



Dance Artist in Residence Open Call Pack

May 2026

This residency is funded by The North East Mayoral Strategic Authority



MALTINGS



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Mayor



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Introduction

The Maltings (Berwick) Trust has received funding from the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority's Inspire Fund to create a freelance temporary role for a Dance Artist in Residence at Berwick Academy for the academic year 2026 – 2027.

This residency will be the second artist-led residency to take place at the school produced and delivered by the Maltings in partnership with staff and pupils at Berwick Academy. In 2025-26 the school hosted artist Martha Ellis as part of the Living Barrack's Berwick Shines programme, produced by The Maltings. This marked the first time Berwick Academy had hosted an artist residency at the school and the ambition for the Dance Artist residency is to build on the success and learning from this project.

Deputy Head Teacher Ben Ryder said:

"Martha has made a huge impact at Berwick Academy. Her work with students has provided enrichment opportunities that we would not otherwise have been able to offer. The Maltings (Berwick) Trust and funding from the Inspire Fund have enabled this partnership to continue and we are excited about the creation of a Dance Artist in Residence position for 2026-27."

Martha Ellis said:

"I have absolutely loved my time working with Berwick Academy and the Maltings. The opportunity to work with students and see their creativity grow alongside the freedom to make my own work has been liberating and joyful. I have been fully supported by both institutions to fulfil my ideas and I hope the legacy of Art Club continues well past my departure at the end of the academic year. It has been a real pleasure and privilege to get to know the Academy community and I hope they enjoy the drawings I have created which capture my time here."

Dance Artist in Residence

For the year 2026-27 we are seeking to appoint a Dance Artist in Residence to be based at the school and to work with the school community, pupils and staff.

Berwick Academy is England's most northerly high school, nestled on Northumberland's border with Scotland in the historic and beautiful town of Berwick-upon-Tweed. It serves the town and rural area of Berwick-upon-Tweed in North Northumberland and is a small, friendly school with approximately 900 students aged 11-18 years, including approximately 100 students in the sixth form. Berwick Academy's ambition is to provide pupils with an educational experience that helps them to develop as young people who are ready for the next step in their life. Core values of friendship, learning, respect and key principles of "on time, on side, on task" are at the heart of the school. Education in the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed has changed very recently, with a restructuring of the town's First and Middle schools from a three-tier system to a two-tier model of primary and secondary provision. Plans for a new Berwick Academy building are moving closer to reality to accommodate the new structure and the increase in pupils at the school.



Berwick Academy Dance Artist Residency - Artist Brief

Our Dance Artist residency project is a partnership between Berwick Academy and the arts charity, The Maltings (Berwick) Trust which this year has the aim of bringing the joy of dance and movement to music into the school setting, bringing new opportunities for creative engagement and constructive self-expression to pupils and teachers alike.

However, alongside this ambition it should be noted that Berwick Academy faces a number of challenges including the local changes to the school system, and the impact of a disappointing Ofsted report. Pupils are reporting and demonstrating higher than ever levels of anxiety, reduced engagement with school life and low self-esteem, exacerbated by some negative press coverage and the changes outlined to the school system.

Berwick Academy has a dynamic new Head Teacher who is committed to addressing these issues, and along with the staff team, progress is being made. One of the early initiatives in 2024 was to accept an invitation from The Maltings to bring an Artist in Residence to school, working with both pupils and teachers alike in a visual arts format. It is the impact of this work that has inspired the thinking for this dance-based project, and the shared desire to sustain the partnership between the school and The Maltings, by bringing a Dance Artist in Residence to the school in 2026 - 2027.

Through the medium of dance, the residency will bring back fun to the school day, creating moments of pure joy for staff and pupils. The residency will offer regular, accessible and inclusive dance sessions that will create a safe-space for self-expression and physical exercise. The benefits of creativity, movement and gentle exercise are well-known in improving mental health and wellbeing, and the dance artist-led sessions will provide a supportive, enjoyable environment to engage with this, particularly valuable to ESBNA (Emotional School Based Non Attendance) students, those experiencing anxiety, and those for whom body-based self-esteem issues make engaging with traditional PE a challenge. The residency will culminate in a mini-Festival of Dance, designed to showcase the achievements of pupils and teaching staff alike. This will be held either at the school or a community venue, to celebrate the learning and creativity of the young people with their parents, carers and the wider community.

One of the aims of this event is to foster a positive narrative for the school in the wider community. It will also be the first opportunity for Berwick Academy pupils and staff to stage a performance or celebration of this sort, and this will be a huge boost to their wellbeing, self-esteem, and how they and the school are perceived in the town.

Residency Aims:

Following an agreed start date, (in October 2026), the Resident Artist would be present in school for a day a week during term time, and will deliver a programme to:

- Work with staff to create and extend dance curriculum in school (no specialist curriculum currently exists)
- Establish a dance club at lunchtimes which will be open to all pupils, with an emphasis on health and wellbeing through creativity
- Run training and CPD for PE staff to integrate dance and creative movement into their teaching practice
- Establish taster-style dance workshops open to all staff, to support their health and wellbeing
- Lead rehearsals and produce the end of year celebratory event, alongside staff team.

The residency will culminate in a mini-Festival of Dance, celebrating and showcasing the achievements of our pupils and teachers to our wider community.

Alignment with the Inspire Programme

Through the delivery of the Dance Artist project the partners aim to address some of the challenges identified by the school:

- **Disruption to education:** We have a pressing need to support the transition from Primary to Secondary school for our incoming cohorts of pupils, many of whom will be making the move to Secondary school several years earlier than their parents/carers would have anticipated. This project will allow us to help support our school community successfully navigate this disruption.
- **Cultural Capital** We currently have no dance or performing arts curriculum in school, or extra-curricular clubs. Exacerbating this, 27% of our pupils attract the Pupil Premium, and in addition large numbers of our school families are reliant on multiple low wage or seasonal jobs – tickets to arts or cultural performances, or dance or theatre clubs, are simply too expensive to be a priority, particularly when the remote location of Berwick means that this is likely to involve the additional expense of travel to Newcastle or Edinburgh. This project is a golden opportunity to develop cultural capital in our pupils and wider school community, and offer engagement opportunities on their doorstep that would otherwise be completely out of reach.
- **Engagement with the school day:** We have significant numbers of pupils experiencing anxiety, low engagement, and a small but growing cohort of ESBNA pupils. Our dance residency will bring joy, fun and happiness back into the school day, supporting our pupils to better engage with school life. While the project itself is not specifically targeting literacy or numeracy skills, we expect that by increasing engagement in the school day and increasing attendance, we will see improved academic outcomes in our participating pupils.

Artist Requirements

Dance specialist applicants should have:

- A proven track record of artistic work as a dance artist/dancer/choreographer
- A thorough understanding of and experience of delivering participatory arts practice and a proven track record of working collaboratively in schools.
- Understanding of the working environment in a school and professional discretion
- The ability to communicate confidently and get people, particularly young people, involved and inspired, coupled with the ability to explore creative processes and engage participants in meaningful dialogue
- Ability and skill to produce an end of year celebratory event. (Date to be agreed with Berwick Academy)

Timeline

Berwick Academy Residency – closing date for applications: Tuesday 2 June 2026.

Site visits to Berwick Academy and interviews will be on Wednesday 10th June.

Artist Appointed: Initial meetings and residency planning – July - September.

(School summer holiday 17 July – w/b 1 September).

Provisional start date for residency: October 2026.

Artist Support

The contract will be with The Maltings (Berwick) Trust and the appointed artist will be supported by Maltings Head of Creative Engagement and Berwick Academy staff team to develop the residency and proposed outcomes.

Berwick Academy Team

Ben Ryder – Deputy Headteacher

Linzi Patterson – PE Teacher

www.berwickacademy.co.uk

How to Apply

We are inviting applications from Dance Artists/Dance Organisations based in the North East or who work in the North East.

Please send:

- An overview of your current artistic practice and how you would approach this residency. Tell us your ideas for potential artistic and development outcomes in line with the residency aims and showing an understanding of some of the challenges outlined in the information provided. (no more than 4 sides of A4 or a 5 minute video)
- A current CV (no more than 2 sides of A4)
- Examples of previous relevant work with schools or youth groups (max of 6 jpeg images no larger than 1MB, 1 PDF if writing based)
- A speculative budget overview indicating your daily rate, travel costs, fees for subcontractors, and any costs for resources.
The fee is £9,000. We are interested to know your approach to this budget and expect daily fee calculations to be in line with creative industry standard of pay for work in schools. (circa: £350 per day)

Please note - applicants must

- Be appropriately and adequately insured as a freelance teaching artist
- Be self employed and make arrangements to pay your own tax. Please provide your Unique Tax Reference number (UTR).
- Provide references if asked to do so.

The appointed Dance Artist will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. An Enhanced level of Disclosure is required for all suppliers of this contract.

Any queries regarding the opportunity in advance of application can be sent to Lucy Vaughan lucy.vaughan@maltingsberwick.co.uk

Further Information

The Maltings (Berwick) Trust

The Maltings (Berwick) Trust is a leading cultural organisation serving Berwick-upon-Tweed, North Northumberland and the eastern Scottish Borders.

Working across three venues - The Maltings Cinema at Berwick Barracks, The Granary Gallery and our new temporary studio, The Maltings on Hide Hill - we create and present a diverse, year-round programme of arts and cultural activity including visual art exhibitions, digital cinema, workshops, classes and community-led projects.

Our work is rooted in place and people. We champion creativity, support artists and cultural practitioners, and ensure that high-quality cultural experiences are accessible to local communities and visitors alike.

The Maltings (Berwick) Trust is a registered charity (No. 701194) and an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. Our work is supported through investment from Arts Council England, Northumberland County Council, our Friends and individual supporters.
www.maltingsberwick.co.uk

