



FOR PARENTS WHO WOULD LIKE TO RAISE FUNDS THEMSELVES TO HELP WITH SCHOOL FEES

Although many parents receive means-tested funding through the Music and Dance Scheme or Upper School bursaries, it can still be a struggle to pay the requisite School fees. Families may need to make adjustments to their family budget and it can be difficult, especially if there are other children and priorities to consider.

Many parents are successful in raising funds to help with School fees and this document sets out some avenues that you can explore, together with advice on writing a press release. It is primarily aimed at UK parents but the information may also be helpful to overseas parents.

This information contains advice on:

- Local Authority funding (local government)
- Charitable Trusts and Foundations
- Guidelines on writing your own press release
- An example of a press release

LOCAL AUTHORITY (LA)

Your first port of call should be your Local Authority, what was previously known as the Local Education Authority (LEA). This Government run local organisation provides advice and guidance on student financial arrangements.

Your Local Authority will ask you to justify why you are electing to send your child to a non-state school but will consider applications from parents of children with a particular musical or artistic aptitude.

Local Authorities have a finite budget and their ability to support individual students depends on the volume of applications made during a particular session. Some authorities also have to prioritise certain areas, particularly when there is inadequate provision of certain skills in the local mainstream schools.

APPLYING TO YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY

It is worth taking time over your application to ensure you present the best possible case for your child.

Points to include in your application are:

- The prestige of The Royal Ballet School - mention that this internationally renowned school is 'the school' of The Royal Ballet Company and Birmingham Royal Ballet and recognised as one of the world's leading ballet schools
- Explain that places are very limited and only offered to the most talented students who have been selected through an extensive audition process. There are approximately 750 applicants to The Royal Ballet School every year. Only 24 places are offered in Year 7 at White Lodge and a further 25-30 places in Year 12 at the Upper School
- Point out the cultural benefit of attending The Royal Ballet School and the opportunity to learn alongside young dancers from other countries. This is particularly relevant in the Upper School where there are currently students from 17 different countries
- Explain that The Royal Ballet School also runs an extensive educational programme and that your child will graduate with 7-8 GCSE's, plus an AS level and if they progress to the Upper School, they will aim for at least 1 A level and 2 BTEC qualifications
- Illustrate the special talent of your child by including photographs, photocopies of ballet exam certificates and letters of commendation
- Explain the commitment and passion of your child and that this is a vocational choice with a view to progressing to a professional life of dance

If you are told by your Local Authority that you do not meet the criteria for their support, you still have the chance to appeal. You should do this and await the outcome. You will receive a letter explaining why your child has or has not been given financial assistance. If the latter, do not despair, as there are a number of Trusts and Foundations to which you can also apply.

TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

- Names and addresses of Trusts and Foundations who specifically support dance students are held on a database at your local library, such as 'The Educational Grants Directory' or 'The Directory of Grant Making Trusts'
- Useful websites are <http://grantsforindividuals.org.uk/> and <http://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Points to include in your application are:

- A photocopy of the letter from your Local Authority, to demonstrate that you have pursued this channel of support
- A letter of introduction, and if possible a letter from your child saying why they wish to go to The Royal Ballet School

- Explain your background, outlining your financial position and how many dependent siblings are still at home
- Provide details of how much the tuition fees and maintenance costs will be and list additional maintenance costs such as uniform, shoes, music lessons, travel etc. The Finance Department will be happy to write you a letter confirming the costs of your child's place at the School
- Explain which year your child will be entering and how long they hope to be at White Lodge and/or the Upper School, before graduating as a professional dancer
- Point out that places in the school are only offered for one year, with an annual appraisal process that determines which students will graduate to the subsequent year - ie the student has to attain a certain standard to remain at The Royal Ballet School
- Explain that The Royal Ballet School runs an extensive academic programme and that your child will graduate with 7-9 GCSEs and if they progress to the Upper School, they will aim to graduate with at least one A-level and two BTEC qualifications
- Some Trusts distinguish between different school age-groups:
 - 11-15 years old - when focus is still on academic qualifications, so it is important to stress the GCSE year
 - 16 - 19 year olds - where students are viewed as vocational applicants - ie the young person is attending the school in order to pursue a career in dance. It might be worth quoting some of the ballet companies that graduates of The Royal Ballet School enter, for example The Royal Ballet, The Birmingham Royal Ballet, English National Ballet, Northern Ballet, Scottish Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, Vienna State Opera Ballet, National Ballet of Canada, American Ballet Theatre. You might also mention alumni of The Royal Ballet School such as Margot Fonteyn, Anthony Dowell, Antoinette Sibley, Wayne Sleep, Darcey Bussell, Jonathan Cope, Edward Watson, Stephen McRae, Lauren Cuthbertson - to name but a few
- Always thank Trusts for taking the time to read your application and ask, should your child not meet their criteria, whether they would be kind enough to suggest another organisation that might support your application
- Support from Trusts and Foundations is usually offered for a specific length of time so you may need to reapply each year

Items that should accompany your application:

- A copy of the letter offering a place at The Royal Ballet School for the relevant year
- A copy of your child's acceptance letter, sent to The Royal Ballet School
- A copy of the appeal letter from your Local Authority that refuses a bursary
- A copy of your most recent RAD result and/or an appraisal report from your child's current ballet school
- An outline of your personal contribution to the school fees for the relevant year

If you are successful and offered funding from a Trust or Foundation, it is important to thank them (ideally with a letter from your child). Keep them informed of your child's progress and perhaps invite them to a performance where she or he is performing. This will encourage future support and also promote the School, which might help other students in future funding applications.

Some Trusts and Foundation can only make grants to a charitable organisation and will therefore insist on sending your grant direct to the School. This is not a problem – when the amount is received by the School it will be deducted from your termly bills.

We have a list of relevant UK Trusts and Foundations. If you would like a copy please email Helen Zeederberg in Finance helen.zeederberg@royalballetschool.org.uk

NB: Please let the Development Department know of any successful applications. Development Department, The Royal Ballet School, 46 Floral Street, London WC2E 9DA
020 7845 7073 development@royalballetschool.co.uk

GUIDELINES ON WRITING A PRESS RELEASE

You may want to tell your local community about your child winning a place at The Royal Ballet School. Parents often ask us how to send information to the local press. The best way is to write a one-page press release which contains the facts expressed in an objective tone. Here are some guidelines, as well as a mock press release designed to help you write your own.

FIRST PARAGRAPH – Keep it brief and to the point
Summarise your story in the first paragraph and include the following:

Who? What? When? Where? Why?

Remember it is not a letter but a tool in which to report bold fact. Therefore the story will be about ‘a girl’ or ‘a boy’ not ‘my daughter’ or ‘my son’.

SECOND PARAGRAPH - Expand
The second paragraph should offer a little more information about how your child’s dance training led to joining The Royal Ballet School. Avoid too much detail and try to distil the story into a few lines. Just ask yourself – what are the basic facts that sum it up?

THIRD PARAGRAPH – Get personal
If you wish to share some personal information, this is where to do it. This could be describing the rest of the family, where you live, what you do for a living, how many people are in your family, any other family members with an interest in ballet. This helps give the journalist a fuller picture.

QUOTATION
Here you can add a statement – this is very useful for the journalist. If they publish the story, a statement enables the journalist to ‘personalise’ the story, make it more immediate and make it look like he/she has actually interviewed you.

FINAL PARAGRAPH
This is where you should provide information about the costs of attending The Royal Ballet School and invite members of the public to help.

Registered address: 46 Floral Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9DA
www.royalballetschool.org.uk

NOTES FOR EDITORS

This is a device that provides the journalist with summary background information in order to contextualise his/her article. Journalists are writing many stories in the course of a single day so this helps speed up the process, as they do not need to do the research themselves.

BEFORE YOU SEND OUT YOUR PRESS RELEASE

Before sending your press release out, you will want to have it checked for factual accuracy and tone. Simply send your final draft to Sarah Eliot-Cohen in The Royal Ballet School's Development Department or email it to: annalise.cunild@royalballetschool.org.uk, telephone on 020 7845 7074.

1. An example of a press release

Manchester boy wins place at The Royal Ballet School

11 March 2015 [change]

An eleven-year old Manchester boy, Jim Morton, has won a place at The Royal Ballet School, ahead of stiff competition. Each year, The Royal Ballet School conducts a vigorous UK-wide audition which sees more than 750 young people compete for just 24 places. [see Note1 below]

Jim first started dancing at the age of three at the Sinead Crawford Dance Centre in Prestwick, joining The Royal Ballet's Junior Associate Programme in Leeds at age eight. Jim will start at The Royal Ballet Lower School at White Lodge in London's Richmond Park in September 2016 where he will board. [Note2]

[Note3] Jim's mother Agnes works as a part-time shop assistant at Samuel Jewellery in Bolton and his father is a local taxi driver. Jim has two brothers and a sister. Mrs Morton comments:

[Note4] 'We are absolutely delighted. Jim has always worked so hard at his ballet and to have that recognised by one of the world's greatest ballet schools means everything to him and makes his whole family very proud indeed. It will be hard to get used to Jim living away from home, but he will be in good hands at The Royal Ballet School's White Lodge. To think that he will be training at the very same school as Margot Fonteyn, Darcey Bussell and Wayne Sleep is just thrilling. We are extremely grateful for the financial assistance we have received but if anyone would like to help us further we would be so grateful.'

A place at The Royal Ballet School costs over £30,000 per year. The Government's Department for Education offers UK students means-tested support for fees through the Music and Dance Scheme. There is however a substantial sum which has to be met by parents, as the grant does not cover items such as ballet shoes, uniform, music lessons or trips home. If you would like to support Jim and help him realise his dream to train at The Royal Ballet School, please contact Katherine Gardiner on 020 7845 7052 or email katherine.gardiner@royalballetschool.org.uk

Comment [jf1]: Add the current date here

Comment [jf2]: (The first paragraph of a press release sets the scene by providing the key elements of the story: who? what? where? when? why? Here you can insert the corresponding information about your own child)

Comment [jf3]: (Here you can expand by including a brief history about your child's ballet training. You will have to be selective and factual. That is, avoid giving your opinion)

Comment [jf4]: (If you are happy to do so, this is a good place to give details about yourself and your family)

Comment [jf5]: (Here you can give your own comment about how you feel about your child's achievement in winning a place at The Royal Ballet School. This will most likely be used if the article is published)

For further information, interviews or images please contact
Annalise Cunild, Marketing & Communications for The Royal Ballet School
on 020 7845 7074 or email annalise.cunild@royalballschool.org.uk

Comment [jff6]: (Note: a press release like this should not exceed one page A4 and if sent as an email, should be within the body of the email, not as an attachment)

NOTES FOR EDITORS

THE ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL

The Royal Ballet School, established in 1926 by Dame Ninette de Valois, is one of the world's great centres of excellence in dance training. The Lower School for 11-16 year olds is based at White Lodge, Richmond Park, South West London and the Upper School (16-19 year olds) is adjacent to The Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. With its six Associate Centres across the UK, the Outreach Programme enables The Royal Ballet School to achieve the key objective of identifying and nurturing exceptional talent, wherever individuals live and whatever their family circumstance. Admission to The Royal Ballet School is based purely on talent and potential and more than 95% of its 210 students receive financial support from the Government's Music and Dance Scheme or from other sources. In any one year, the Outreach Programme engages with more than 3,500 aspiring young dancers, with about 750 of these auditioning for a place at the School. The Royal Ballet School admits 24 students into Year 7 each year.

Former Royal Ballet School students include:

The Royal Ballet School has trained some of the world's greatest dancers and choreographers including: Margot Fonteyn, Kenneth MacMillan, Antoinette Sibley, Anthony Dowell, Anya Linden, Lesley Collier, Viviana Durante, Wayne Sleep, Darcey Bussell, Jonathan Cope, and current dancers and choreographers: Adam Cooper, Lauren Cuthbertson, Steven McRae, Edward Watson and Christopher Wheeldon.

NOTES FOR PARENTS ON DRAFT PRESS RELEASE

A press release like this should not exceed one page A4 and if sent as an email, should be within the body of the email, not as an attachment.

Note 1: The first paragraph of a press release sets the scene by providing the key elements of the story: who? what? where? when? why? Here you can insert the corresponding information about your own child

Note 2: Here you can expand by including a brief history about your child's ballet training. You will have to be selective and factual. That is, avoid giving your opinion)

Note 3: If you are happy to do so, this is a good place to give details about yourself and your family.

Note 4: Here you can give your own comment about how you feel about your child's achievement in winning a place to The Royal Ballet School. This will most likely be used if the article is published.

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