

Dancing is a historical tradition. Ballroom and Latin dancing has been alive at social functions for centuries.

In recent years, social dance has proved its long lasting presence in our lives. It is in our media, our music and day to day social functions. It isn't usually taught parent-to-child so people are seeking schools where they can learn.

With Dancesport being considered as a medal sport in the next Olympics, more people will be exposed to Social and Ballroom dance.

Sharon Vickers FNATD Director and Principle of The Dance Studio School of Equality and Excellence Limited.

The Dance studio moved into **24 Richfield Avenue Reading March 2008 with 1 teacher 20 adults plus 2 Children.**

Over 10 years we now grown to:

50 Children (and a waiting list) and 120 Adults. The adults are combination of competing adults and social dancers.

With ever increasing popularity of the studio we now have a total of 6 employees with another to commence 2nd January 2019.

I have been teaching and involved with Ballroom and Latin dancing for 45 years competing as Juvenile, Junior, Amateur , Professional then a full time teacher, examiner and lecturer and Winner of World and European Championships., Teacher to Senior 2 Champions (50's), London Area and Numerous Blackpool Winners.

One of the most qualified teachers in Berkshire holding 5 Fellowships. Fellowship is highest qualification taken by a dancer teacher.

The Dance Studio also belongs to an Association which is recognised by **OFQUAL (The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation).**

Ballroom and Latin exams taken by Children and young persons (18 and under) form part of their Educational Record.

Because Sharon holds a Fellowship in Freestyle all exams taken in this particular genre will be graded and the **UCAS points** put towards their GCSE's and A Levels.

The Dance Studio team are innovative and forward thinking dance school which brings Ballroom and Latin plus other genres into community.

ADULT CLASSES:

Mondays 7.00pm/8.30pm Absolute Beginners

Wednesdays 7.00/8.00 Riff Raff Club

Wednesday 8.00/9.30pm Intermediate

Saturday Adult Workshop 9.30/11.00pm

CHILDRENS DANCE CLASS

Every Saturday 11.00/12.30

PRIVATE TUTITON, WHEELCHAIR TUTITON FROM 10.00AM DAILY

WEDDING DANCE LESSON FROM 10.00AM DAILY

Wheel Chair Dance Sport:

Sharon has spent 2 years training to bring Para Dance Sport to Reading. No other dance school or teacher in Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, West Berkshire and surrounding area provides this unique skill.

Para dance sport is an extremely elegant, graceful and stylish sport which involves Adults and Children athletes with a physical impairment that affects the lower limbs.

Participants can compete combi style, dancing with an able bodied (standing) partner, or duo dance for two wheelchair users together with able-bodied partners whereas single dance sees a wheelchair user dance alone

LGBTQ Same Sex Dance Competitions

Sharon has also spent many years training Same Sex Couples to compete in the **Pink Juke Box Trophy, World and European Same Sex Dance Championships with great success.** Training Same Sex Competition dancers is very different from the normal mainstream

FIRST STEPS DANCE FESTIVAL

The Dance Studio and team launched 'FIRST STEPS DANCE FESTIVAL', the only dance festival aimed primarily at children attending dance clubs within schools, who have not taken any dance examinations or competed in registered competitions.

The objective is to introduce and provide easy access for children of all abilities to the welcoming and fun environment of dance, to encourage them to **ASPIRE, ACHIEVE and INSPIRE.**

The government readily acknowledges that obesity is a growing health concern, with officials stating that it is one of the leading causes of preventable deaths in the UK. In February 2012, experts predicted that by the year 2020 one third of the United Kingdom could be obese.

The NHS advise that regular dancing is great for losing weight, maintaining strong bones, improving posture and muscle strength, increasing balance and co-ordination, and beating stress.

Whilst the physical movement of dance helps reduce stress, anxiety and depression, dancing with others also helps us feel more connected and social. Dance classes can encourage social bonds and friendships which are key factors in improving our mood and mental health.

Dancing helps children build confidence and to express themselves when they find it difficult to do so elsewhere.

The FIRST STEPS TEAM aims to assist schools to start or consolidate their own lunch and after-school dance clubs, or even run sessions as part of the school curriculum.

The National Association of Teachers of Dance (NATD) is fully supporting FIRST STEPS and hope that success in Berkshire may see the initiative spread countrywide.

Mr Kevin Page, Chief Executive of the National Association of Teachers of Dancing (NATD) is fully supportive of First Steps and hopes that the success in Berkshire may see the initiative spread countrywide. He feels that this is an exciting new venture which should entice a whole generation of youngsters to take to the floor and start to love and appreciate the art of dancing.

President Annette Hufton commented that, "The importance of offering dance in schools for physical, social and mental health reasons, cannot be exaggerated, whether in the curriculum or through social clubs, and I passionately support all such projects."

With the imminent return of Strictly Come Dancing, fans favourite, Ian Waite commented that. 'Dancing has provided me with such a wonderful life; I hope that youngsters give it a go'.

The FIRST STEPS DANCE FESTIVAL was held on Saturday 3rd March 2018 at Burghfield 150 local school children participated. Next event March 2019.

9A ASHMERE TERRACE READING

During July 2018 The Dance Studio received devastating news. The landlord wanted vacant possession of 24a Richfield Avenue Reading December 2018.

Ashmere Terrace would be ideal location. Geographically it is less than one mile from our existing premises and on the ground floor

Plenty of parking and a dropped kerb for the wheelchairs.

Wide doors accessible for Wheelchair users.

Our current premise is located on the first floor. This makes it difficult for some of our mature students, those with Wheelchairs and Parents with young siblings still in Pushchairs.

Easy access via the local bus route, cyclist and walkable from Oxford Road Area.

Good distance from the main Portman Road.

Non Residential.

I have spoken to the owner of the property next door Mr Richard DeSouza. Mr DeSouza is very happy for us to be his neighbour.

Currently there is a problem with the dumping of rubbish adjacent to 9A Ashmere Terrace.

The Dance Studio will be in operation when other businesses have closed.

Mr DeSouza believes this could act as deterrent.

To whom it may concern:

We are dance teachers..... But above and beyond that, we are educators and mentors. Laterally and equally important, we are friends to our students of all ages.

It is our responsibility to not only teach Children the importance of technique and timing, but the importance of teamwork and accountability.

Often times we find ourselves as dance teachers the only positive influence in people's lives and sometimes the only consistency in a child or young person's life and sometimes the only person who cares.

We are a dance community; even more we are a family.

We not only educate our Children and Young Adults to be good dance technicians, competent dancers and future Champions and Olympians but more a highly effective adult in society.

Kind regards

Sharon Vickers