

English National Ballet School

Fulham, London, United Kingdom



Only thirty places are offered from three hundred auditions each year, and graduates fill a third of English National Ballet's own ranks.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	39/100
Academic outcomes	5/100
University placement	25/100
Prestige & heritage	41/100
Alumni network	2/100
Facilities	82/100
Transparency	59/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

English National Ballet School occupies a narrow, serious niche: pre-professional classical ballet training for students aged 16 to 19 who already know that dance, not school sport or a broad sixth form menu, is the point. This is a specialist institution in Fulham, founded in 1988, with a three-year BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Performance validated by Trinity College London and taught in English. The numbers define the place. Each year, ****300**** dancers audition for ****30**** first-year places: a clean ****10:1**** admissions ratio. That selectivity matters because the school is not selling enrichment or prestige for its own sake; it is training for the stage. For families who want **hard-edged vocational focus**, **a direct route into the profession** and **serious conservatoire discipline**, that is the core attraction.

What distinguishes the school is its proximity to a major company without being swallowed by it. English National Ballet School now operates as a separate entity, yet keeps strong links with English National Ballet. The editorial tagline is the sharpest market signal here: graduates fill **a third** of English National Ballet's own ranks. Few ballet schools can point to such a direct relationship between training and employer demand. Add to that the school's published claim of consistent Outstanding Ofsted inspections and Trinity College London's description of it as an "exemplary provider", and the proposition is clear: **elite selection**, **company-facing training** and a structure built around employability in classical ballet, not around generalist sixth form life.

Parents should also read the limits clearly. This is not a broad academic environment with many fallback options. It is a specialist dance school for students ready to commit early, tolerate pressure and build technique under constant scrutiny. The boarding and day model widens access for families outside London, but the decisive question is not logistics; it is fit. The right student is intensely self-motivated, technically advanced, resilient under correction and ambitious about a professional ballet career. The wrong student is one who wants to keep several pathways open, needs a softer pace or is still testing whether dance is **a consuming vocation** or just a strong extracurricular interest.

In the market, English National Ballet School sits in the top tier of UK vocational ballet training for older teenagers: small intake, explicit industry alignment, and a clear destination. It belongs on a shortlist for families seeking **stage-ready training** rather than school-brand gloss. Its appeal is strongest for dancers who want **high-stakes artistic training** in London, value the link to English National Ballet, and understand that places are scarce because the school is preparing a tiny cohort for a profession that is even more selective than the admissions process.

STRENGTHS

- Its BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Performance is validated by the University of Kent, giving graduates a recognised UK degree alongside vocational training.
- The school is closely affiliated with English National Ballet, the professional touring company, giving students exposure to professional repertoire, staff and occasional stage opportunities.
- Purpose-built studios at the Chelsea campus support a full-time vocational training environment.
- Offers a structured single pathway from associate and junior programmes through to the BA, allowing progression to be tracked over several years for committed young dancers.
- Small cohort sizes allow close staff attention and individualised coaching, typical of specialist vocational ballet schools.

TRADE-OFFS

- Training is narrowly focused on classical ballet and contemporary dance, offering little breadth in general academic subjects compared to a mainstream school.
- Places on the BA course are highly competitive and audition-based, with a small annual intake, so acceptance rates are low.
- Full tuition sits around £22,000 per year, a substantial commitment for a single-discipline vocational path.
- A dance-only vocational path carries inherent career risk: not all graduates secure contracts with English National Ballet or other companies, and injury can end training early.

ADMISSIONS

Entry to the BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Performance is by audition, typically for students around 16 to 19 with a strong prior ballet training background. The school also runs Junior Associate and pre-vocational programmes for younger children as feeder routes. Auditions assess technique, physicality and potential rather than academic grades alone, and competition for places is significant given the limited annual intake. International applicants should check visa requirements early and discuss accommodation arrangements with the school, as the course is full-time.

WTS RATING     

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_f2cd3e70c1.