

CAMBRIDGE CITY CULTURAL EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP



CREATIVE FUTURES

2025-2026 Academic Offer

AN INTRODUCTION

THE NATIONAL PICTURE

Since 2010, there has been an overall decline of 42% in the number of Arts GCSE entries in England.

There are schools which no longer offer some Arts subjects at all: 42% of schools no longer enter any pupils for Music GCSE; 41% of schools no longer enter any pupils for Drama GCSE; and 84% enter no pupils for Dance GCSE.

Where EBacc subjects have seen an increase in total teaching hours across secondary schools at Key Stage 4 in England (History increasing from 48,644 to 70,072), Arts based subjects have seen a decline across the same period (Drama decreasing from 28,437 to 19,908).

THE LOCAL PICTURE

43% of Cambridge's young people have not attended a cultural activity in the past year. Of those who had, it was four times more likely that school is where that engagement happened than in any other space.

Per pupil wise, Cambridge is one of the lowest funded local authorities in the entire country (136th out of 149th)

Half of state-funded secondary schools in Cambridge for 2024/2025 have percentages of students known to be eligible for free school meals higher than the national average.

DUE TO LACK OF FUNDING IN STATE SCHOOLS, 93% OF CHILDREN ARE BEING EXCLUDED FROM ARTS AND CULTURAL EDUCATION.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

Across television, film, and music, high-profile figures in the creative industries are much more likely to have attended private school than the UK population (31% compared to 7%).

Working-class people are underrepresented in every area of arts and culture. They make up 8.4% of those working in film, TV, radio, and photography, while in museums, archives, and libraries, the proportion is only 5.2%.

THIS STARTS AT SCHOOL

All children and young people, regardless of their socio-economic background, should have access to a high-quality creative education in schools, as well as access to wider experiences in the arts.

Subjects like music, dance, or drama help to build confidence and essential skills such as communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork. These are skills employers value, and which parents know help their children to achieve and thrive – both academically and throughout life.

The Cultural Education Partnership, Creative Futures, is a coalition and commitment from key cultural organisations in the city and region, aiming to provide a more joined-up cultural education offer to support children and young people in Cambridge to fulfil their creative potential and access high-quality cultural experiences where they go to school.

Signed:

Ben Hallworth, Creative Partnerships Manager at Cambridge City Council
 Katie Short, Creative Learning & Engagement Manager at Cambridge Arts Theatre
 Michael Judge, Associate Artistic Director at New International Encounter
 Tom Bowes, Producer for Children & Young People at DanceEast
 Cristina Roures, Operations Manager at Cambridge Film Festival
 Laura Vanhulle, Co-Artistic Director at Vanhulle Dance Theatre
 Thomas Thurbon, Venues General Manager at Cambridge Corn Exchange
 Beth Bailey, Head of Creative Learning at Cambridge Junction
 Eve Gordon, National Schools Partnerships Manager at Royal Opera House
 Carey Robinson, Head of Learning & Participation at Fitzwilliam Museum



Sources:

- [Creative Learning Alliance Annual Report Card](#)
- [Creative Industries Sector Plan](#)
- [A Class Act: Social Mobility and the Creative Industries](#)
- [UK Arts, Culture, and Heritage: Audiences & Workforce](#)
- [An evidence-based approach to creating a culture of inclusive opportunity through arts and creativity](#)

CAMBRIDGE ARTS THEATRE

Event: Noughts and Crosses: Theatre Day, Production Tickets, and Resource Pack

Target Audience: Year 9 - Year 11 Drama

Date: Wednesday 15 April 2026

Time: 10am – 5pm

Location: Cambridge Arts Theatre

Capacity: 60 students

Discover how the production of Noughts and Crosses has been brought to the stage.

This two-hour, interactive session will be hosted on stage in the main auditorium. Through fantastic demonstrations and discussions, you will get an insight into the rehearsal process with cast members which includes the exploration of dialogue and movement. There is also the opportunity to get a technical perspective of the production and learn how the actors and production team came together to create this production by exploring lighting and sound states. A live informal Q&A with some of the cast and creative team will bring the morning to a close.

Each school will then be provided up to 60x* fully subsidised tickets to the matinee production that proceeds the Theatre Day, alongside a follow up resource pack containing comprehensive lesson plans, handouts, access to filmed scenes of the 2022 production, and the published play text adaptation by the playwright Sabrina Mahfouz.

Production Trailer

*This may increase depending upon requirements from other schools.



CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE

Event: Schools Celebration Event 2026

Target Audience: Year 7 - Year 11 Performing Arts

Date: Thursday 2 July 2026

Time: 10am – 8pm

Location: Cambridge Corn Exchange

An opportunity for students to perform at one of the largest venues of its type in the East of England, bring one or several performances to our stage that you have developed throughout the academic year to perform alongside other schools involved in the Cultural Education Partnership and across the region. Whether it be a school band, an excerpt from a school production, choir, dance performance, or solo artists, this is a moment to come together, celebrate, and showcase all of the incredible talent that your school has to offer.



NEW INTERNATIONAL ENCOUNTER

Event: Shakespeare in a Suitcase: Hamlet Schools Tour 2026

Target Audience: Year 7 and 8 English & Drama

Date: Tuesday 3 February – Friday 13 February 2026

Duration: 55 minutes

Location: School

Capacity: 60 students

A combination of Shakespearean verse and contemporary language makes this original famous story clear and easy to follow. Punctuated effortlessly by an original soundtrack, live music, and sound effects, you will be taken on a roller-coaster of excitement, humour, and grief in this bitesize retelling of Shakespeare.

New International Encounter (NIE) is an international company that makes award-winning theatre performances and projects through a mix of physical theatre, multiple languages, live music, storytelling, and a European ensemble.

[Tour Pack](#)

[Production Trailer](#)

“HAMLET WAS AMAZING. ALL THE CHILDREN WERE REALLY ENGAGED & ON THE EDGE OF THEIR SEATS... I WOULD THOROUGHLY RECOMMEND.”



VANHULLE DANCE THEATRE

Event: ORB Schools Tour 2026 + Q&A

Target Audience: Year 7 & 8 Dance

Date: Monday 9 February – Friday 13 February 2026

Duration: 22 minutes + Post Show Q&A

Location: School

ORB is a mythological dance duet that ignites the cosmos, exploring the tension between connection and distance. Athletic, emotive, and filled with joy, this thrilling performance delves into the struggle of being together while still apart.

When the light between two souls flickers, and the pull to transcend limits and explore the unknown becomes irresistible, how do we find balance in a world that never stops moving? ORB weaves together explosive physicality, breathtaking partner work, and martial arts-inspired movements, creating a stunning visual tapestry set to a hauntingly emotive sound score for a full year group.

Vanhulle Dance Theatre are specialists in secondary school dance education. Whether students actively engage in dance or whether it's their first time, VDT offers an unforgettable experience that uses movement to go beyond what words can explain.

[Production Trailer](#)

Photograph by Jon Fraser

“THANK YOU FOR THE LOVELY DAY YOU OFFERED US, BOTH STUDENTS AND STAFF. WE ALL ENJOYED WATCHING AND ADMIRING YOUR PERFORMANCE, WHICH WE FOUND SUCH AN INSPIRING AND EMOTIONAL PIECE OF ART.”



CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION

Event: Creative Industry Day

Target Audience: Year 10 & 11 Performing Arts

Date: Monday 27 April 2026 or Wednesday 1 July 2026

Time: 9.30am – 2.30pm

Location: Cambridge Junction

Capacity: 30 students

Bring up to 30 students to an industry day at Cambridge Junction, providing insight into the wide range of job opportunities in the arts and exposure to what happens behind the scenes. Young people are able to participate in a meet-the-staff round-table question and answer session about entry routes, career paths, and individual experiences and to participate in 'behind-the-scenes' workshops in areas such as technical theatre, design, and directing, plus a tour of Cambridge Junction.

Industry Days give young people an opportunity to develop insight and knowledge from those that work in the field, connecting the future creative workforce with industry professionals.



“MY STUDENTS FELT INSPIRED BY THE DAY AND FEEL MORE CONFIDENT TO PURSUE A CAREER IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY”

FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

Event: Art, History, Science and People: Careers at the Fitzwilliam Museum

Target Audience: Year 9 – Year 11 Art, History, and Science

Date: Wednesday 5 November 2025 or Spring Term

Time: 10am – 2.15pm

Location: Fitzwilliam Museum

Capacity: 15 students

How many people does it take to put a painting on display? Come and sample some of the wide range of careers for those who love visual art, history, or science. Whether protecting artworks and artefacts, sharing them with the nation, or making them yourself. During the visit students will take part in a creative workshop with a professional artist and discuss their career; tour an exhibition with a curator to find out what goes into making a display and finally, get to work with our conservators to see how science underpins the care of the collection.



DANCEEAST

Event: Dance Masterclass

Target Audience: Year 7 - Year 11 Dance

Date: September - July 2026

Duration: 90 minutes or half day

Location: School

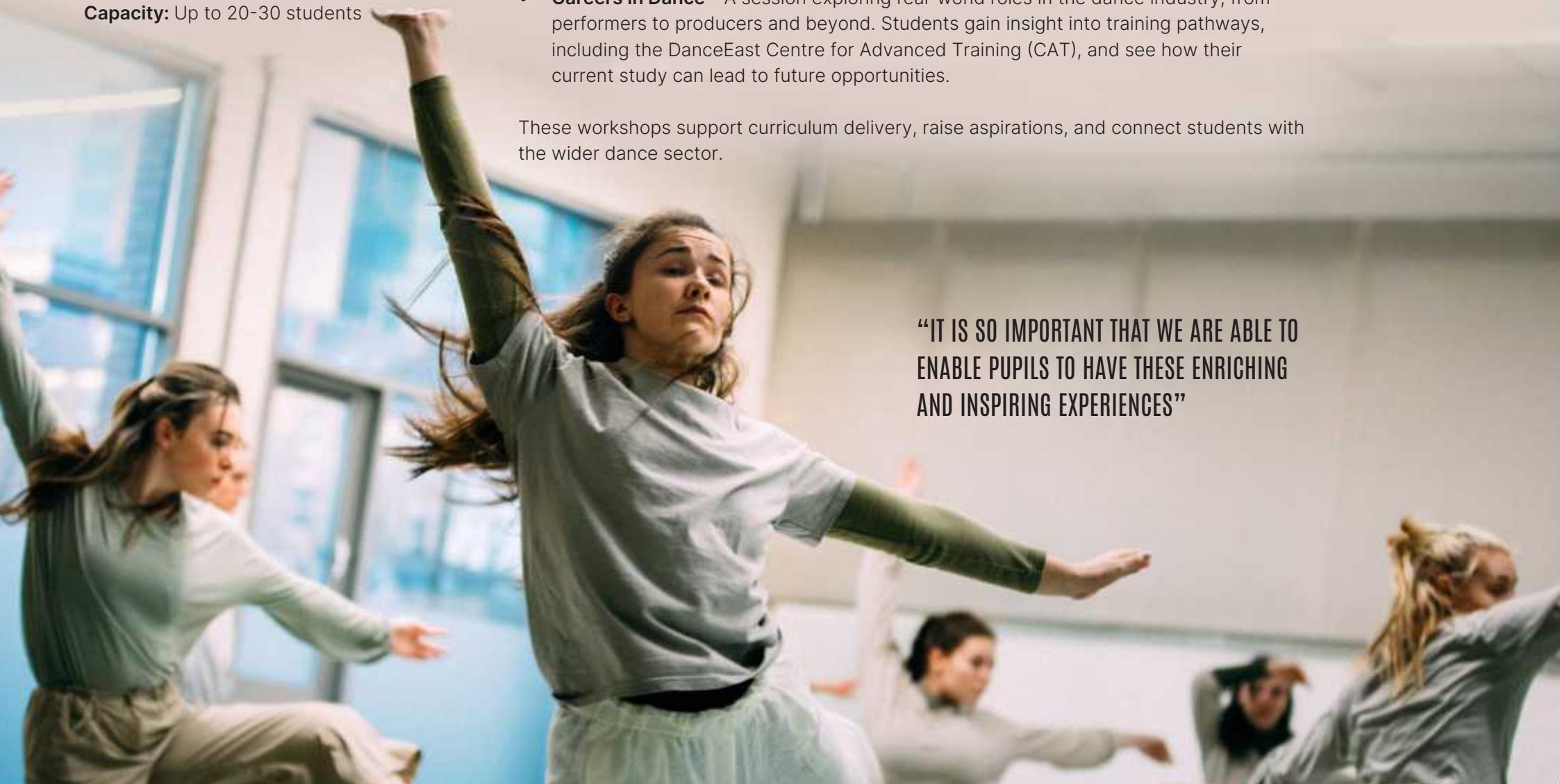
Capacity: Up to 20-30 students

A fun, high-quality, in-school workshop led by a professional DanceEast artist, designed to energise and stretch students through expert-led creative learning. Choose between a 90 minute or half day workshop:

- **Contemporary Technique & Choreography** - A dynamic movement workshop blending contemporary dance technique and creative tasks, helping students develop skills, develop original choreography, and build confidence in performance and composition.
- **Careers in Dance** - A session exploring real-world roles in the dance industry, from performers to producers and beyond. Students gain insight into training pathways, including the DanceEast Centre for Advanced Training (CAT), and see how their current study can lead to future opportunities.

These workshops support curriculum delivery, raise aspirations, and connect students with the wider dance sector.

“IT IS SO IMPORTANT THAT WE ARE ABLE TO ENABLE PUPILS TO HAVE THESE ENRICHING AND INSPIRING EXPERIENCES”



CAMBRIDGE FILM FESTIVAL

Event: Careers Behind the Camera

Target Audience: Year 10 – Year 11 Media

Date: January – June 2026

Duration: 2 hours

Location: School

Capacity: 20 students

Step into the world of film with this dynamic, hands-on session exploring the many creative careers involved in filmmaking - not just directing, producing, and acting, but the amazing behind-the-scenes roles often overlooked. From sound recording to costume design, scriptwriting to post-production, students will work with real equipment and props, role-playing key on-set jobs before devising and pitching their own original film ideas. Led by the Cambridge Film Festival's **Youth Lab** Lead, this session promotes teamwork, creativity, and career aspirations, offering a unique insight into how diverse roles come together to create the films we love.



ROYAL BALLET AND OPERA

Event: Create & Dance: Teachers CPD

Target Audience: KS3 Teaching Staff

Date: Thursday 11 December 2025

Time: 9am-3pm

Location: Storey's Field Centre, CB3 1AA

Capacity: 10 staff*

* This may increase or decrease depending upon requirements from other schools.

Create & Dance offers an inclusive approach to leading dance and storytelling that helps pupils develop creative collaboration, physical learning, spatial awareness, and general health and well-being.

This in person, award-winning, curriculum-led CPD is a full day training session suitable for class teachers plus performing arts leads. It is accompanied with free classroom resources, including five lesson schemes of work.

KS3 Resources

CPD Trailer





TRAVEL CONTRIBUTIONS

Each school can claim up to £400* across the academic year as a contribution to travel to enable attendance at offerings within Creative Futures that take place outside of the school premises in cultural venues across the city where this would have otherwise been a barrier for engagement.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Many of the organisations dedicated to Creative Futures offer work experience placements in June and July 2026 for Year 10 students interested in exploring careers in the creative industries and have committed to a number of places exclusively for schools within the Cultural Education Partnership.

*This may increase depending upon requirements from other schools.



Please contact artsandculture@cambridge.gov.uk or 01223 457018 to book or if you have any questions about any of the opportunities in this brochure.

The Cultural Education Partnership, Creative Futures, is an equal partnership project and coalition between the listed arts organisations and facilitated by Cambridge City Council's Cultural Services team.





Cambridge Arts
Theatre



CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF
CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE



CAMBRIDGE
JUNCTION

DANCE
EAST
MOVE | BE MOVED

CAMBRIDGE
film
FESTIVAL



The
Fitzwilliam
Museum
CAMBRIDGE