

Queen Elizabeth II School

The athlete: Penny Clapcott – swimmer and circus aerial performer

The Artists: Rachel Gadsden – visual artist, Mark Smith – choreographer and dancer

The Young People: 30

“Yesterday was an amazing day. The work that both you and Mark are achieving with the QEII students is simply stunning”
Teacher

On the first day, following an assembly and a chance to interview the visiting athlete and artists, the young people learned how dance movements could be recorded as they danced. Moving in rows across the room to different music, they picked up a paintbrush at the end and recorded their moves and emotions on a large piece of paper hanging on the wall.



Driving Inspiration



A Creative Bucks project

On subsequent days, the group divided into those wanting to dance and those wanting to create paintings of the dance as it developed. Some explored movement by looking at different Paralympic sports in action and sharing feelings about competing.

The young people worked on elements of the dance that drew on their strengths and ideas leading to a final performance. Paintings were incorporated into the performance with the young people developing a method of creating a painting on the stage that responded to the performance.

The performance itself began with the painters and dancers acting out an opening parade. The dancers then worked in slow motion drawing on sport actions and adding in some spoken words such as 'swimming', 'running' and 'basketball'. This led on to a contemporary choreography inspired by a mix of Paralympic sports, leading on to some hip-hop sign dancing drawing on the Paralympic values of courage, determination, inspiration and equality. The finale was a sign dance to Take That's 'Greatest Day' representing a closing ceremony. The work was performed to the rest of the school, and the artwork is permanently displayed.

