



**DANCE**  
**LIVE!** 2027<sup>®</sup>

**Information Pack**

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# 1 Welcome to The Guildhall Trust

We launched our Dance Live! competition for schools and colleges in 2020 as part of our 'Get Involved' programme, inviting young people between the ages of 7-18 to take to the stage and perform creative dance routines that are choreographed to the backdrop of a giant LED screen.

Since then, Dance Live! has grown exponentially. In 2026, Dance Live! welcomed over 130 schools and colleges with over 6,500 young people across our events. We are incredibly excited to be expanding again for multiple dates and venues for Dance Live! 2027 (subject to registration) including:

## Portsmouth Guildhall (Portsmouth):

Wednesday 27th January SENIORS  
Thursday 28th January JUNIORS  
Friday 29th January JUNIORS  
Monday 1st February SENIORS  
Tuesday 2nd February SENIORS  
Wednesday 3rd February SENIORS  
Thursday 4th February JUNIORS  
Friday 5th February JUNIORS  
Monday 8th February SENIORS  
Tuesday 9th February SENIORS  
Wednesday 10th February SENIORS  
Thursday 11th February SENIORS \*\*  
Friday 12th February JUNIORS \*\*

## The Swan (High Wycombe):

Monday 22nd February SENIORS  
Tuesday 23rd February SENIORS  
Wednesday 24th February SENIORS

## White Rock Theatre (Hastings):

Monday 22nd March SENIORS  
Tuesday 23rd March JUNIORS

**\*\* Please note:** Dates marked with \*\* may have lower demand. To maintain the best possible atmosphere and competition experience for all schools, we may adjust performance dates by up to 1–2 days. By selecting one of these dates, you are confirming that you are happy to be flexible if required. Any updates will be shared after registration closes on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2026.

The Finals will take place at Portsmouth Guildhall on **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> to Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2026**. Exact dates will be confirmed after the registration deadline.

**Registration:** Schools can register for the event via the form on the Dance Live! website. By registering, schools are committing to the event.

**Deposit:** All schools are required to pay a deposit of £150.00 within 30 days of registration submission. This deposit will not be refunded if your school withdraws after event dates and venues have been confirmed (approx. mid to late July. This will be deducted from your participation invoice.

**Event Delivery:** The delivery of events at each venue depends on the level of registrations. If an event has to be cancelled, schools will be offered a space at another venue.

**Cancellation Policy:** If a school is unable to attend at the new venue offered after an event cancellation, they will not be charged a withdrawal fee.

**Contact:** For any questions about the event, schools can get in touch with the Dance Live! Team via email at [hello@dancelive.co.uk](mailto:hello@dancelive.co.uk).

Kind regards,

*A. Grays*

Andy Grays CEO  
The Guildhall Trust

## 1.2 Statement of Intent

The Guildhall Trust is the organisation that produces and manages Dance Live!. Dance Live! is an integral part of The Guildhall Trust's 'Get Involved' programme which is focussed on supporting the community, skills and creative career development and emerging creatives. Decisions and processes for Dance Live! events are based on a variety of factors, including, but not limited to: The Trust's organisational structure, The Trust's charitable objectives, applicable funding and grants, the event's specific technical requirements, event stakeholders (e.g. participants, parents and teachers), the capacity of the wider team, child performance laws, local council requirements, venue health and safety policies, and safeguarding policies.

Dance Live! and The Guildhall Trust aim to be transparent with reasoning behind decisions and processes, we believe that clear communication and accountability are essential for building trust with our schools/stakeholders. While we strive to provide rationale and context for significant decisions, it is important to acknowledge that not every decision can be accompanied by a detailed explanation. Rest assured that our commitment to transparency remains unwavering. We will continue to share relevant information, engage in dialogue, and uphold ethical standards. If you have specific inquiries about any decision, please feel free to reach out, and we will provide the available context within the bounds of our organizational policies.

We want to be adaptable and always moving forward with new technology along with changes in laws, environments and cultures, particularly in the cultural and creative sectors. We are always receptive to feedback, even if we are not able to implement these immediately. This allows us to grow to provide relevant opportunities and skills development options for our participants.

Thank you for your trust and understanding.



## 1.3 Introduction

We live in a digital age. Much of what we see, hear or do is defined by the latest technology. At the forefront of this are our young people, they embrace today's digital culture naturally and often with a greater certainty than older generations.

In today's professional world, dance and theatre embrace all aspects of digital technology. Whether that is using the latest sound and lighting equipment, to all aspects of the creative delivery of a show. Sets are no longer defined by heavy pieces of carpentry which are static, but moving imagery conveyed by projection, video and the clever use of lighting and sound. Smaller props are imaginatively assimilated into the digital world of today's production.

Dance Live! challenges schools to embrace today's digital culture by creating a performance piece which is largely dance based. We want schools to be highly creative, developing an original piece of work using video and sound on a large LED screen. The work should have a strong narrative or theme, which interacts with the digital content.

Today's dance and musical theatre practitioners challenge themselves to push boundaries, whether that's the re-staging of a classic musical like 'An American in Paris' in London's West End, new dance presented by Sadlers Wells or touring ballet by companies like Northern Ballet.

Dance Live! is therefore much more than just the performers, it relies heavily on how the choreography and direction works with the digital element. We hope a wide range of skills will be utilised to create the work and we want to see the teamwork involved in putting the performance together, demonstrated through a 2-minute introductory film.

Children and young people from primary and secondary schools right up to sixth form/college can enter, from ages 7-18. Primary schools will enter the Junior competition and senior schools and colleges the Senior competition.

**Please note that the competition is only open to schools and colleges and not dance schools, dance studios or youth dance companies. If you are a dance school, dance studio or youth dance company wishing to compete, please contact the Dance Live! Team regarding Dance Live! Studio Edition. The Guildhall Trust has public liability insurance and licenses with PRS and PPL.**

## 2 Participation, Fees & Payment

### 2.2 Entering the Competition

- Schools must register by completing the registration form on the Dance Live! website: [www.dancelive.co.uk](http://www.dancelive.co.uk).
- The deadline for registration is **5pm, Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2026**.
- By completing the form, schools are entering into an agreement to participate in the event.
- The signed agreement confirms the school's entry into the competition.
- **After the dates and locations have been confirmed (late July), if a school wishes to withdraw after signing the agreement and the deposit has been received they will not be liable to a refund.**
- The delivery of events at each venue depends on the level of registrations.
- If an event has to be cancelled, the school will be offered a space at another venue.
- If the school is unable to attend at the new venue offered they will be refunded their deposit.

#### **Late Submissions and Amendments Fee**

- **To ensure the smooth delivery of Dance Live! events and to support the large-scale coordination of safeguarding, licensing, scheduling, ticketing, staffing and event logistics, all schools are expected to submit accurate information by the stated deadlines.**
- **Please note that any amendments or resubmissions requested may incur a £10 administration fee per change. This includes, but is not limited to, participant numbers, staff/chaperone information, ticketing requests, video uploads and submitted forms/documents.**
- **Late changes can have a significant impact across multiple areas of event planning and delivery. We therefore encourage schools to carefully check all information before submission and ensure that all documentation is completed within the stated timeframes.**

### 2.3 Agreement

- The agreement requires each school to abide by safeguarding rules concerning all young people with regards to offsite school's activity and the local authorities licensing requirements.
- Schools must be prepared for each pupil to be offsite for one full day.
- By returning the agreement, schools are confirming that they will be submitting all required paperwork, to comply with Child Licensing requirements, by the stipulated deadlines. More information about this can be found in section 7, page 13 of the Information Pack.
- The agreement requires each school to commit to the competition rules and confirm that they will make payment in full according to the participant numbers.
- It is expected that all children and young people will be well behaved within the venue and under the supervision of teachers and/or helpers.
- Only one team from each school can enter into Juniors and Seniors. A school with a Junior and Senior section can therefore enter 2 teams, one into the Junior competition and one into the Senior competition.
- If a school is a Middle School, it must enter either the Junior competition with only participants of Junior ages or the Senior competition with participants of Senior ages (and Junior ages if they wish).
- **Middle Schools are not allowed to compete in the Junior competition with participants of Senior competition ages.**

## 2.4 The Participation Fee

Schools entering the event will be charged a **£16.50 fee per participant (minimum 20 participants) or £340 if bring under 20 participants**. This fee applies to student team members only and supports event production. Schools will be invoiced for total fees, which must be paid by the invoice deadline.

The Guildhall Trust will issue invoices after receiving your Invoice Information form up to one month before your event date. Preferred payment is via BACS transfer, but card and cheque payments are accepted.

Final participant numbers must be confirmed by the form deadline date. If no updates are received by this point, invoices will be based on registration form numbers. Once an invoice has been issued, participant numbers or invoices cannot be changed. Payment must be made before your event date or you will not be permitted to perform unless remittance has been received. No refunds are given for individual participants unless in exceptional circumstances.

## 3 Creating a Performance Piece

We aim to involve as many young people as possible in creating professional theatre and dance. This involves a variety of skills including direction, choreography, costume making, filming, graphic design, drawing, lighting design, and music. Dance Live! encourages student-led pieces and teamwork. The teamwork process should be reflected in a 2-minute introductory film which will be discussed in section 4.2.

### 3.2 The Performance Piece

Performances should be 5-7 minutes long, original, and 'PG' rated. Refer to section 5.2 for theme-related rules. We encourage originality, innovation, and fun. All dance forms are allowed. Performances can tell a story, relate to a theme, or be interpretive, and may include spoken word or narration. Microphones are available, but full musical support is not allowed, except for some percussion. Contact the Dance Live! Team for any queries.

### 3.3 The Role of the LED Screen

All schools must use the LED screen as a set and backdrop for their performance. A video with a soundtrack that runs the length of the performance should be created using software like iMovie or Final Cut Pro. The Dance Live! Team will provide support and advice. The screen, hung at the rear of the stage, will be large, with size depending on the venue. After registering, schools will get access to examples and advice documents for creating screen content. Promotional films and image examples are available on our website and Instagram page (@dancelive\_uk).

### 3.4 Demonstrating Teamwork

The creation of the piece should be student-led, reflected in a 2-minute 'Journey to Dance Live!' video. The Guildhall Trust promotes offstage skills for career exploration. We hope that as well as the young people enjoying the competition it might spark some interest to explore careers in lighting, sound, production, design, marketing and much more.

Teams could include:

- Dance and Performance Team: All on-stage performers.
- Choreographic Team: Devises the work, with student involvement.
- Props and Production Team: Handles props, costumes, video content, technicians, wardrobe, hair, make-up, and stage management. Also creates the lighting design.
- Film Team: Produces the 2-minute film showing the school's journey to the heats.

The role of volunteers and parents are welcome in a supportive capacity. We do realise that for the Junior competition teachers and volunteers will need to be more hands on. However, for the Senior competition we expect teachers, parents, and volunteers to be supportive and allow the young people to take the lead where it's feasible.

For SEN/D settings, if it is feasible for your school, the Dance Live! Team will work with you, to organise a time for your students to come into the venue ahead of the day, so that they can familiarise themselves with the space, including the stage, backstage areas and dressing rooms.

### **3.5 Workshops**

Dance Live! will be offering workshops to all schools participating in the event. The team will work with you to develop all areas of your Dance Live! Performance. Workshops can be for either teachers or students (or both), and will be based around the following elements:

- The creation of the LED screen content/ 2 minute 'Journey to Dance Live!' film
- Lighting Design
- Choreography/ Performance Skills
- Costume Design
- Concept/Theme Development
- Screen Interaction

These workshops will be organised as individual video calls for each school. These will take place in Autumn term and multiple video support sessions can be arranged upon request.

### **3.6 Dance Live! Resources – Teaching Aids & Information**

After registering, all participating schools will be given access to the Dance Live! Resource app/site. This will include an array of teaching aids and information to help you with your Dance Live! creations, for example: some information videos relating to the LED screen, including examples from last year; simple guides to creating a 2-minute film; dance tutorials; guidance for lighting plans and general information about the event.

## 4 Performance Guidelines

Please read the below guidance carefully, as it details the rules and what is and is not acceptable for a performance. You should refer back to these throughout the creation of your piece.

### 4.2 Performance Guidelines and Rules

#### PERFORMANCE

- Performances should be 5-7 minutes long. Penalties apply for deviations.
- The LED screen must be used with an embedded soundtrack in the video.
- Music can be original or published. All audio must be declared to the Dance Live! Team.
- Only drums and percussion are allowed. All instruments must be portable.
- A 20-minute rehearsal is provided for practice and lighting setup.
- Vocals and spoken word are allowed but not the focus.
- Notify the Dance Live! Team if tap shoes, vocals, or spoken word will be used.
- Dance Live! provides lighting and sound. No additional elements are allowed without permission.
- Performers must be backstage 5 minutes before performance. Latecomers may be disqualified or penalised.
- A maximum of **100 performers** from the school can be involved, with no more than **20 stage crew** on or around the stage.

#### PERFORMANCE CONTENT

- **Performances should be 'PG' rated and suitable for performers' ages. Themes must be factual, especially if sensitive.**
- A Concept/Theme synopsis is required by **5pm, Monday 19th October 2026**. Keep references for sensitive pieces and show education of source material in your video.
- Resources will be provided to help choose appropriate themes. Cultural appropriation is not allowed, and the Dance Live! Team may request changes to hair/makeup/costume on the day of your event if deemed inappropriate. For a copy of our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy, please contact [hello@dancelive.co.uk](mailto:hello@dancelive.co.uk) or visit our website: [www.dancelive.co.uk](http://www.dancelive.co.uk).
- **Performances that are centred around the Coronavirus outbreak, conflicts within the last 5 years (e.g. the Russia and Ukraine conflict) the Palestine and Queen Elizabeth II's funeral will not be permitted themes this year. Screen content must not contain footage from these events.**

#### 2 MINUTE 'JOURNEY TO DANCE LIVE!' FILM

- The 'Journey to Dance Live!' video should reflect your school's journey, be under 2 minutes (overruns will be penalised).
- **Schools must list the first names and year groups of any young people that contributed to the creation of your Journey Video and Screen Content.** We understand that some of these young people may not be present on the day of your event and would like them to be acknowledged during your performance. This addition is not included in your 2min time limit. **Any videos that do not contain credits will not be eligible for the Video Journey Award.**
- It should not reference other dance competitions, except previous Dance Live! events. A 'Journey to Dance Live Video Structure' resource will be provided. The video must be submitted by the deadline specified in section 8.

### 4.3 Copyright

- **Content:** All images, film, graphic design, and animation in LED Screen Content must be royalty-free, copyright-free, or original content. Any schools found to be breaking copyright regulations will not be eligible for any awards or to attend a finals event.
- **YouTube Videos:** Dance Live! recommends that schools avoid using YouTube videos as they are rarely copyright-free or royalty-free.
- **AI Use:** The use of AI in Dance Live! performance pieces is restricted to a maximum of **45 seconds per piece**. This decision follows overuse in previous years and consistent feedback from judges, where heavy AI use has not been favoured. Schools are strongly encouraged to focus on original creative content.
- **Copyright Permission:** While Dance Live! has obtained a license for music tracks, it does not have a license for images/film. Therefore, all images and video used must be copyright-free, royalty-free, or original content.
- **Soundtrack:** Participants should be considerate about the soundtrack. Any unsuitable pieces (e.g., featuring explicit language or songs of a sexual nature) may be muted.
- **Recording Consent:** By participating in Dance Live!, your school consents to being recorded by audio, visual, and/or other means for marketing purposes.
- **Recording Restrictions:** Schools or members of the public are not permitted to record or photograph any part of the performance.
- **Performance Copies:** A digital copy of your school's performance video will be able to access for free post-event. Photographs will be made available for purchase also. Photography costs will be sent to schools in Autumn term.

### 4.4 Audio and Visual Guidance and Rules

**LED Screen:** The LED screen is to be used as the set and backdrop. All schools must use the screen to support their performance. The screen will be the majority of the width of your performance area, with the exact size varying depending on venue capacity.

**Audio and Video:** All audio must be embedded into your video, and videos must be submitted in MP4 format. The minimum length of the video and thus the performance is 5 minutes, and the maximum length is 7 minutes. A 10-second leeway is allowed; any content that runs over 7 minutes 10 seconds will be cut, and the stage will go to blackout, along with a five-point deduction from your performance mark.

**Content:** Music and text used on the screen must not contain explicit language and must be appropriate for a family audience (e.g. no references of a sexual nature). **Music used, where the original is explicit, must be radio edits with any inappropriate language replaced rather than being silenced or 'bleeped out'. The songs 'Toxic' by Britney Spears, 'Game of Survival' by Ruelle and 'Run Boy Run' by Woodkid are not permitted for 2027 events. Sound effects, spoken word, song and voiceovers are permitted.**

**Resolution:** It is suggested that videos and images have a minimum resolution of **1920 x 1080 pixels**, also referred to as 'Full HD'.

**Live Music:** No live music produced by electrical instruments is allowed, however, drums and percussion are permitted.

Please refer to the specific sections of the information pack for more details.

**Modesty Clothing:** All schools are fully responsible for ensuring that every performer is provided with appropriate modesty clothing for use during quick changes, side stage holding areas and within shared dressing room spaces. Modesty clothing must always provide full and appropriate coverage and must be suitable for a professional backstage environment.

Appropriate modesty clothing may include dancewear such as full leotards, unitards, dance tops and fitted dance shorts/leggings that provide suitable torso and lower body coverage. Sports bras worn as outerwear, underwear-only coverage, or extremely short shorts are not considered appropriate modesty clothing under any circumstances.

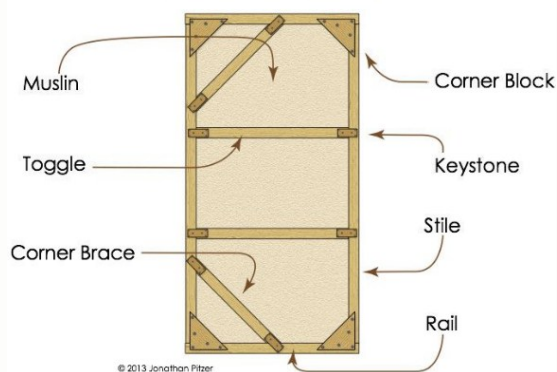
Please note that all Dance Live! venues remain active working environments outside of Dance Live! activity, with authorised personnel regularly moving throughout the building. These expectations are in place to protect the welfare, safeguarding, dignity and health and safety of all performers and students within the Dance Live! environment.

**Any school deemed not to be meeting these requirements may be required to make immediate adjustments before performers are permitted backstage, side stage or within shared changing spaces.**

#### 4.5 Stage Decoration and Props Guidance and Rules

##### USE OF STAGE DECORATION

- **Solid Flats are not permitted.** A Solid Flat consists of 'a frame covered with scenic canvas or plywood' and/or 'a painted wooden, cardboard or plastic board' that is usually built in a rectangular or square shape or the shape of an object or scenery (e.g. a tree or furniture) and positioned on stage so as to give the appearance of a specific scene or hide a stage background. Solid/ Broadway/ Studio/ Scenery Flat example:



- Stage decorations must move during the performance and enhance it.
- Decorations should be safely movable, ideally by one person.
- Maximum size for a solid decoration piece is 2m high, 1.2m wide, 1m deep (including wheels). **Five points will be deducted from your overall performance mark for any stage decoration over this measurement.**
- Fabrics are allowed but must be flame-retardant and not exceed stage width or 2m height.
- Off-stage storage area for decorations and props is 1.5m x 2m.
- Decorations over 1m high to be stood on must have handrails.
- Decorations must be sturdy and safe for performers.
- No scaffolding allowed.
- **2 minutes** for pre-performance setup, **1 minute** for post-performance removal.

- Stage crew must wear full-foot-covering footwear.
- Decorations and props must be transferred to transport after use.
- Large decorations and props should arrive **30 minutes** before rehearsal.
- Parking arrangements are available in Venue Information Packs.

## USE OF PROPS

- Performers can hold or wear props, but worn props must not exceed **5m** in height. **Five points will be deducted from your overall performance mark for any props over this measurement.**
- No authentic weaponry, roller skates, blades, skateboards, bikes, or other forms of transport.
- Props must be removed post-performance and comply with health and safety regulations.
- All props must be fire retardant and may be tested for fire safety.
- Powered props must be battery operated.
- **Prohibited items include: animals (except guide dogs), liquids, lasers, confetti, glass, oils, bubble machines, balloons, talcum powder, dry ice, naked flames, compressed gas, or pyrotechnics.**

### 4.6 Lighting

- Dance Live! provides all lighting; only battery-powered additional lights are allowed.
- Battery-operated projection equipment is permitted, but no follow spots or lasers.
- Strobe lighting must adhere to health and safety regulations, with a maximum of 10 seconds at a time and 60 seconds total per performance.
- A student Lighting Assistant (LA) must be nominated to design up to 10 lighting states.
- The LA doesn't need to be a lighting expert but should understand the performance and desired effects.
- Schools will receive a lighting plot and cue sheet to complete.
- **Schools must bring a student LA. Without one, the maximum lighting score is 2 out of 5 points. For SEN schools, a teacher can be the LA.**

### 4.7 Video Directing


- All schools must provide a video director to call the shots within your individual school's video production. This can either be a student or a teacher.

### 4.8 Performance Space

- Performance space is **12m wide by 7m deep**.
- Performers must not extend body parts or props over the stage edge.
- Use the backstage crossover; there is no access behind the LED screen. Beware of costume and footwear hazards for quick crossovers. Crossover-route videos for each venue can be found on the Dance Live! Resource site/app.
- Performances are restricted to the stage; no auditorium entry or exit.
- Be mindful of limited wing space for costume changes. Quick changes must be out of audience view and wing space will vary by venue. If you have any questions or concerns about wing space and quick changes, please contact [hello@dancelive.co.uk](mailto:hello@dancelive.co.uk).

### 4.9 Behaviour

- Dance Live! values mutual respect and professionalism.
- Participants must sign a Code of Conduct upon registration which forms part of the registration form. (Please refer to section 13 of this pack to view the Code of Conduct).
- Negative behaviour from anyone involved can lead to point deductions or disqualification.

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- Participants must respect the venue, its staff, and rules.
  - Schools must be considerate in shared dressing rooms; complaints may lead to disqualification.
  - Damage to fixtures will be invoiced to the school.

Dance Live! encourages all schools, participants, teachers and audience members to celebrate and acknowledge the achievements of all placing schools and award winners with professionalism, respect and good sportsmanship. While we appreciate that results can bring excitement and disappointment, all reactions should remain supportive, considerate and reflective of the positive community values of Dance Live!.

## 5 Judging & Awards

### MAIN PERFORMANCE

There will be 3 judges all of whom have worked within the sector. Judging for the main piece will be split into 2 segments 'Creative' and 'Performance'. Each segment will contribute equally to the final score. It will be made up of the following:

**Performance: 40%**

**Creative:**

**LED Screen Content: 25%**

**Lighting Design: 10%**

**Soundtrack Creation 10%**

**Costume, Hair and Makeup: 5%**

**Concept: 5%**

**Props: 5%**

**Performance Judging Criteria (40 points):**

- Delivery
- Originality
- Interpretation
- Musicality
- Formations
- Choreography
- Overall performance

**Creative Judging Criteria (60 points):**

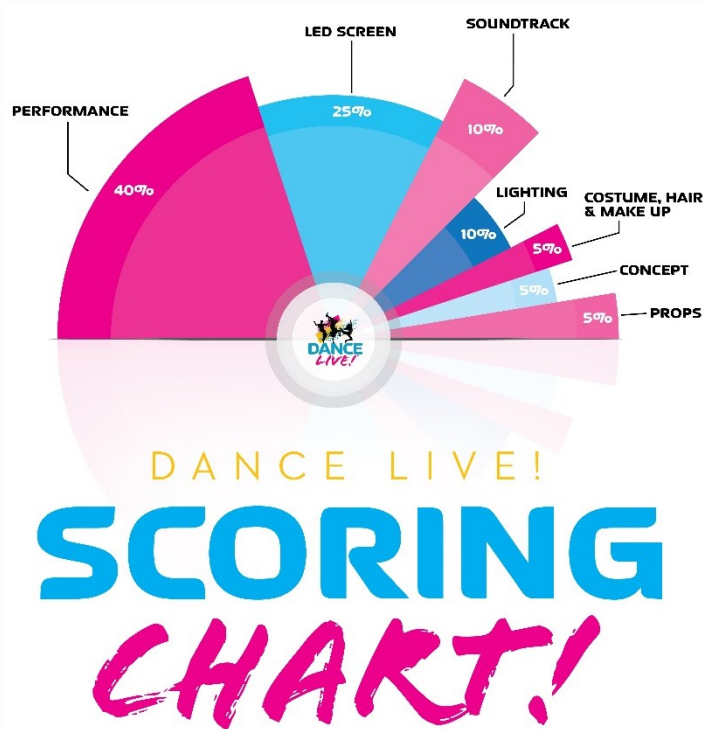
- LED Screen Content : The content of the screen, how well it compliments the performance, and how the performance interacts with the screen. Consideration will also be given to whether the screen distracted from the performance (e.g., too much text).
- Other Areas (5 to 10 points each): Lighting Design, Soundtrack Creation, Costume, Hair and Makeup, and Concept.

### **NEW: Dance Technique Declaration – 'Dance Technique Award'**

While Dance Live! is not a technical dance competition, we recognise the incredible amount of training and dedication that many schools and students bring to their performances each year.

From strong ballet foundations and clean jazz technique to advanced lifts, flexibility, tap work, acro skills and extension, we regularly see schools showcasing a wide range of dance training and performance ability throughout their Dance Live! pieces.

For Dance Live! 2027, schools will now have the opportunity to complete a Dance Technique Declaration Form ahead of their performance. This optional form allows schools



to highlight specific dance techniques, skills or areas of training that have been a focus within their piece.

These declarations will then be shared directly with the judges ahead of your performance, giving our industry-professional judging panel additional insight into the dance techniques and performance skills being demonstrated on stage. This is an opportunity for schools and students to receive industry-level recognition, comments and feedback on the technical work showcased within their performance.

Schools who complete the Dance Technique Declaration Form will also be placed in the running for the **brand-new 2027 Dance Technique Award**, celebrating commitment to dance training, performance quality and technical execution within a Dance Live! performance.

Examples of techniques or focuses that schools may choose to declare include:

- Ballet technique
- Jazz technique
- Tap work
- Contemporary technique
- Acro or gymnastic elements
- Lifts and partnering work
- Flexibility and extension
- Musicality and precision
- Lines and body placement
- Strength and control

Please note that this declaration is completely optional and is not a requirement to participate in Dance Live!. We remain committed to ensuring Dance Live! is inclusive and accessible for all schools, including SEN/D settings and schools with varying levels of dance training experience.

The Dance Technique Award sits separately from the main Dance Live! judging criteria and overall competition scoring structure. Completing a Dance Technique Declaration Form does not impact a school's overall score, and schools who choose not to complete the declaration will continue to be judged as normal under the standard Dance Live! judging criteria.

Schools are encouraged to use this opportunity if there are technical elements or performance skills they would like the judges to recognise and celebrate within their performance.

The overall score will be the average of the 3 judges' scores (there may be up to 4 judges for the Finals).

**Please refer to the updated Judging Guidance Resources on the Dance Live! site for a full breakdown of criteria and method: <https://eu.jotform.com/app/dance-live/dance-live-resource-zone/page/67>**

### **Qualifying for Finals:**

The top schools from each night of the Heats will automatically go through to the Final. The number of schools invited to the Final from each night will depend on the number of participating schools.

### **Other Awards:**

- Video Journey Award
- Technical Award
- People's Choice Award
- Dance Technique Award
- Dance Live! Fellowship Award
- Creative Achievement Awards

### **Final Prizes:**

- Junior competition winner: £1,000
- Senior competition winner: £1,000
- Runners up of both competitions: £500

The Finals will take place at Portsmouth Guildhall. The prize money should be committed to the school's arts budget (this includes music and dance).

### **Feedback and Judges Scores**

Schools will receive their Judges Feedback and scoring within 1–3 weeks of their performance date. This timeframe allows the Dance Live! Team to collate and process all feedback while continuing to deliver ongoing Dance Live! event dates across multiple venues. We kindly ask for your patience and understanding during this busy period.

Your feedback will be uploaded to your school's allocated Google Drive folder. A link to this folder will have been sent to your lead teacher via email. If you do not have access to your folder, please contact the Dance Live! Team.

Dance Live! does not disclose or discuss another school's scores, feedback, or judging information with other participating schools. Schools are welcome to share their own results at their own discretion.

## 6

## Ticketing

- **Free Tickets for Eligible Students:** Schools can apply for a limited number of free audience tickets for students who are eligible for Free School Meals and/or Pupil Premium.
- **Ticket Sales:** Tickets will go on sale in the Autumn term. School Group Bookings will also be available first, followed by General Public Sale Tickets. Payment must be received before tickets can be emailed to teachers for School Group Bookings.
- **Individual Bookings:** If a school does not wish to make a Schools Group Booking, parents/guardians can purchase their own tickets at the point of General Public Sale via the website. Any issues must be addressed directly with the venue's Box Office.
- **Performance Dates:** For safeguarding reasons, school performance dates are not publicised. Schools must communicate their performance date and venue to parents before booking. No refunds are issued once tickets are paid for.
- **Free Tickets for Headteachers/SLTs:** All schools will receive two free tickets for headteachers/SLTs. These tickets are registered under the school's name and can be collected from the venue's Box Office on the night of the event. Please note, these seats are in a specific area of the auditorium and will not be next to the Schools Group Booking.
- **Finals Tickets:** Finals tickets will go on sale in the Spring Term. Each school will be allocated seats for Schools Group Bookings. These seats will only be released after the Schools Group Booking Deadline to ensure that all participating schools can purchase tickets, regardless of their Heat Event date.

## 7

# Child Licensing Requirements

- **Participation Confirmation:** By signing up to participate in the event, you are confirming that you will supply the Dance Live! Team with the necessary information for obtaining appropriate licenses for the event.
- **Document Receipt:** You will receive the relevant forms/documents, along with the deadline for returning these, after your entry has been confirmed in the Autumn.
- **Child Performance Licensing Agreement:** This document sets out what is required from you as part of your entry. It includes:
  - i. Providing participating students' names, dates of birth, and postcodes on the date of performance.
  - ii. Completing the Participant and Staff Detail form, (including a list of name, DBS and Chaperone details of all staff and chaperones) and return at least 20 days before the performance date. This form asks for you to break down the number of girls/boys/nonbinary students participating, along with the number of male/female/non-binary members of staff/chaperones. All school staff and chaperones must be Enhanced DBS checked.
  - iii. Confirming that, on the day, you have details of any medical conditions and emergency contact details for each young person.
- **Data Storage and Security:** These documents will be stored securely as password-protected files or in a locked cabinet and will only be shown to Venue-Area Council staff, should they request it. This information will be available for up to 6 months after the event, after which point it will be safely destroyed or removed from the system.
- **Licence Requirement:** Both of these forms are a condition of obtaining the Child Body of Persons Licence from Venue-Area Councils. These are compulsory documents that must be completed for your school to compete in the event. Failure to provide this information by the dates specified will mean you are unable to attend or perform at the event.

## 8 Communication & Submission of Document and Film

- Submission of Documents and Footage: By signing up to Dance Live!, you agree to submit all required documents and footage by the stipulated dates, which will be no later than 20 days before your performance day. These dates will be sent to you in the Autumn term.
- Communication and Document Storage: Communication relevant to all schools will be via email with reminder push notifications through the Dance Live! Teacher Site/App. Communication with your school as an individual will be via email. Documents, videos and forms will be stored and accessible via the Dance Live! Teacher Site/App.
- Film Submission: Films must be shared by schools via the allocated form. All videos must be in either .MP4 or .MOV format.
- Information Submission: When submitting information, child names and lighting state sheets should be submitted in paper version on the day of your event. All other information should be submitted via the forms provided on the Dance Live! Teacher Site/App.
- Data Usage and Storage: For more information about how confidential data, including participant details, is used and stored, you can refer to the Data Sharing Agreement here: <https://dancelive.co.uk/policies/>

## 9 Welfare, Health & Safety

### Media, Consent and Wristbands

- Wristbands: Where possible wristbands will be sent to schools before their event. All students and teachers/chaperones must wear a wristband when they arrive and keep it on until they leave the premises.
- Number of Wristbands: The number of wristbands sent will correlate to the information you have supplied on the Child Licensing documents. If this information changes, additional wristbands can be collected from the sign-in desk on your event day.
- Photo Consent: Students who do not have photo consent will be given a different coloured wristband on the day, upon registration.
- Photographs and Videos: Photographs and videos will be taken during the performance. Schools will be sent an individual link post-event to their school's performance video. Please note that Dance Live! will use the photos and videos taken on the day for promotional material on the Dance Live! Website and Social Media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram

### Changing Facilities

We want all young people participating in the event to feel welcome and comfortable. With this in mind, Dance Live! has ensured that there are gender neutral toilets and changing facilities available. We will notify schools of locations of accessible toilets and facilities on a per-venue basis.

Each school will also be provided with 2 pop up tents, to be used as changing facilities.

### Risk Assessment

As with all school activities when taking students off-site you will have to create your own risk assessment for the visit to the venue. The venue risk assessment will be made available to teachers via our Teacher Resource app/site each year. This should form part of your assessment. The assessment must be completed by a trained, competent person and must include details pertaining to your visit to the venue and for the activities undertaken during the performance. The risk

assessment must include all risks and relevant control measures which you will have in place. The relevant risks must be reduced so far as is reasonably practicable.

### **Student to Staff Ratios**

Student to staff ratios must be a minimum of 1:12 or match your individual school's ratio (whichever is lower e.g. if your school policy is 1:20 you must abide by the 1:12 ratio). **Please note that Dance Live! and The Guildhall Trust are not able to provide any child supervision during your event.**

#### **You will be required to have teachers stationed:**

1 x Stage Right

1 x Stage Left

1 x with students at the lighting desk

1 x Streaming Desk - It is not required at all times however please ensure a staff member takes and collects students from the desk.

This is due to previous injuries on stage and comms with the DL! Team and schools, we need someone with decision making authority present at all times

### **Parents and Audience Members**

Schools are asked to reiterate to parents that they are not allowed in the dressing rooms. Any parents attempting to gain access to the dressing room will be turned away and any possessions that need to be passed to students will be transferred by Dance Live! staff. Please remind parents and other audience members that filming and photography on personal devices is not allowed due to consent and safeguarding rules.

Each school must coordinate their own parent/guardian collection arrangements in relation to the Venue Information Packs provided by Dance Live!. Parents will not be allowed to go to dressing rooms for collection, regardless of where in the auditorium they are seated. Dance Live! is not responsible for connecting students and parents' post-event.

### **First Aid**

The venue hosting Dance Live! will ensure that suitably trained First Aiders are on hand for the duration of your visit and performance. Any person requiring First Aid must be attended to by the provided First Aider so as all relevant paperwork can be completed. All minors must always be accompanied when moving around the venue to reduce accidents. Schools must have at least one designated First Aider within their party. The venue's designated First Aider will be on hand at all times.

If you are attending a Dance Live! tour venue, for example High Wycombe & Hastings, schools will also be required to bring a standard First Aid kit, including an Instant Cold Compress (ICE Pack). For any incidents requiring further assistance beyond this provision, please communicate directly with the Dance Live! Team or venue staff.

### **Personal Property**

Items of personal property (e.g. phones, cameras, bags, clothing etc.) are brought onto venue property at your own risk. Venues, Dance Live! and The Guildhall Trust are not responsible for the loss, damage, misplacement or return of personal property.

In previous years, items of lost property have been reported across multiple venues. We therefore strongly advise that students do not bring valuables, expensive jewellery, or unnecessary personal

items to Dance Live! events. Any lost property enquiries or claims must be communicated directly between the student, parent/carer or school and the venue.

Please also be aware that students often have similar clothing, shoes, bags and coats, which can result in items being accidentally misplaced or collected by another student. We strongly recommend that all personal belongings are clearly labelled with the student's full name, and that all costumes and performance items are labelled with the school name.

### **Stage Crew**

All stage crew must wear footwear which cover the complete foot (e.g. trainers or boots).

### **Stage Decoration and Props**

All stage decoration and props must be fire retardant, lightweight and safe in construction.

### **Electrical Items**

Any electrical item entering the venue must have a PAT certification. **Dance Live! Management have the right to remove from the venue anything which it deems unsafe.**

### **Food**

Venues, Dance Live! and The Guildhall Trust are not responsible for the delivery, collection, storage or distribution of food to participants during our events. This includes Deliveroo, Uber Eats, Just Eat, takeaway deliveries, parent drop-offs and packed lunches. **Please note that Dance Live! is a nut-free event.** This applies to both participating schools and audience members.

There have been repeated issues with food deliveries arriving at venues with no responsible adult present to collect them. Due to safeguarding, venue operations and event management, Dance Live! staff are not able to leave their roles to locate schools or dressing rooms for food deliveries/collections.

**Any food deliveries that arrive and are not immediately claimed by a member of school staff or an adult chaperone will be denied.** Under no circumstances will food deliveries be handed directly to students. It is the responsibility of each school to ensure that a designated adult is available to meet and collect any deliveries arranged during the event day.

## 10 Dance Live! Media Policy

This policy sets out Dance Live! and The Guildhall Trust's commitment to using photographs and recordings in a safe, appropriate way.

Photographs and recordings taken during Dance Live! events or workshops will be used on the Dance Live! and Portsmouth Guildhall Social Media pages, on the Portsmouth Guildhall website ([www.portsmouthguildhall.org.uk](http://www.portsmouthguildhall.org.uk)), in Dance Live! Brochures, Information Packs and Promotional Videos. Please note that this list is not exclusive and images and recordings may be used to promote the Dance Live! Brand in other documents, platforms or websites.

Dance Live! and The Guildhall Trust will not use images unless parent/guardian permission has been obtained. Any young person without photo consent should be highlighted by participating schools to the Dance Live! Team. Please note that school names will be listed in photo/video captions and school social media profiles will be tagged if handles have been provided. Social media handles can be provided at the point of registration.

When posting on social media platforms (e.g. Instagram and Facebook), Dance Live! and The Guildhall Trust will not use filters on images and recordings of our participants. All images used will be truly representative of our participants and Dance Live! promotes positive body image for all our participants across our events and opportunities.

### Dance Live! Photography Policy

Audience members are not allowed to film or photograph performances for safeguarding and media consent purposes. An Enhanced DBS Checked professional photographer is in attendance at Dance Live! Events and all performances are filmed. All professional photographs and films taken of each individual school's performance are sent directly to the lead teacher of each school post-event and it is the responsibility of the school to distribute photos and films to parents depending on the media consent of their students.

Schools are notified of photo package costs in the Autumn term of each school year. All videos of performances are sent to schools post-event, along with Judges Feedback, free of charge.

**Please note that you can expect up to a month after your event for the return of photos and videos. Schools must register with our online photo system to get notifications when photos are ready to check & purchase.**

## 11 Final Note

Should you have any questions about Dance Live!, get in touch with the Dance Live! Team via email: [hello@dancelive.co.uk](mailto:hello@dancelive.co.uk) where someone will get back to you as soon as possible. Please do not contact members of the Dance Live! Team via their personal social media accounts regarding Dance Live! enquiries

Should you wish to register for Dance Live! 2027, please visit the Dance Live! website at [www.dancelive.co.uk](http://www.dancelive.co.uk) and complete the registration form, before the closing date of **5pm, Monday 27th July 2026**.

To stay updated with all Dance Live! news and upcoming events, follow us on social media:

**Facebook:** @danceliveuk

**Instagram:** @dancelive\_uk

**Dance Live! reserves the right to amend, update or introduce information, policies, procedures and rules at any point throughout the event year. Any changes will be communicated to all registered schools via email, with the most up-to-date versions made available on the Dance Live! website and Teacher Zone.**

## 12 Contract of Agreement

The Participant School agrees to the following;

1) The Participant School to make full payment for all participants when formally requested by Dance Live! Schools must make full payment before their venue deadline date.

2) That all young people have permission to be away from the school/college grounds for the whole day and parents have signed all relevant paperwork to authorise this.

3) The Participant School will ensure that there will be satisfactory supervision of children at all times. This is set out by the local authority guidance on supervising under-age children away from the school/college premises.

4) The Participant School must obtain relevant permissions from parents/guardians for their children to be recorded and photographed on stage during rehearsals and the evening performance and is aware of where/how these photographs and recordings will be used (please see the Dance Live! Media Policy listed in the 2027 Information Pack). Any young person without photo consent will be highlighted to the Dance Live! Team.

5) The Participant School will submit the full names and dates of birth of each child that is participating.

6) The Participant School will complete all relevant paperwork required by Child Licensing, by the dates specified.

7) The Participant School will adhere to the rules as set out in this document and all Dance Live! official documents.

8) The Participant School will advise the Producer at the earliest possible opportunity if they are unable to take part in the event. Please note the £150 deposit is Non-refundable. This will be deducted from your participation invoice.

9) The Participant School is responsible for the health and safety of all their children, volunteers and carers whilst attending the Dance Live! Event Venues.

10) The Participant School will complete all relevant evaluation and feedback documents pre and/or post event. The Participant School is aware that any feedback and/or data given may be used for fundraising and/or promotional purposes for the Dance Live! Brand.

11) The Participant School will adhere to the Code of Conduct:

## 13 Code of Conduct

### Participants:

1. Respect for self and others: Participants must conduct themselves with dignity and respect towards themselves and others at all times. Any form of bullying, harassment, or discrimination is strictly prohibited.
2. Appropriate attire: Participants must wear appropriate dance attire that is suitable for the event. Clothing that is revealing, offensive or inappropriate for a family-friendly event is not permitted. Participants must be wearing nude-coloured or black base-clothing while performing quick-changes at the side of the stage.
3. Punctuality: Participants must arrive at the event on time and be ready to perform. Latecomers will not be allowed to perform, and the organizers will not be responsible for any missed opportunities.
4. Safety: Participants must follow all safety guidelines provided by the organizers, including but not limited to, warming up before the performance, wearing appropriate footwear, and avoiding dangerous dance moves.
5. Good sportsmanship: Participants must exhibit good sportsmanship, both on and off the stage. This includes congratulating other participants and accepting the judges' decisions gracefully.

### Teachers/Chaperones:

1. Professionalism: Teachers must conduct themselves with professionalism and act as role models for their students. They must also exhibit fairness, objectivity, and impartiality in all aspects of the event. During rehearsals throughout the year, we encourage teachers to develop resilience in their students and prepare them for the possibility that they may not win in order to help enable their students' good sportsmanship at their event day.
2. Appropriate behaviour: Teachers must conduct themselves appropriately at all times during the event. Any form of disruptive or inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated.
3. Safety: Teachers must ensure that their students follow all safety guidelines provided by the organizers, including but not limited to, warming up before the performance, wearing appropriate footwear, and avoiding dangerous dance moves.
4. Respect for other participants, teachers, Dance Live! Staff and Venue Staff: Teachers must show respect for other participants, teachers, Dance Live! Staff and Venue Staff. Any form of rudeness, bullying, harassment, or discrimination will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to: eye-rolling when being given clear instructions; pretending to a Dance Live! staff member that you haven't been given an instruction by another member of Dance Live! staff previously that day; expecting priority treatment on your event day over other schools; negative comments about other schools/participants etc.
5. Alcohol Consumption: Teachers and Chaperones must not consume alcohol while in attendance at a Dance Live! event. Any teachers or chaperones who are found in possession of alcohol will be asked to leave the venue and their school's participants will be sent home.
6. Adherence to rules: Teachers must adhere to all rules and guidelines set forth by the organizers. This includes submitting all necessary paperwork, payments and videos by the deadlines stated.

### Parents:

1. Support and encouragement: Parents must support and encourage their children in their dance performance. They should refrain from placing undue pressure on their children to perform at a certain level or to win.

2. Appropriate behaviour: Parents must conduct themselves appropriately at all times during the event. Any form of disruptive or inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated, this includes shouting children's names and making inappropriate comments during the performances.
3. Respect for other participants: Parents must show respect for other participants and their families. Any form of bullying, harassment, or discrimination will not be tolerated.
4. Alcohol Consumption: While parents are able to purchase and consume alcohol at Dance Live! performances, they must be mindful of their behaviour and their ability to make their own way home post-event safely and legally. Any parents whose behaviour is becoming inappropriate due to their alcohol consumption will be asked to leave the venue.
5. Adherence to rules: Parents must adhere to all rules and guidelines set forth by the organizers. This includes refraining from taking pictures or videos during the performance, and any shouting during the performance.

## **Resilience**

***Resilience: 'the ability to be happy or successful again after difficulties... It is also the ability to adapt to challenging situations without feeling like it's all too much for you. It means using difficult situations to grow and improve.'* (British Council)**

Dance Live! encourages the development of resilience in our participants in both Junior and Senior categories. We aim to do this through providing and signposting to resources to use in schools in rehearsals and classrooms. We also aim to avoid the promotion of negative-competitive behaviour at our events through our above code of conduct and school support on all things Dance Live!- related throughout the year.

Dance Live! does not release information around the placings of any schools other than those who won awards on the night of their event. This is to avoid promoting negative-competitive behaviour amongst our participants, teachers and parents along with our ethos of promoting creative careers, problem-solving and creative thinking skills. While we are keen to offer and further discuss judges' feedback to all schools, we will not release overall scores and placements – exactly the same as a job interview!

We would like to remind all participants, teachers and parents that dance is a subjective artform and sport. Dance Live! and The Guildhall Trust do not expect all participants, teachers and parents to agree with our judges' decisions and event placings (sometimes our judges do not even agree with each other!) however all participants, teachers and parents should agree upon entering this competition that all our participants hold equal worth and deserve their moment on the big stage.

Dance Live! expects all participants, teachers, schools and audience members to celebrate results with professionalism, respect and good sportsmanship at all times. Unsportsmanlike, disruptive or disrespectful behaviour during award announcements will not be tolerated.

## **Behaviour - System Update**

During heats events, we have noticed a rise in negative behaviour towards other schools during awards ceremonies. We recognise, off of the back of this, that the points deduction system we had in place, for breaching the code of conduct, was open to a lot of interpretation, is not immediately enforceable during/after award ceremonies, and was not clear, therefore we have given a lot of consideration as to how we can put something clearer in place, that schools can understand. Moving forward, we are introducing a card system for Dance Live!. Schools will receive a formal warning for any misconduct or inappropriate behaviour, followed by a yellow card if the issue persists. If there is a further breach of conduct, that school will not place for the evening and will be banned from participating in the event the following year.

**Please keep a copy of this Information Pack in your files for reference.**