

# ISA Awards 2023 Case Study: Award for Excellence and Innovation in Performing Arts

## CLAREMONT SCHOOL

JUNE 2024



### History of the School

Founded in 1925 by Mr M. O'Byrne with just four pupils, Claremont School has journeyed from humble beginnings in Hove to a thriving educational institution with over 700 students. In 1945, it found its permanent home in St Leonards-on-Sea, merging with Langley Place School and taking residence in a magnificent Norman Shaw-designed mansion. The school's history reflects both tradition and resilience. It faced challenges like a fire in the 1970s and storm damage, but also milestones like becoming a charitable trust in 1961 and embracing co-education in 1982.

Claremont's commitment to growth is evident. It established a nursery and sports hall in the 1990s, further expanded with the acquisition of a senior school in Bodiam in 2011, and most recently, invested in a new Early Years and Pre-Prep building in 2021. This dedication to development extends to its students as well. Claremont fosters a positive and hardworking environment that prioritises continuous learning.

Beyond academics, Claremont recognises the importance of a well-rounded education. The school offers a vibrant performing arts program encompassing drama, dance, and music, nurturing confidence, self-expression, and critical thinking skills. Claremont's idyllic location near the seaside and surrounded by countryside provides a welcome escape from the bustle of London and the school's core values of respect, a positive attitude, and continuous learning create a happy and hardworking environment where every student can flourish.

Claremont's story is not just about its own growth, but also its role within a wider educational network. In 2018, it joined the International Schools Partnership (ISP), a collaborative group focused on

excellence in teaching and learning. This partnership has brought benefits such as the "Octagon Project" at the Senior School, creating new classrooms, science labs, and artistic spaces. With this membership, Claremont leverages the experience of a broader community while still maintaining its own mission and values. This combination of strong identity and international connection allows Claremont to offer a truly unique educational experience.



Ed Dickie  
Principal

<https://claremontschool.co.uk>



## Aims

- To be original and innovative through the encouragement of exploration and experimentation in all aspects of Performing Arts.
- Foster a love for performance without fear of failure so students become passionate performers.
- Provide a platform for student self-expression so that they can express themselves authentically.
- For staff to journey confidently alongside students, continually discovering and developing alongside them.
- To authentically embrace a "who knows what's possible" attitude, empowering the students.
- Exploring diverse experiences to expose students to a variety of audiences, building performance experience.
- To build depth into the curriculum to develop student ability to portray characters with depth and nuance.
- Having the freedom to be adaptable in pedagogy to encourage risk-taking and exploration from students and staff.
- Where appropriate and possible to integrate professional experiences into the curriculum.
- To be holistic in our approach and so nurture the whole person, considering their backgrounds and interests.



## ACTIONS

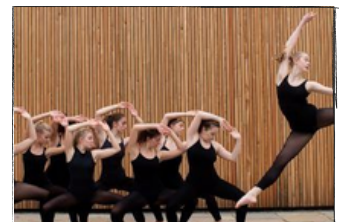
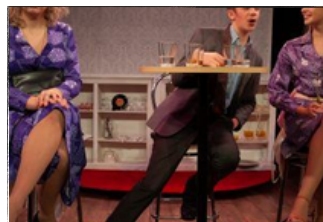
- We used a wide variety of material, performing scenes from over 20 plays across the year, catering to diverse interests as well as creating space for originality and self-expression.
- Multiple performance spaces were used, and we established "The Studio" for intimate performances that demanded more detailed work and deeper character portrayal.
- Site-specific performances were explored which led to the creation of an original piece performed in cars for an immersive audience experience.
- We implemented a new framework for assessment, focusing on individuality and inclusivity in Dance.
- Ballet Training for Athletes was incorporated into training for the Football Academy, breaking down barriers.
- We hosted workshops with industry professionals like Jordan Nesbitt and Cleo Demetrio building connections with industry and professional collaboration.
- We offered A-Level and co-curricular Music Technology programs for in-depth learning.



- We introduced student-led music tech sessions that empowered music scholars to develop leadership and communication skills.
- By providing diverse performance opportunities such as the annual Dance Show and Musical, we provided opportunities for students to work at professional levels of preparation.
- We focused on Student Voice, considering the student interests, cultures, and experiences in shaping performances.

## OUTCOMES

- The combination of approaches led to the creation of exceptional performances across Drama, Dance, and Music.
- Students felt empowered and gained confidence by performing for a variety of audiences.
- Working in "The Studio" encouraged performers to develop detailed character portrayals.
- The use of Rambert Grades fostered a more inclusive Dance program.
- The Football Academy players gained a broader appreciation for Dance through their ballet training and it expanded their skillset.
- Exposure to professional workshops better-equipped students for careers in the Performing Arts.
- Music Technology courses cultivated valuable music production and recording skills for both students and staff.
- Music Scholars gained leadership experience by running Music Tech clubs for other students.
- A strong sense of mutual respect and connection developed between students and teachers creating an excellent foundation for students to excel in the creative arts.



## NEXT STEPS

- Building upon the success of professional workshops, we aim to explore possibilities to deepen industry connections and provide even richer learning experiences.
- We wish to explore pushing the creative boundaries further for students with more technological integration and use in Drama and Dance by exploring interactive performance elements.
- We intend to continue to be innovative and open so that the experiences of our students are as holistic as possible.

## Contact:

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