

## DANCE UNSTUCK SYMPOSIUM - SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS



*We are travelling in the right direction....*

### Research question 1:

**Can Universal Design of Instruction (UD) principles be applied to the teaching and learning of the codified form of ballet? (studio research findings)**

UNSTUCK	VS	STILL STUCK
The UD informed approach enabled access for all dancers to all selected exercises during studio weeks	vs.	We haven't yet tackled exercises with more intricate patterns and/or jumps for example
There is existing flexibility in some syllabus exercises, where it is not prescribed how all movements must look / be taught	vs.	There was some self-censorship amongst dancers (who knew the 'usual' version); in syllabus DVD, exercises are standardised on a highly trained, non-disabled dancer
The Researcher and Associates felt the individualised versions of exercises retained the aesthetics and qualities of ballet	vs.	A need to extend discussion and understanding around modern-day ballet, e.g. some parents have a very traditional perception of the genre
Ballet teacher noted benefits of UD-approach in open class (research studio) setting, inc. recognised value of playful UD tools	vs.	It has been challenging to use UD tools during very time-limited syllabus classes
Growth in confidence of dancers making choices in individualised versions (boosted by working in an integrated context)	vs.	Challenging for disabled dancer(s) to sustain commitment to individualising in usual weekly class (where all other children do the same version)
Benefits observed of applying UD approach with a diverse, integrated group (observed positive impact on ALL dancers)	vs.	Challenge preparing for filming in limited time with a diverse group (including different levels of experience in dance) = akin to exam preparation
Positive impact on dancers of using different / a combination of language (e.g. your 1 <sup>st</sup> or 'narrow' position) + useful to define the UD approach through its own glossary	vs.	Balance to be struck with language / terminology: it could alienate (as makes UD seem like whole 'new' approach); whereas some teachers are familiar with elements under different 'names'

Boosted ambition (in teacher and students) vs. (Or despite) lack of disabled role-models  
re. what disabled students could achieve

Teacher noted positive CPD (refreshed practice) in teaching methodology

Aligned awareness / equality training would help boost confidence around disability community

*'It's just brought in a new way of teaching things which I am finding beneficial straight away. It has sort of fired up my enthusiasm really. It's the best CPD I've done actually'. (Ballet Teacher)*

## Research question 2:

### **What initial and/or ongoing support do teachers, disabled children and parents need to sustain participation in private dance school classes? (local infrastructure findings)**

Parents need information and reassurance to feel they're making informed decisions in enrolling their child and, ideally, a larger number of inclusive schools (so more choice re. location, time of class, etc)

Parents of disabled children were encouraged by subsidiary wellbeing benefits

Peer support was invaluable: existing and new friendships / relationships between the children, parents and teachers / professionals supported learning and transition to dance schools

Dance Support Workers can be invaluable in supporting the whole class and help support conversation with parents of disabled children. However, they need to understand the school culture, teacher preferences in how to work, etc. Long-term, ideally, the schools' assistants would have DSW skills

Simple tools (e.g. dancer information form) and guidance aided effective integration / induction of new students into local dance schools

Ongoing (manageable within limited capacity) teacher CPD, mentoring and/or advice is needed: in applying the UD approach, around the disability community and around safe practice

Funding, partnership and/or advice to explore the feasibility of a more 'open', less time-limited class (e.g. a small group 'coaching' class)

Need for clear teacher guidance from examining bodies around whether individualised exercises are acceptable and/or contain 'reasonable adjustment(s)'

Advice on setting clear criteria for classes / dance schools; as more disabled children seek to enrol (especially as 'flagship' inclusive schools develop / word-of-mouth spreads), there's greater need for clarity around how diverse a group of students can be accommodated safely and equitably

Support in negotiating with landlords &/or accessing capital funds to address physical access barriers

The right / different funding models to support teacher CPD and / or access for dancers

*'The legal frame work is there and you can say to anybody this is what the law says and I'm bringing my child. However, you do not want your child to go into an environment when people do not get it'*

Parent