



Press Release

IBTA Launches Innovative Junior Cycle Short Course in Creative Dance and Movement

The Education Centre, Dromthacker Tralee, V92 HK52

July 21, 2023 - The Irish Ballet Teachers Association (IBTA) is delighted to announce the launch of its new Junior Cycle Short Course in Creative Dance and Movement today, on Friday 21st July, 2023. Designed to foster students' physical and personal development, this long-awaited curriculum course was officially unveiled at the IBTA JC Short Course Launch Event on Friday, July 21, 2023, at 3pm with support from Minister Norma Foley at The Education Centre, located in Dromthacker Tralee.

The Education Sub Committee, led by the IBTA Education Officer Dr. Trish Melton, was established with the primary goal of forging connections with the education sector and developing a Junior Certificate (JC) Short Course. This significant achievement of bringing dance as a subject in its own right into mainstream curricula has been long-sought and will make a difference to numerous students within the Irish school system. It will provide students with additional choice and deliver the physical and mental benefits associated with dance and hopefully a lifelong interest in physical activity.

Acknowledging the importance of students' overall wellbeing during their junior cycle, the committee identified six key indicators: Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected, and Aware. Dance education has proven to be instrumental in addressing each of these indicators, offering valuable learning opportunities.

The Junior Cycle Short Course in Creative Dance and Movement will be delivered by qualified dance teachers in collaboration with partner schools. The primary resource required for the course is a suitable hall, along with a dedicated liaison teacher within each school. The aim is to enable students to engage actively in dance and movement activities, fostering creativity, collaboration, and personal growth.

To ensure the effectiveness and success of the course, a pilot programme will commence in September 2023. Meán Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh in Co. Kerry and Presentation College in Athenry, Co. Galway, have come forward, showing true leadership in mounting the pilot programme by participating in these trials. The pilot programme is still open to accepting other applications from schools, and anyone wishing to partake are welcomed to get in touch. Valuable insights gained from the pilot programme will inform further refinements before the full short course is implemented in schools nationwide from September 2024.

The Junior Cycle Short Course in Creative Dance and Movement, aptly titled "Creative Dance and Movement: Communicating and Collaborating for Physical and Personal Development," offers students the opportunity to appreciate the importance of regular health-enhancing

physical and creative activities. It empowers them to make informed choices regarding the inclusion of these activities as part of a healthy lifestyle, thereby promoting lifelong habits. With a focus on student-centered teaching and learning, the course encourages students to exercise creative control, enabling them to develop their individual and team-based dance and movement activities.

To support qualified teachers and schools in the delivery of this exciting short course, members will gain access to a comprehensive range of downloadable resources, including lesson plans and worksheets. These resources will be made available upon the completion of the trial period in January 2024, ensuring educators have the necessary tools to facilitate an enriching learning experience.

The IBTA is committed to enhancing the educational landscape by integrating dance and movement into the Junior Cycle curriculum. The introduction of the Junior Cycle Short Course in Creative Dance and Movement represents a significant milestone in this endeavour, promising to provide students with invaluable opportunities for personal growth, physical well-being, and self-expression.

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For more information about the launch event or the Junior Cycle Short Course in Creative Dance and Movement, please contact:

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About IBTA:

The Education Sub Committee, led by the esteemed IBTA Education Officer Dr. Trish Melton with direct support from IBTA Secretary Clarissa Michaux together with the full IBTA's Committee led by Chairperson Phyllis Hayes and Vice Chair Sinéad Murphy.

The IBTA represents Irish ballet teachers registered with highly respected worldwide organisations: Royal Academy of Dance (RAD), Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD), and International Dance Teachers Association (IDTA), British Ballet Organization (BBO), Association of Russian Ballet & Theatre Arts (ARBTA) and others. We undergo extensive years of training and subsequent examinations to be qualified to teach and train ballet students from recreational up to pre professional level in a safe and disciplined environment. IBTA also includes representatives from Ballet Ireland, Ireland's national ballet company which is funded by the Arts Council and Irish National Youth Ballet (INYN), Cork Youth Ballet Company and Youth Ballet West (YBW). All ballet schools in Ireland are privately run education establishments, and teachers are both self-employed and employers, paying significant tax, local charges and rents etc. They are important contributors to the economy. Our members are dance educators.