

# Inspection of Bodywork Company Performing Arts Cambridge

Inspection dates: 25 to 27 May 2022

## Overall effectiveness

**Inadequate**

The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Education programmes for young people	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Information about this provider

Bodyworks Company Performing Arts Cambridge (Bodywork Company) is a private college that trains students for employment in the musical theatre and dance industries. Bodywork Company offers a level 6 diploma in professional dance and professional musical theatre awarded by Trinity College London. This inspection focused on final-year students taking the level 6 Trinity College diploma course who are in receipt of dance and drama award (DaDA) funding.

Bodywork Company was established approximately 40 years ago and is currently located in a former warehouse in Cambridge. It attracts students from across the country and internationally. Currently, 30 students are enrolled and funded on the level 6 diploma course.

Bodywork Company does not subcontract any element of its provision. No student receives high-needs funding. Bodywork Company is accredited by the Council for Dance and Musical Theatre.

## **What is it like to be a learner with this provider?**

Students enjoy the opportunities provided at Bodywork Company to improve their readiness for auditions. Taking part in the Christmas show and termly events builds their confidence in performing. This helps students develop the mental resilience needed to successfully enter the performing arts industry.

Students are polite and articulate. Across all performance disciplines, they are supportive and encouraging of their peers. They value this comradery highly. Students' passion and enthusiasm for performing end-of-year show numbers are infectious.

Many final-year students expressed concern that they have not made good progress. Less than half feel that the programme meets their needs or prepares them for what they want to do next. Students do not feel that they have enough opportunity to extend their skills further.

Students told inspectors that if they perform well, teachers use them to show how to execute a technique. While less able students benefit, more skilled students feel that they make limited improvement.

Students feel safe at college. They understand how to protect themselves from performance-related injuries. Bullying is not tolerated by students or staff. On the very few occasions that this has happened, teachers have responded effectively.

## **What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders have not provided a suitably demanding curriculum. They have not ensured that the two pathways of dance and musical theatre are distinct. Students all follow the same programme regardless of their pathway choice. Students do not experience a broad enough range of skills development opportunities. There are not enough opportunities for students to extend their repertoire to reach a professional standard as a result. Dancers rarely learn any extra dance genres beyond ballet, jazz, tap and contemporary. They are not proficient and competent in heelwork, for example. Musical theatre students do not receive individual singing lessons.

Leaders have not maintained a high professional standard of student performance. Too few teachers are sufficiently ambitious or demanding of students. A substantial minority of students do not work to the standard expected of the final-year Trinity College diploma. Teachers do not ensure that students achieve the good skills and techniques they need in order to be successful. There are too many freelance teachers who do not have qualified teacher status. They do not always teach the detail of the technique they demonstrate, although teachers do have extensive experience in the professional disciplines that they teach.

The quality of education and training has declined and is no longer good. Leaders and managers pay insufficient attention to the quality of teaching students receive.

Too few teachers structure learning to enable students to become fluent, competent performers. A few skilled teachers structure learning effectively. In ballet, students work through exercises that develop their strength and stamina. They focus correctly on precise, safe techniques. In singing, students develop increasingly proficient ensemble singing skills.

Teachers' use of assessment for learning is not good. The feedback and corrections teachers give students are often too infrequent or general. Teachers do not provide specific help to improve technique, artistic interpretation and control. More effective teachers encourage students to give respectful feedback to their peers. This develops students' reflective practice and a critical eye for improvement.

Most students develop satisfactory skills in dance, singing and acting. The standard of students' contextual studies work is good. Their work reflects thoughtful and insightful thinking on often challenging subjects. For example, students are confident in researching and reporting on child abuse and sexual violence. Students show a sound awareness of how to live and work respectfully in modern Britain.

Students develop a good understanding and use of technical and professional language. In singing, students confidently use and can explain terminology such as 'crescendo'. They understand that this describes the gradual increase in the volume of the voice. Students in ballet discuss the accurate placing of the foot when executing a 'développé, devant and derrière.

Students' self-discipline does not always reflect the high levels expected in the industry. In rehearsal sessions, while peers perform, too few students make good use of their own time to refine their skills. Students often stand around chatting or looking at their mobile phones. A few students are habitually late for classes. Their lateness disrupts the learning of the punctual majority.

Leaders have not developed an effective English and mathematics strategy. They have not ensured that teachers support students' continued skills development. Teachers correct English errors in students' written work. Teachers use appropriate, practical mathematics examples when preparing students for freelance employment.

Students receive appropriate ongoing careers advice and guidance. Frequent industry talks provide useful guidance to students. They learn to recognise the challenges of working in the performing arts industry. Managers have an incomplete understanding of where students progress to. Those students with known destinations often reflect limited ambition. This lack of ambition reflects the narrow curriculum available to students at Bodywork Company.

Leaders have yet to establish effective governance arrangements. This was a weakness identified at the previous inspection. Governance arrangements are still in their formative stages. Those providing governance oversight bring a wealth of relevant experience to their roles. They have established a clear vision of what is good governance, but this is in its infancy, and it is too soon to see any impact.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders have not yet established a culture of safeguarding. Leaders' ongoing scrutiny of safeguarding arrangements, although strengthened, is not yet comprehensive.

Confidential record-keeping by staff is poor. Physical access to the building does not protect students from unauthorised access. Female student changing facilities are not private. Guests and staff have unlimited access to students' shower, toilet and changing facilities.

Safeguarding training has resulted in students being clear about how to report concerns. Teachers understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Teachers now train students on how to stay safe in the performing arts world. Most students feel safe at Bodywork Company.

### What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and those with governance responsibilities must develop and implement comprehensive safeguarding arrangements. They must ensure that students are physically, mentally and emotionally safe. Shower, toilet and changing facilities must be for the sole use of students.
- Leaders need to establish effective governance arrangements. Arrangements need to help leaders improve the quality of education and check that leaders' actions are making a difference. Arrangements must ensure that governors are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and are checking that agreed safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- Leaders must provide a suitably demanding curriculum. They must ensure that the two pathways of dance and musical theatre are distinct. Leaders must ensure that students benefit from a broad range of skills development opportunities.
- Leaders must ensure that teachers are ambitious and demanding of students. Teachers must structure learning to enable students to become fluent, competent performers. Teachers must provide specific individual help to improve students' technique, artistic interpretation and control.
- Leaders need to develop an effective English and mathematics strategy that enables students to continue their English and mathematical skills development throughout their studies at Bodywork Company.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	50009
<b>Address</b>	25–29 Glisson Rd Cambridge CB1 2HA
<b>Contact number</b>	01223 314461
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bodyworkcompany.co.uk">www.bodyworkcompany.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal</b>	Theresa Kerr
<b>Provider type</b>	Dance and drama academy
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 and 14 January 2016
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the musical director, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

## Inspection team

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