

EXCEL PERFORMING ARTS

HALF TERM NEWSLETTER

2nd WINTER TERM DATES 22nd FEBRUARY – 2nd April 2010 (6 weeks)

Firstly, we would like to extend a warm welcome to all our new students that have started classes with Excel Performing Arts this term. Everyone has settled in really well and we have had great fun getting to know you all!

It has been an exciting start to our term with all the new classes that began in January. The classes are filling up fast with some that are full now with waiting lists. Our aim is for Excel Performing Arts to become one of the most exciting performing arts schools in Hertfordshire and the word seems to be spreading!!

EXCITING NEWS AND NEW FACES

Our Artistic Director – Steven Houghton, whom many of the students know as he has been teaching some of the classes, has been asked to perform alongside the opera singer - Katherine Jenkins on her arena tour. The 11 date tour starts March 3rd 2010 at Birmingham's National Indoor Arena, taking in most major cities. The London Show is at The O2 Arena on March 13th. As much as Steven is looking forward to this new venture, he will miss his students and hope they will all work extra hard in their lessons whilst he is away. The tour finishes on March 19th and depending on his schedule you may still see him around during this time.

All classes that Steven has been taking will be taught either by myself or various guest teachers that have an impressive performing and teaching background. We are very excited that the actor, Ben Richards who currently is starring in 'The Bill' has agreed to teach a workshop with our Wednesday drama and singing class and we are just trying to fit it in around his busy filming schedule. Ben, like Steven, has worked extensively in television, film and as a leading man in the West End. For more information about Ben please visit www.benrichards.com.

Another new face you may see teaching the drama & singing is actress - Brogan Meadwell. Brogan has been the leading lady in many West End shows as well as UK tours that include 'West Side Story', 'Les Miserables', 'Oliver' and 'Saturday Fever' as well as many others. Brogan is an experienced drama and singing teacher and has taught for various Stagecoach schools. We are thrilled that she has agreed to teach for us.

As I will be teaching some of the classes Steven has been taking, I have two brilliant assistants – Angie Holland and Claire Coker to assist in general health and safety issues such as first aid, safe handing over of children at the end of a lesson and any other issues during the classes that I can't attend to whilst I am teaching.

Many of you will know Angie Holland has been assisting in the preparatory ballet classes since we opened in September. Angie is a hugely respected teaching assistant at Bowmansgreen School and has been working with children of all ages for many years. The young children in the ballet classes adore her.

Claire Coker is also a much loved teaching assistant and now learning mentor at Bowmansgreen School. Claire has also many years experience of working with children and she will be an asset to the team.

For the smooth running of the classes, if you have any issues you wish to discuss with me that can't be discussed with either Angie or Claire, please let them know that you wish to talk to me and I will phone you after classes when it is convenient.

SECURITY & LATENESS

We have had a few issues with the security door lately with some of you complaining you can't get in. The inner door has a security coded lock which is paramount to the safety of all children either taking part in Excel classes or from the Golden Opportunities after school club next door.

Students need to wait in the lobby accompanied by parents and at the time their class begins we will open the door to let them through to the hall.

The problem seems to be if a student is late as the class has already started and we are busy teaching. Not only can we not hear any knocking as the class music is playing, it is disruptive of the lesson. We intend to get a bell similar to Golden Opportunities however we may not hear it with the music playing and again it will be disruptive. Golden Opportunities are forbidden to let any other parent or adult in apart from their own parents that are picking up children from their club. This rule also applies to any other adult (cleaners, teachers, office staff) working within the school. Only Excel Performing Arts staff are able to open the door for Excel students and their parents. I'm sure parents are pleased and reassured that their child is attending classes in such a safe and secure environment.

The answer is not to be late! Not only is this a problem with not getting in the building, it is a serious health and safety issue as well. If your child misses registration and there was a fire incident, we would have to evacuate and your child may not have been marked here. Lastly, always ensure your child is safely in the building and never just drop them off for them to make their own way in. We are only responsible for your child once they have been handed over to us at the start of their class.

TOILETS

Please ensure your child goes to the toilet before they start their class especially the little ones in the ballet classes. As the younger ballet class is only half an hour it can disrupt what we are doing and we also don't want them to miss out on any of the fun.

FEES

I would appreciate if fees can be paid the first week back at lessons after a holiday or half term break and put in the envelope provided which should have your child's name and class clearly marked on it. A lot of other dance and performing arts schools require payment for the entire term in one go. We do try and make it a little easier for parents by breaking it up into half terms so please ensure payment is made on time.

WEBSITE AND NEW LOGO

We are extremely excited to announce we now have a website!!!! The website address is www.excelperformingarts.co.uk and we would welcome you to visit it and send us a message through the contacts page. There are some photos from the classes and lots of information about the school. We are adding things to the website all the time so keep visiting it for updates and news. If we have another snow day and you are unsure as to whether classes are on, you will be able to check the website. You will also be able to see our new logo on the website.

HOODIES & T-SHIRTS

We are having some zipped hooded tops and t-shirts designed with our new logo on. As soon as I have some for students to try on I will let you know. What we will do is put a bulk order in by a certain date each month. For the Street class the t-shirts will be part of their uniform but any of the other classes can order them too.

UNIFORM

May I remind you that we do have a uniform that we require students to wear. We believe we are offering high standard performing arts classes for your children and think it is essential that the children look and feel the part. To ensure we can attract top guest teachers in we need to also look professional.

FOOD & DRINKS

If your child is doing a 45min class, please ensure they bring a small bottle of water with them. Please no juice as it sometimes gets spilled on the floor and leaves a sticky mess. No food to be brought at all!

I hope you all have a great half term and we look forward to seeing you all the week beginning Monday 22nd February.

Kind regards,

Sam Payton

Principal – Excel Performing Arts

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