vast amount of opportunities Arts Award has to offer, and take advantage of the **SUPPORT** that is available to practitioners delivering the qualifications.

For more information on Arts Award go to: www.artsaward.org.uk