



# 2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT

## DAZL Dance & Health Charity

DAZL starts where people are at in their lives. Local need is at the heart of our work, using asset-based community development and dance to deliver public health outcomes around obesity, mental health, inactivity and wider health inequalities.

A key aspect of this development work lies in a commitment to training and mentoring local people to deliver dance and dance fitness back to their own communities.

This year DAZL has restructured our programmes and offer to the communities we serve. We hope you enjoy this report!

[www.dazl.org.uk](http://www.dazl.org.uk)

Words and key stats of 23-24 from Ian Rodley, Director of DAZL

This year has been a year of growth, creating new strategies and reflection for DAZL. As we approach our 25th year we have worked extensively with the DAZL Board of Trustees and stakeholders to create and implement a new strategic plan. We have a bright forward-facing vision for our wonderful organisation with our communities and the arts at its heart.

We have a clear plan on how we will achieve our goals and articulate our objectives. In 23/24 we as an organisation set out to improve health & well-being through high-quality dance and connecting with communities across Leeds, Wakefield & Kirklees. Our team has worked hard to achieve these and follow through to with our commitments to the communities we serve.

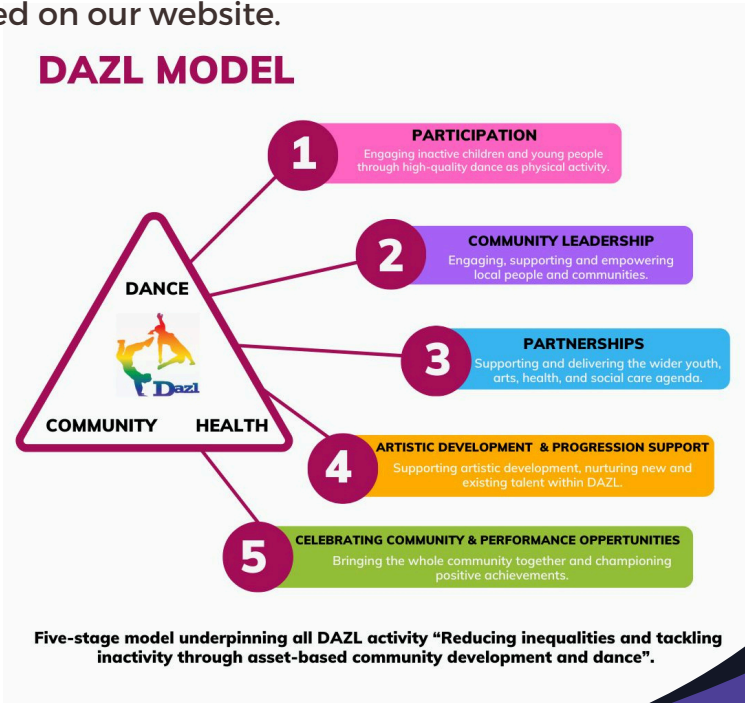
Areas	Leeds	Other Areas	Total
Participants	5635	995	6630
Dance Sessions	1833	273	2106
Events/ performance	55	-	55
Audience	26234	-	26234
Artists/ Practitioners	20	5	25



In addition to the regular sessions above, we have also worked with schools, community venues, and organisations to support them to achieve their priorities. Delivering activity in 25 of the 33 Leeds City Council Wards. I'm so proud of all our team, families and supporters. I would like to take the opportunity to thank them for making such a valuable contribution to our organisation and making DAZL what it is today. #TeamWork

The DAZL Model and our strategic approach to engaging communities.

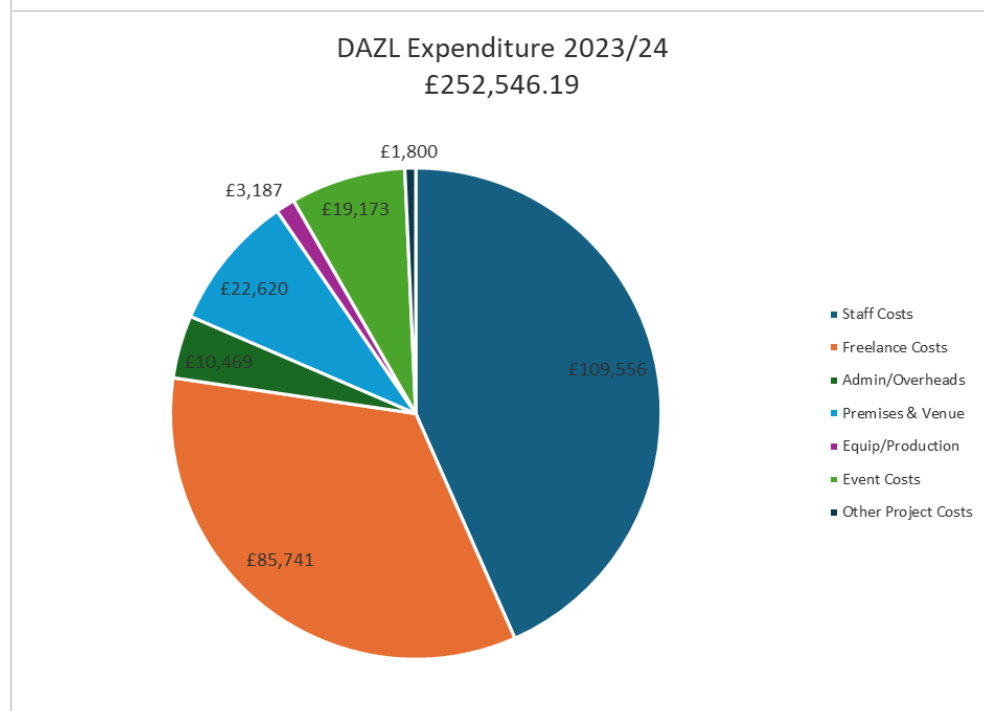
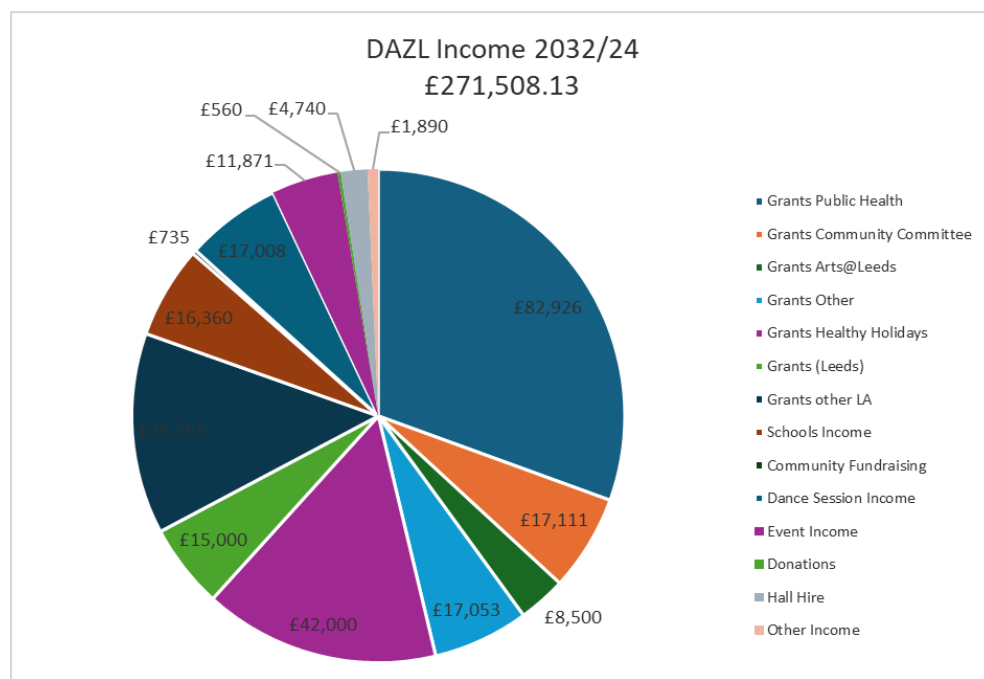
Our academic research shows that engagement in DAZL’s activity improves mental and physical health whilst improving your overall well-being and resilience. DAZL’s work offers fun, positive dance and arts experiences which engage people, particularly girls, who otherwise opt out of a physical activity or active lifestyle. We use our 5 stage strategic model to inform all our programmes and delivery. This is embedded in all our dance and health activities, training programmes for our stakeholders and staff and the development of our programmes. We have new academic research to be published by Leeds Beckett University published 2024-25 this can be viewed on our website.



## Leeds Public Health Investment and Other Funds 2023-24

With the **£82,926** initial funding DAZL received from Leeds Public Health, we **engaged 5635** young people in regular dance as physical activity and an additional **995 participants** from Leeds, Wakefield and Batley through the other funding sources, listed below. We use this initial investment to match funds and widen our offer across Leeds to support as many communities and families as possible.

From the Leeds Public Health initial investment, this cost less than the treatment for two people with type 2 diabetes



Our Fundraising KPI for 23-24 was to achieve an Income of **£150,000**.

This year our annual income was **£271,508** therefore, achieve beyond our financial KPI stated.



## Inclusion is at the heart of all our DAZL provisions.



At DAZL we put inclusion at the heart of our work. In 2023-24 we increased the opportunities for young people with a physical or learning disability. We increased the number of these young people participating in our dance provision. We also supported, worked in partnership and provided hall hire space at the DAZL Studio from the Disability Families of Middleton and Endorphins Community Group. The DAZL Include dance programme continued to group and the group performed in many community events, showcases and competitions. They performed at the Northern Ballet EXPRESSIONS annual showcase and even to part in the Leeds Pride Parade.



Check out the DAZL YouTube and Vimeo Media Channels for the two documentaries where the dancers and their families share their stories, challenges and triumphs with you.

#AbilityNotDisability [www.youtube.com/@dazldance](https://www.youtube.com/@dazldance)  
[www.vimeo.com/dazldance](https://www.vimeo.com/dazldance)



*90% of DAZL participants stated they feel happier from attending our programmes*

*100% of young people feel DAZL is a safe space.*

*85% of DAZL participants stated they feel more confident from attend our programme from attend our programmess*

This year DAZL took 70 families to take part in the Leeds Pride Parade celebrating and supporting all LGBT people in and out of DAZL. We believe everyone should have access to high quality arts, culture and physical activity regardless of age, race, gender or sexuality. Our commitment to taking part in the annual Leeds Pride Event sends a strong message that here at DAZL "Everyone Is Welcome"



*DAZL has impacted my life massively. It has given me opportunities to meet new people and increased my self-esteem and confidence. It enables me to have an outlet while exercising and keeping fit. DAZL has improved my mental and physical health as the weekly groups enable me to let my hair down and just have a few hours where I'm not mum, auntie, or partner I'm just enjoying myself and releasing natural endorphins thus improving my mental health.*



### Case Study:

I do enjoy coming to DAZL Dance-fit and when I can make it I try to attend as many dance-fit sessions as possible. I do prefer the dance fit rather than the fitness sessions I used to attend at a well-known gym. Before I joined DAZL I went through a really difficult stage in my life, I was involved in a road traffic accident where sadly I lost my partner at the time. I had to try to bring him back to life with the help of an ambulance lady on the other end of the phone but I could not do it, he was pronounced dead at the scene.

This led me to suffer from very bad PTSD and Depression and bad anxiety and scared to go out for many months. I needed something to focus on so that is where I started with fitness and joined a running club. I joined a gym which held fitness classes but I felt it was full of pretentious people who believed they were better than anyone else. I eventually stopped going as I felt like I didn't fit in. I missed going as I do enjoy the feeling you get after a fitness session. I still kept up with the running and have since completed a few 10ks. I THEN FOUND DAZL!!!!

My Daughter attended their dance classes and I will never forget the first time I saw the mum's team compete at Blackpool. I honestly got a buzz from watching them and knew I wanted to give it a go and I am so glad I did.

The DAZL Dance-Fit Queens have made me feel so welcome and to be in a group of normal people who don't believe they are better than anyone else is the best feeling. They do not judge; they make you feel like part of a team, which is priceless. You do need that in life, especially when you feel low, they will bring you back to life and you are always guaranteed to leave the class with a smile on your face, or fall out of the door laughing. I need that as sometimes I still have my moments.

You never know what people are going through and if you ever need an ear to talk to, or someone to give advice or just a hug you know that those women have got your back. Our dance-fit routines are great too may I add. There's no I in the team and this is the best team of queens I could be in improving our fitness and well-being one dance step at a time.

**"At DAZL we are dedicated to improving health and wellbeing through dance".**

### Research with Leeds Beckett University

This year DAZL worked on the 4th year of our dance and mental health research with Leeds Beckett University, Dr Suzan Bond and her team. They have focused the work on DAZL and adolescent girls. This work has evolved from our Public Health funded project and the final finding will be presented in 2023. You can read the previously published research on the DAZL Website research page.

<https://dazl.org.uk/dance-and-health-research/dance-mental-health/>



## The Wider Impact of DAZL's Leeds Public Health Investment

**Dance Education:** With the support from Arts @ Leeds and Leeds Public Health and our commission programme the Leeds Family Healthy Living Service throughout 2023-24 the DAZL Excel Training and Performance programme, we have supported 10 young people to follow a creative education pathway to study dance, musical theatre or performing arts at college. In addition to this, we had 8 young people gain entry to universities to study dance. We have 5 students gain a place on the Centre for Advance Training Programme at NSCD. From the DAZL Empire Competition Training Programme we have had 6 students gain places at college. Both programmes have become pathways to further dance training. The special part of this story is that most of these young people are the first people in their families to attend university which is a wonderful achievement. We also trained 15 young people ages 14-16 from DAZL Excel to gain their level 1 & 2 leadership in dance awards and put 162 dancers through examinations with the NCDTA.



**Supporting Families:** The DAZL Family Healthy Living service, commissioned by Leeds Public Health, supported our DAZL families in making positive behaviour changes to their health, well-being and lifestyle choices. The data below illustrates the changes in lifestyle habits of 6630 DAZL Participants which have been recorded at points throughout the year. **Change 4 Life** light touch activities were integrated into the **family physical activity session**. This family well-being session supported them to participate in a 30min physical activity session followed by 30min light touch family Change 4 Life/ Food activities incorporating the following.

- Portion sizes,
- Alternative snacks,
- Recommended daily intake of sugar and salt,
- Sugar swaps, Healthy meal ideas.

We also supported families to achieve this through the delivery of two HENRY Healthy Lifestyle Courses working with 9 families with the support from Public Health, in the community at Manorfield Hall. We have embedded healthy lifestyle messages within the DAZL programmes across Leeds & Yorkshire



"DAZL has made a massive change to Jessica turning her from a quite shy girl who only spoke to people she knew to a little sassy diva who loves performing. She's learnt over time with commitment and dedication she will improve her skills. Thank you to all her teachers past and present for gifting her love and passion for dance."



"DAZL makes me happy, My teachers  
I love my teacher Megan:  
Reenie, Age 9"



## DAZL Family Food offer and Healthy Holidays in partnership with Leeds Public Health

With the support and investment of £82,926 from Leeds Public Health for the DAZL Family Healthy Living Service, we were able to deliver 1833 regular dance sessions and 480 healthy eating, and healthy lifestyle sessions. DAZL engaged 5635 people in regular activity, mainly children and families from the most deprived communities across Leeds. We engaged with 19 schools of which 10 were in the top rankings for childhood obesity from the National Child Measurement Programme.

We have helped to reduce inequalities and improve the health and well-being of families involved in the programme. We did this by promoting dance as physical activity, as well as healthy eating activities, as our creative pathway to deliver our Public Health outcomes.

We have created online food resources, these online interactive cooking shows. Families can cook at home and then post and upload feedback and a picture of what they have done. This not only encourages cooking together but also eating together as a family. We created a step-by-step guide and list of ingredients for those families who want to cook along at home with video and PDF resources. All videos and PDFs can be found on the DAZL Healthy Lifestyle Page [www.dazl.org.uk/healthylifestyles](http://www.dazl.org.uk/healthylifestyles) We have delivered two DAZL Family Healthy Living Service funded HENRY Healthy Families Program for parents with children 6-12yrs. We engaged 8 families in this programme. In 2024-25 we aim to deliver up to 2 courses per year with an 8-week commitment of 2 hours per week.

### NEXT STEPS FOR PARTICIPANTS/FAMILIES

**DAZL Families stated,** "We are going to try to make sure we cook together at least once a week as a family".

"We are going to try the sugar swap challenge and see what small changes we can make". "We are going to try one new thing each month like the Chicken and Pesto tart. It was so quick and easy to follow".

"We are going to try doing more with fruit as we are still on a budget but could add more of this".



### NEXT STEPS FOR DAZL Family Healthy Living Service

Continue with dancing/ Physical activity as the main focus with incorporated food activities. Once a month having live cooking with Steph at the DAZL session. Change 4 Life Activities, to try to make this more physical, try and test this way of delivering the messages.

1. 12-week dance program & food programs
2. Cooking with DAZL online resources using the video and step-by-step guides for each dish/activity. In-person sessions with all school holiday provisions.
3. Change 4 Life online resource and encourage participants to take part in the face-to-face Food & C4L sessions as part of the Healthy Holidays programme.
4. Gathered feedback and evaluated the process
5. x2 HENRY Healthy Family Growing-Up Courses in the community.

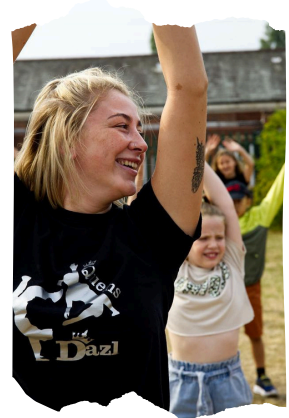
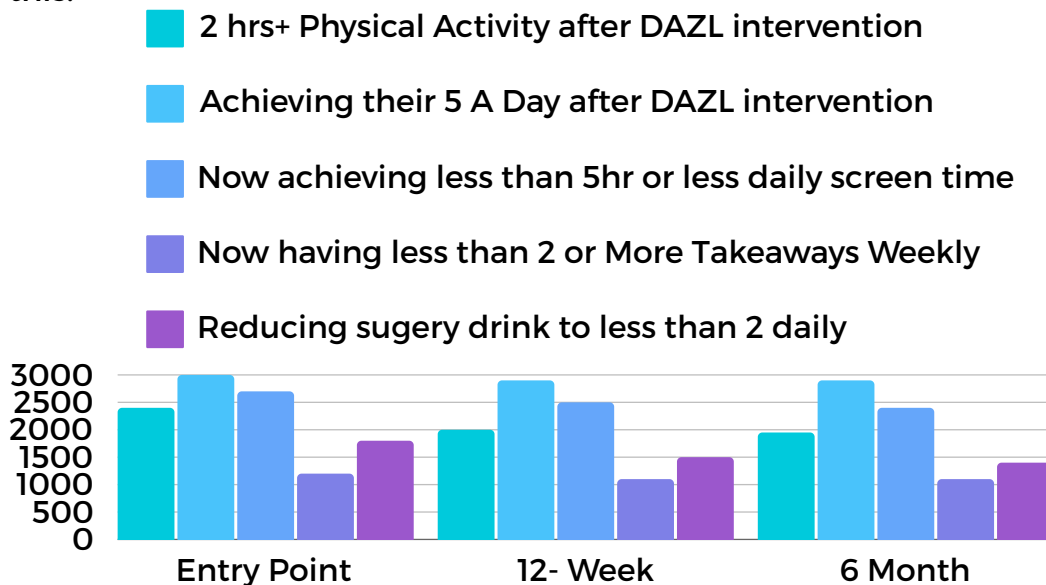
**"DAZL values young people, families and their involvement"**

## Stats from the Leeds Public Health-funded DAZL Family Healthy Living Service 23-24

- 75% of the 5635 people we engaged in Leeds were women and girls.
- 40% of all DAZL participants were from black or minority, ethnic backgrounds 1 in 5 of DAZL's overall program but 1 In 4 in regular Public Health funded activity were non-white young people.
- 7% of the participants we worked with had a physical or learning disability.
- 7% were looked after or children with caring responsibilities
- DAZL & Leeds Public Health supported participants who took part in 55 events/ performances and reached a live audience of 26234.
- Online content views 3.2million (YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Vimeo)
- **Beyond Leeds** we engaged 995 people, delivered 273 sessions

"Dance is my safe space, I get to be myself with no looks, no one judging me and to be myself. This has helped with not just my mental health but also my physical health, this is all thanks to DAZL. Thank you for everything you have done for me as well as all the other young people In DAZL"

DAZL has a clear focus in 2024-25 with our Leeds Public Health Contract to engage and widen our participation and impact in priority neighbourhoods across the city. This also includes the top-ranking NCMP schools that face challenges around children's excess weight and inactivity. We plan to do this through dance and well-being sessions and the delivery of two HENRY Healthy Lifestyle courses for parents in these areas. When considering our planning and next steps we must consider aspects such as the cost of living crisis and how deprivation and demographic data may have switched from the previous year. We believe young people from across Leeds should have access to physical activity and food if they wish to improve their overall health and well-being. Our programmes, especially the Leeds Family Healthy Living Service, support this.



All healthy lifestyle data is taken from DAZL consent forms and feedback to trap meaning data of our work.



## DAZL & Manorfield Hall 23-24

During 2023, DAZL has successfully run Manorfield Hall. We have improved the physical accommodation and safety of the building; we have balanced the books, made Manorfield Hall a much more active centre for the community and; increased the revenue for running the building whilst keeping it safe and viable. For the future, DAZL will support new community activities and funding opportunities which will help build capacity for both Manorfield Hall as a community asset and DAZL, such as additional office space and additional studio space.

With the DAZL team we have been able to:

- Improved the website, new booking systems
- Updated and improved all governance, policies and procedures
- Improve and decorate the building inside and improved outdoor space

DAZL's mission has always been to support and serve communities of high deprivation and to welcome everyone. We very much share the objectives of Manorfield Hall as stated in their Constitution. Manorfield Hall fits into the DAZL model perfectly in regards to developing local people - most of our staff come from the Belle Isle and Middleton area. DAZL is passionate about this community which has been recognised by HM the Queen, receiving the Queen's Award for Voluntary Services – the MBE for a community group – in 2022.

The DAZL organisations team with the support of the Manorfield Hall Board has enabled the hall to flourish whilst supporting the Manorfield Hall Tots Group, Food Bank, Line dancing and Lunch Club. We have supported and nurtured relationships with the existing users and increased their delivery and support within the hall such as 3rd South Leeds Morley and Middleton Scouts/ Beavers and the Debbie Hart Theatre School, Kinship Care Group, Middleton Breath Easy Group along with our own DAZL Empire Freestyle Training Programme.

- We have 229 local people attending activities weekly
- We have on average 30 families per week accessing the food bank
- We have 30 families accessing the parent and tot group
- We have booked 48 parties whose income supports the running of the hall
- Recruited 3 new volunteers
- We hosted a Christmas lunch event for the elderly in the community and provided two themed parties for parents and tots, and a Halloween event. Local businesses supported presents at Christmas and also Easter Eggs at Easter for children who use the centre.

Moving forward DAZL is excited to continue to work with the Manorfield and DAZL Boards of Trustees and to take Manorfield Hall into a bright future for the whole community. We have new activities planned to support the whole community.



## DAZL & The LS9 Club Partnership

This year DAZL partnered up with The Gorse Academies Trust, Richmond Hill Academy. Other partners include the Leeds United Foundation, Leeds Rhinos Foundation and Inspiring Positive Futures. Collectively we have created a new initiative THE LS9 CLUB, an after-school, community provision where to school opens up its facilities to us as leading physical activity providers in the city.

Our focus is to build a stronger community through the power of sport, dance and education. The Yorkshire Sport Foundation has supported this initial programme. We have engaged 144 young people weekly over the three nights actively taking part in dance.

In addition to all the fantastic physical activities, the young people are taking part in social action projects with inspiring positive futures. more information on this project and the findings to follow.

**Next Steps:** as a partnership, we are developing funding bids and working with the school on a sustainability model and plan to develop this work further.



Inspiring Positive Futures

*"I feel more confident and happier."*

*"I get to try new things with my friends."*





## Feedback

"Over the last 2 years, I have found dance to be an even safer place than in the previous 8 years. I have had debilitating peri-menopause symptoms that have left me feeling sad, alone, anxious and hopeless at times. Dance is my safe space, I can be me, feel comfortable with the team and staff and know that I am accepted for where I am in my life journey. It is so safe for me that I've passed dance exams for the first time in my 50s and even learnt new styles of dance. Thank you DAZL for just being you".

"My daughter Emily-Mae has been with DAZL Bramley for about 5 years or more and it has had a great impact on her life she's more confident and keeps fit which gives her a great mindset with the life she looks forward to going every week and loves doing comps and loves dancing and loves learning new styles of dancing she loves her dance teachers they are a great support when she needs it and when she struggles dancing with DAZL is something she enjoys".

My son was bullied at school and was in such mental distress that I took him out of school in year 8. I needed to find social settings where he could mix with other children and came across Dazl through NSCD Kick-Off Boys.

The inclusive, welcoming and supportive atmosphere of Dazl was exactly what we both needed. DAZL has changed my son's life. He has made life-long friendships and become a happy, confident, resilient young man. He has managed to put the negative school experiences behind him. The support he received from the tutors and other dancers meant he could return to a school environment and continue his education.

The impact on and improvement of his mental health has been profound. As a single mum one of the most important things that Dazl gives me are positive male role models. All the staff are brilliant, the male teachers are fantastic; happy, successful, caring, dedicated, inspirational men and my son needed to see that. He feels part of the Dazl family and is looking forward to doing work experience there and pursuing a dance career. I couldn't be prouder of my son or more grateful to DAZL.

"My daughter started dancing at the Batley group she wanted to get into a dance group with no pressure and this has most definitely been the group for her, her confidence has grown since she started and she had her first exam last week and although she was nervous she loved it, Thank you".

"I have been with DAZL queens for around 6 months and, amazingly, I get to meet new friends dancing is something I didn't think I could do but it gives me more confidence to be part of a great team and my dance teacher Chrissie is amazing too she helps on parts I struggle on and has a lot of patience teaching me joining DAZL queens is one of the best decisions I made".



## **DAZL Moving Forward throughout 2024-25 (Celebrating 25 years of DAZL)**

**After-school/in-school dance** for young people, including talent development, career advice, pathways and opportunities. Delivered in partnership with local schools, targeting children from areas of deprivation with low cultural engagement.

**Kick-Off Boys & DAZL Boys Youth Dance Project**, creating dance for social purposes engaging boys 11-19 years from across Leeds who would not ordinarily choose or have access to high-quality contemporary dance. A focus on creating new work and providing performance opportunities within DAZL and our partners focusing on multiple entry and exit points/progression routes. Partners DAZL, NSCD, Phoenix and Leeds City College.

**DAZL Dance Leadership Course** - 15 young people 14yrs+ from across DAZL Leeds provision to achieve Level 2 dance leadership qualification supported by Arts & Leeds

**DAZL Excel Training and Performance Programme:** Gifted and talented young people (7-10yrs, 10-14yrs & 14-19 yrs.) creating work which has a social purpose and addresses Youth Culture. Targeted, audition-based programme working with internal and external artists, supporting the progress and development of young people into vocational dance training., including examinations with the NCDTA.

**DAZL Inclusive Dance Program:** 8 - 25-year-olds with physical and learning disabilities. Based in the SEND Schools with progression to our DAZL Empire Inclusive dance program. Develop a younger group and extend the age of our older group. Use our work in partnership with the Bridge Learning Centre as a feeder for this programme.

**DAZL Open Access Community Program:** outreach weekly dance, food and wellbeing sessions/programmes. local engagement opportunities across Leeds & Yorkshire in high-deprivation areas that face barriers to cultural opportunities. Engaging the wider community with Art & well-being activities on their doorstep. Progression routes to DAZL Excel, and DAZL Empire Programmes across Leeds, Wakefield and Batley. Offer of dance examinations with the NCDTA.

**Dance Fitness Programme:** A safe space for women by women where they can take part in dance fitness improving their physical and mental health and reducing social isolation. A small proportion of this programme will be family-focused sessions, Supported by Sport England

**DAZL Empire Competition Training Programme:** Engage children and young people who wish to take dance more seriously, and take part in Freestyle, Street, Cheerdance and contemporary competitions. Weekly sessions and local performance opportunities in high-deprivation areas that face barriers to the arts. The groups will take part in dance competitions and also undertake annual examinations with the NCDTA. Community fundraising is a key aspect of this programme and progression routes to further education/ leadership.

**Middleton Youth Theatre Project.** DAZL and Leeds Playhouse Partnership. Bringing high-quality theatre into the heart of the community and providing access to young people who face barriers to activities.

**LS9 Club:** weekly sessions based at Richmond Hill Primary School in partnership with Leeds Rhinos, LUFC and Gorse Trust. The focus is to engage young people three nights per week across LS9. Engaging the wider community with a multi-partnership approach through the Art, Sports and Youth Activities on their doorstep.



# Thank You For Supporting DAZL 2023-24

This year the DAZL has worked with the following organisations, funders and projects to widen our offer to communities, young people and families.

A special DAZL thank you to;

- All our partners listed below helped make everything possible.
- Local Leeds & Wakefield, Batley elected members
- The wonderful DAZL Board Of Trustees and all the DAZL staffing team.



@dazldance on all socials     

Registered Charity: 1106394 Limited Company: 5228208

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