

# Boys Dance Experience Day 2024

By Jo Hodson-Prior, PGCE Dance Coordinator and Professional Studies Tutor at Chichester University

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***'Working on this project highlighted the immense value of involving boys in dance. It provided them with a creative space to explore dance, build trust between each other, and gain confidence in performing. Seeing all the boys commit to their performances, support one another, and celebrate each other's success, was truly inspiring.'***

Charlotte Lay (PGCE Dance Student 2024-2025)

***'I enjoyed watching all of the different types of dancing and learning from others.'***

Zack (student from SRWA)

On Monday 16th December over 100 boys from schools in Sussex and Hampshire, took part in our boys' dance event at the University of Chichester. The intention of the day was to provide a safe space for boys to share their work and hopefully inspire and motivate them to continue dancing. Our 10 PGCE Dance students each brought a boys' dance group from their placement schools, as a culmination of one of their Subject Specific PGCE directed tasks. This year the showcase was supported by Fuzzy Logic, who provided an insight into the youth company and facilitated a workshop for all participants and JP Omari (StreetFunk) who led the finale and provided a guest performance from his all-male hip-hop group Y2K. Boys dance is an aspect of the PGCE dance course that we work hard to develop and promote, recognising that it is an aspect of dance education which can be problematic, notably as a result of gender stereotypes and lack of provision in some school contexts (Risner, 2014; Purcell, 2010; Stinson, 2005). The unique nature of dance allows it to be a subject that is accessible for all pupils, and we hope our PGCE dance students will become pioneers in promoting inclusive practice and advocating for the importance of dance in education.

## THE EVENT PROVIDED OPPORTUNITIES:

- For partnership schools to share their excellent practice in widening the participation of boys in Dance.
- For boys to perform in a professional setting, including an audience of University Tutors, dance teachers from schools, the professional dancers and their peers.
- For PGCE students to showcase the work they have completed in school and provide a contextual introduction for the audience. This is an excellent additional experience in teacher training for our PGCE dance students, highlighting the inclusive nature of dance practice.
- For male dancers in years 7 – 13 to see live, inspirational, performance and benefit from a workshop led by Ollie and Lizanne from Fuzzy Logic dance company.

The morning was a celebration of the incredible work being carried out across the University partnership to promote boys' dance, and the boys left feeling inspired and proud that they had been part of this very special event.



***'Celebrating boys in dance is central to what we do at ZoieLogic Dance Theatre and vital to the creative arts. The Chichester Boys Dance Event is a brilliant platform for local boys to perform—many for the first time! It's always inspiring to see the support and camaraderie between schools. We loved attending, delivering movement workshops, and working with such talented and enthusiastic young men. They are the future of dance, and we can't wait to see their journeys unfold!'***

Ollie Webb, Project Coordinator, ZoieLogic Dance Theatre

***'The boys loved the workshop and a few members of the company took a leaflet about joining Fuzzy Logic.'***

Sophie Jones, PGCE Dance Student 2024-2025

***'Our school has taken part in the Boy's Dance event for the past 3 years. It has really helped to raise the profile of boys' dance within our school, and the students who take part usually come back again the following year as they enjoy it so much. It is also a great opportunity for students to see work from other schools, build confidence in sharing their work with others, and develop skills in collaborating with others'.***

Ali Askew, Subject leader for Dance SRWA and PGCE Dance mentor

***"Dance has had an everlasting impact on my life, so I set up Streetfunk - a multi award winning Streetdance school to do the same for young people across East and West Sussex. There is still a huge stigma towards boys dancing, and it is my lifelong mission to combat that and show the benefits and huge impact that Dance can have in all aspects of boys' lives.***

***The Boys Dance Event is a huge opportunity to bring these boys together and for them to inspire and be inspired. Jo Hodson-Prior and the University of Chichester are pioneering something that needs to be done by dance organisations and communities across the UK - PROMOTING BOYS' DANCE. Long may it continue with more funds and resources so that parents, friends, family and sponsors can attend this event and cause a ripple effect across all communities."***

JP Omari, Director of Streetfunk Dance CIC

***'Working with the group of boys from my placement school, was an absolute joy. Watching students who previously didn't know one another, come together to form a friendship through dance was incredible. One student even wanted to support other schools' performances, rather than having lunch! The platform formed a sense of community for those boys involved.'***

Tegan Lewinton (PGCE Dance Student 2024-2025)



***'Taking part in boys dance has been so eye opening. With a company of 32 boys, they introduce themselves as a brotherhood and they pride themselves on supporting each other throughout the whole time they are with the school. The day brings students together and allows them to spark conversation around boys' dance. I have never felt so much pride being a dance teacher, knowing that boys' dance is growing and growing.'***

Sophie Jones (PGCE Dance Student 2024-2025)

## **ABOUT FUZZY:**

Fuzzy, ZoieLogic Dance Theatre's male youth dance companies, are nationally acclaimed for pushing the boundaries of dance for boys and young men. Through our weekly dance classes and performances, you will build skills, explore self-expression and be part of our trail blazing youth dance companies. Our expert instructors specialise in working with boys and young men, we also offer inclusive classes designed for those with autism and sensory differences. Since 2000 we have been supporting and developing young dancers - now it's your turn!

To come along to a free taster class contact Ollie at [ollie@zoielogic.co.uk](mailto:ollie@zoielogic.co.uk)

To find out more about ZoieLogic Dance Theatre's youth companies visit our website [zoielogic.co.uk/join-our-youth-companies/](https://zoielogic.co.uk/join-our-youth-companies/)

### **The schools represented this year were:**

- Purbrook Park
- Park Community School
- The Angmering School
- Wildern
- Thornden
- Bishop Luffa School
- St Edmunds RC School
- Steyning Grammar School
- St Philip Howard Catholic School
- Sir Robert Woodard Academy
- Y2K (StreetFunk)
- The Petersfield School

For further information about the PGCE Dance course at Chichester University please contact Jo Hodson-Prior [J.hodson-prior@chi.ac.uk](mailto:J.hodson-prior@chi.ac.uk)

## REFERENCE LIST:

Purcell T, Jay M. (2010). Stigma and Perseverance in the Lives of Boys Who Dance: An Empirical Study of Male Identities in Western Theatrical Dance Training. *Journal of Dance Education* Volume 10, Number 3: 90-92.

Risner D. (2014) Bullying victimisation and social support of adolescent male dance students: an analysis of findings, *Research in Dance Education*, 15:2, 179-201, DOI: 10.1080/14647893.2014.891847

Stinson, S. (2005) 'The Hidden Curriculum of Gender in Dance Education', *Journal of Dance Education*, 5:2, 51-57

**Image 1:** JP Omari with Alison Askew (Subject leader for Dance SRWA) and students from Sir Robert Woodard Academy

**Image 2:** Students from Purbrook Park School

**Image 3:** Students from Purbrook Park School