Dance Curriculum Objectives- EYFS to Year 2

Progression and continuity in body and movement, space, relationships, dynamics, composition, performance, evaluation and musicality.

Curriculum rationale: Dance is used as a practical context for meeting statutory physical-development and PE expectations while supporting creativity, imagination, communication and expressive movement. The progression moves from exploration, imitation and expression in EYFS, to increasingly controlled, purposeful and linked movement in Year 1, and towards composition, refinement and communication in Year 2. Children repeatedly revisit core movement concepts while increasing the challenge through space, dynamics, relationships, musicality, sequencing and performance.

Aspect	EYFS- Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Body & movement	Explore different ways of moving the whole body and individual body parts. Explore a range of body shapes. Move safely with increasing body awareness. Develop balance, coordination, strength and agility through movement. Move from one position to another with increasing control. Begin to start and stop movement in response to a cue.	Demonstrate increasing control and coordination. Isolate movement of different body parts. Travel using different locomotor actions. Combine travelling, turning, jumping, balancing and gestures. Develop agility, balance, flexibility and strength. Move with increasing awareness of individual body parts.	Perform a wider range of actions with control and coordination. Isolate and combine movements of different body parts. Use turning, jumping, balancing, gesturing, travelling and stillness. Link actions smoothly. Apply agility, balance, coordination, strength and flexibility within dance.
Space & spatial awareness	Explore personal and general space. Move safely around others. Explore different levels, directions and pathways. Explore different sizes of movement and shapes. Begin to understand how movement changes when space changes.	Use personal and general space safely. Travel in different directions and pathways. Change direction on cue. Explore low, middle and high levels. Make and change shapes at different levels. Explore changes in size, direction, pathway and distance. Begin to judge space in relation to others.	Change direction, level, pathway, speed and shape intentionally. Accurately judge direction, distance and level. Use different formations. Move safely and effectively in relation to others. Transition between movements and formations with increasing fluency.
Relationships & collaboration	Observe and copy movements. Begin to move alongside a partner. Take turns and respond to another person's movement. Join in with simple group movement. Begin to lead and follow simple actions.	Work cooperatively with a partner. Watch, copy, lead and follow. Meet and part. Move alongside a partner. Begin to mirror simple movements. Work as part of a small group. Maintain awareness of others when performing.	Work effectively with a partner or group. Mirror and copy accurately. Lead and follow. Meet and part. Perform in unison. Explore simple canon. Maintain timing and spatial awareness when working collaboratively.
Dynamics & quality of movement	Explore fast and slow. Explore strong and light movements. Explore big and small movements. Explore smooth, sharp, heavy, gentle, still and energetic movements. Begin to change movement quality in response to music or an idea.	Explore and apply fast/slow, strong/light and sudden/sustained. Change speed or energy within a movement. Respond to changes in music through movement. Perform movements with increasing control and clarity.	Apply contrasting dynamics such as fast/slow, strong/light, heavy/gentle and sudden/sustained. Change movement quality intentionally. Use facial expression and body language to communicate mood or feeling. Perform with increasing control, precision and expression.

Creating, performing & evaluating	Copy and repeat simple movement patterns. Select movements to represent an idea, object, animal or character. Join two or more actions together. Perform familiar movements for others. Watch and talk about dance, expressing likes, dislikes and feelings.	Copy and remember short movement phrases. Link 2–4 movements into a phrase. Create a simple movement phrase from a stimulus. Repeat a phrase accurately. Establish a clear beginning and ending. Perform to an audience. Begin to describe what worked well.	Create a dance with a clear beginning, middle and ending. Select and organise movements to communicate an idea. Create, repeat and develop a movement motif. Link phrases into a longer sequence. Teach a short sequence to others. Rehearse and refine a performance. Perform confidently. Identify strengths and a specific improvement.
Responding to stimuli & musicality	Respond to music, percussion, songs, rhymes, stories, images, objects and sounds. Notice changes in music such as tempo, volume and rhythm. Move in response to musical changes. Use imagination to represent ideas through movement.	Respond to music, percussion, stories, objects, images and video. Identify and respond to changes in tempo, rhythm and dynamics. Use movement to represent characters, actions, ideas or feelings. Begin to match movement to a beat or musical phrase.	Respond creatively to music, stories, images, photographs, objects, voice and sound. Respond to rhythm, beat, pattern, tempo and dynamics. Use movement vocabulary such as dart, glide, slither, spring, twist, curl, stretch and collapse. Use props safely and purposefully where appropriate. Use movement to communicate character, mood, narrative or abstract ideas.

Suggested progression model for teachers

Stage	Core progression	What this means in practice
EYFS	Explore → respond → express	Children develop confidence, body awareness, spatial awareness and a broad movement vocabulary through play, imagination, music and adult-guided challenges. They copy, repeat and adapt simple movements and begin to communicate ideas through their bodies.
Year 1	Control → link → perform	Children make individual actions increasingly controlled, explore dynamics and space, link a small number of movements into phrases and begin to work purposefully with partners and groups. They respond to musical and creative stimuli and perform for an audience.
Year 2	Select → compose → refine → communicate	Children select appropriate movements and dynamics, compose coherent dances, develop motifs and sequences, use relationships and formations purposefully, rehearse and refine their work, and communicate character, mood, narrative or abstract ideas through movement.