



ROYAL  
BALLET  
SCHOOL

## PRIMARY STEPS



### PRIMARY STEPS WORKSHOP NEWSLETTER

Welcome to Primary Steps Workshop Newsletter issue 5. This is our last newsletter, we hope you have enjoyed all of your workshops and have learnt lots about ballet.

**Parents and Carers - please find some important information at the bottom of this newsletter.**

### ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND

Your Primary Steps workshop leaders have told us how hard you have been working in class and how much you have learnt. If you continue to dance you may one day perform in a ballet on stage! One of the favourite ballets of the Primary Steps team is Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. We thought this would be a great ballet to share and hope you find it really inspiring.

Choreographer, Christopher Wheeldon's production of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, was first performed by The Royal Ballet Company in 2011.

The story that is told in this ballet, was taken from a book called Alice in Wonderland written by Lewis Carroll. The main character, Alice, was based on a friend of Lewis Carroll's called Alice Liddell. See her picture below.



Some of you may be familiar with the story but here is a quick recap:

The ballet begins at a garden party on a sunny afternoon, when Alice is surprised that her friend turns into a white rabbit. When she follows him down a rabbit hole, events become very interesting...

As Alice travels through Wonderland she meets lots of strange creatures. She stumbles across a tea party hosted by the Mad Hatter and joins the Hatter's guests, the Dormouse and the March Hare – it is a most unusual tea party!

Alice is then swept off her feet by the charming Knave of Hearts, who's hiding from the Queen of Hearts as he stole her tarts. Confusion piles upon confusion. Then Alice wakes with a start. Was it all a daydream?

#### Ballet Dictionary

Motif - A movement phrase that is repeated and developed throughout the dance

### SOMETHING TO WATCH

Watch the video to find out how the dancers in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland used movement to tell the story. Karim welcomes you to the Royal Opera House, home of The Royal Ballet. Karim meets Director of the Royal Ballet Kevin O'Hare and Principal Dancer Lauren Cuthbertson, to find out about Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. Karim creates his own **motif** as he journeys down the rabbit hole... [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWEQQS\\_En5M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWEQQS_En5M)

## SOMETHING TO DO

Watch the Mad Hatter's Tea Party and then see if you can answer the following questions:

1. What colour is the Mad Hatters Hat?
2. How many giant spoons are part of the set in this scene?
3. What style of dance is the Mad Hatter doing?
4. How many dancers are on stage during this scene?
5. What colour is the Dormouse's Teapot?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kq8zqhjUlo>

If your child is selected to join Primary Steps, we will contact you via email.

We would love to offer this opportunity to all students but sadly we have limited spaces at our centres. However, we also have a reserve list in case a space becomes available in the after-school class.

If your child is not offered a place but would like to continue dancing, we would be happy to signpost you to a dance organisation in your local area. Please email us for more information at:

Primarysteps@royalballetschool.org.uk

## ENDORSEMENTS FOR THE PRIMARY STEPS PROGRAMME

### PARENT OF A GRADUATING PRIMARY STEPS STUDENT

The entire Primary Steps programme has been such an enlightening experience for us. To be contacted all those years ago through school to say my son had been identified as having a natural ability for dance was a huge surprise. An even bigger surprise has been how much he enjoys dance and how we have both developed a shared love for ballet. It's not just about the technical and physical development but the wider social and friendship groups we have all developed, it feels like a family. To have had this opportunity has been a privilege and life enriching and I am incredibly proud of my son for his commitment and hard work even when confronting the stigma of dance as a boy.

### GRADUATING PRIMARY STEPS STUDENT

In my time at Primary Steps I have really enjoyed learning new and fun things. I have discovered skills I never knew I could do before and have felt more confident in myself as a dancer.

## NEXT STEPS - INFORMATION FOR PARENT

We hope that your child has enjoyed the Primary Steps workshops and is inspired to continue dancing whether it's at home or starting dance classes. Some students will be invited to attend a final workshop at the local Primary Steps centre and after this a number of students will be invited to join the Primary Steps weekly classes. These selected students will receive weekly dance classes during term time (starting Spring 2024) until the end of Year 6.

Every student that is invited will have the opportunity to:

Watch a live performance from a professional dance company in a theatre

Visit their nearest Royal Ballet School Associate centre

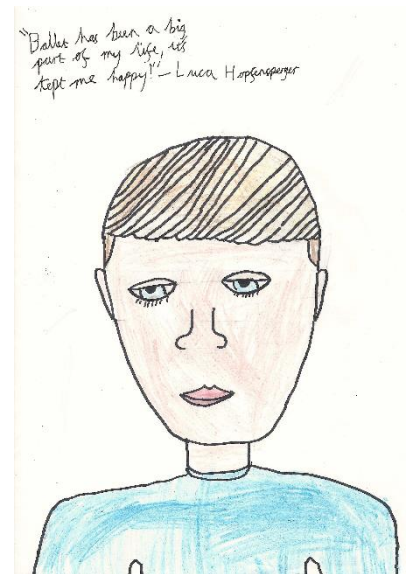
Take part in the half-term creative course lead by visiting professional dance artists

Take part in taster sessions from their local Centre for Advanced Training

Take part in performances in their local area and at The Royal Ballet School.



I have really enjoyed being in Primary Steps and I will miss the teachers especially Miss Gibbs and Miss Cox



### PARTNER PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADTEACHER

Without doubt, Primary Steps is an incredible opportunity for our children to raise their aspirations. It gives them an insight into a world of opportunities that they would not necessarily ordinarily access. Not only does it lift aspirations but it encourages commitment, dedication and enthusiasm and a sense of belonging to something and of course many opportunities to succeed. We are so grateful that our girls and boys get this wonderful opportunity to shine.

We hope that your workshops and these newsletters have left you feeling truly inspired to continue exploring dance. We would love to hear from you about your experiences of the Primary Steps workshops or to answer any questions that you might have.

Please email us on: Primarysteps@royalballetschool.org.uk