

Salto! Youth and Juniors

(Salto! means *Leap* in Spanish)

An Overview

Salto! Youth and Juniors is a dance project for children aged 7-16 years with learning difficulties. It is a vibrant project initiated by Swindon Dance, in response to local need. The project has benefitted with funding from BBC Children in Need.

Class Details:

A weekly attending group of eight to ten children will explore a range of dance styles through a creative and child centered approach. They and the wider community will benefit from an annual two day dance intensive with a professional disability positive dance company ie: StopGap and a summer inspiration day will be on offer each year.

The participants will work towards sharings and performances to gently improve their team-working, independence, memory, self-esteem and confidence.

The dance workshops are staffed by a specialist dance leader and three dance led teacher assistants providing a high ratio. The classes will be held at Swindon Dance in a dance dedicated safe space. They aim to develop impact in the areas of social skills, physical mobility and self-esteem. The teachers use props, live music and imagery to explore creative possibilities and fun lively approaches.

Past Performances and Films:

In the past Salto! Juniors has performed at the Big Hat Cabaret and Swindon Dance's 'Christmas Crackers' in 2017 as well as making two films in the Summer Term of 2016 and during a StopGap residency in June 2017. The Big Hat Cabaret is an annual performance organised by Big Arts and Disability Network. The Big Hat Cabaret exists to develop opportunities, raise awareness and increase access to performing arts particularly for disabled people.

Moving Forward:

In year three of this project, it is expected that a Salto! Juniors Children's group will be set up, and a new weekly Dance group will take place, thus allowing a further eight to ten children to access the regular classes.

This project seeks to create and devise meaningful and positive experiences for children and young people with disabilities through the medium of dance. We have strong support from parents, children and other local agencies that have assisted in helping this special project to thrive.