



Parent & Student
Induction Booklet
BELFAST 2024-2025



Welcome to Youth Lyric...

Youth Lyric is one of the largest Youth Arts organisations in Ireland, teaching acting, drama, and dance, with over 300 students aged Nursery - 21, who attend weekly drama classes in Antrim and Belfast. We have qualified teachers and administrators who deliver a planned curriculum weekly and who prepare our students for New Era examinations in Speech and Drama and Performance Arts. Pupils have the opportunity to complete Grades 1-8 as they progress with us, Grades 6-8 constituting UCAS points which supports their university application.

OUR MISSION

Youth Lyric's mission is to provide the very best quality education experience for young people from every background in Northern Ireland.

We provide excellence in Performing Arts training, enriching the lives of our students, whilst promoting self-confidence and personal development. We are committed to providing a unique and valuable experience for young people through the employment of highly qualified professional tutors with a track record of achievement in education and the Performing Arts industry.

OUR TEAM

The Board of Trustees

Chairperson: Lynda Bryans

Vice-Chair: Carolyn Stewart

Treasurer: Roy Creelman

Financial Guarantor: Jim Browne

Board Member: William Scott

Board Member: Sarah Cochrane

Board Member: Natalie Gilbert

Board Member: Joanna Dickey

Board Member: Kate Nicholl

STAFF

Artistic Director: Aidan Browne

Head of Curriculum and Tutor: Natalie Gilbert (Designated Child Protection Officer)

Head of Dance & Musical Theatre and Tutor: Jane Stewart

Senior Administrator: Rachel Robinson

Antrim Outreach Co-ordinator: Jackie Fisher

Administration Assistants: Naomi Robinson, Lisa Bates, Katie Lawther, Caryle Ann Townsend

Tutor: Sheelagh O’Kane

Tutor: Ali Donovan (Designated Child Protection Officer, Belfast)

Tutor and Social Media Co-ordinator: Blair Barrett

Tutor: Joanna Dickey (Designated Child Protection Officer, Antrim)

Tutor: Danielle Johnston

Tutor: Hannah Makinson

Tutor: Bethany Roy

Tutor: Danny McCombe

Tutor: Pauline Hughes

Tutor: Lynn McElroy

DRAMA CLASSES IN BELFAST AND ANTRIM

COURSE CONTENT

Our drama classes involve mime, dance, improvisation, scripted performance and the study of leading practitioners in the industry. We encourage our students to work collaboratively learning key performance techniques in a mutually encouraging environment. We use performing arts vocabulary, equipping our students to become self-evaluating. From the age of 4, we start to build the child’s

ability to express themselves creatively and explore age relevant issues using recognised dramatic forms. We have a range of abilities in our classes and seek to develop the potential of every child. We structure our lessons so that there is a performance aspect during every class to develop audience awareness. Our staff are all trained teachers who work in educational establishments and understand the pedagogy required for teaching Drama. We are a self-evaluating organisation, always striving to better the pupil experience and professionally deliver recognised qualifications in Performing Arts.

CLASSES

ANTRIM: Youth Lyric Antrim, Antrim Grammar School, 10 Steeple Road, Antrim BT41 1AF/ The Old Courthouse Antrim, BT41 4AW

DAY	TIME	CLASS	AGE
Tuesday	4-5pm	Drama	P3-P7
Tuesday	5-6pm	Drama	Yr8-14

BELFAST: Youth Lyric Belfast, Stranmillis College Stranmillis Road Belfast BT9 5DY

DAY	TIME	CLASS	AGE
Monday	5-6pm	Drama/Performance Arts	N-P3
Monday	5-6pm	Drama	Yr8-12
Monday	6-7pm	Drama	P4-P7
Monday	6-7pm	Drama	Yr8-12
Thursday	6-7.30pm	Drama	Yr13+
Friday	5-6pm	Drama/Dance	P4-P7
Friday	6-7pm	Drama/Dance	Yr8-12

BLOOMFIELD COLLEGIATE: Astoria Gardens, Belfast BT5 6HW
(Bloomfield pupils only)

Wednesday	3.45-4.45pm	Drama	Yr8-12
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STRANDTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL : North Road, Belfast, BT4 3DJ
(Strandtown pupils only)

Thursday	2.45-4pm	Drama	P4-P7
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STRATHEARN COLLEGE : 188 Belmont Road, Belfast, BT4 2AU (Strathearn pupils only)

Friday	4-5pm	Drama	Yr8-12
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To register your child for our classes visit our website www.youthlyric.co.uk where you can submit an online application form <https://youthlyric.co.uk/student-registration-form/> for all centres.

FEES

£10 per class £12 per class Youth Group

Payment can be made through bank transfer no cash/cheques please. Late payment will jeopardise your child's place in the class as we operate a waiting list.

BANK DETAILS:

Name of A/C: Youth Lyric Ltd **Sort Code:** 90-22-07 **A/C No:** 94225920

NB: When making an online bank transfer it is vital that you use your child's name as the bank reference so that we know which pupil the payment is for.

Some financial full / half scholarships are available for students financially challenged. A scholarship application can be obtained from Rachel Robinson and needs to be returned to info@youthlyric.co.uk These are then passed to the Head of Curriculum for consideration and dealt with in the strictest confidence. All successful applicants will be expected to pay £5 annual insurance. Evidence will help to support the application. There is a sibling discount on fees of £5 per child.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

There are no formal entry requirements for Youth Lyric. Youth Lyric does not operate auditions in order to join. We welcome children and young people of all abilities. There is wheelchair access at every centre. Everyone is entitled to a Taster session when they can decide whether participation in Youth Lyric is for them. Many students come to Youth Lyric classes with experience of school plays and work in professional productions. However, many of our pupils join Youth Lyric with no experience, just a healthy interest in the subject area. This is equally acceptable and valuable.

ANNUAL PRODUCTIONS

Each year Youth Lyric Belfast or Youth Lyric Antrim put on a large production which all students are invited to audition for. Our previous performances are listed on our website [Youth Lyric Productions - Youth Lyric Belfast](#)

THEATRE TRIPS

Youth Lyric believes that all P7 students and above should be given the opportunity to see live theatre and we endeavour to make it accessible to all. Information about these trips will be shared through email by our administrators. Local theatre trips to the Grand Opera House may also be included with a pre-show meal at Scalini and are priced approximately £70-£80.00.

FESTIVALS

Festival takes place each year in a venue in Belfast. This is a time for us to celebrate the work of our young people and for parents to see the skills they are developing in class.

It is a wonderful occasion, where pupils from all our classes prepare performance pieces and are adjudicated by a special Youth Lyric guest. We use this opportunity to make special awards and have accumulated many cups and trophies over the years, which we take pride in bestowing on our young people.

NEW ERA EXAMINATIONS

New Era Academy is an international examinations board offering accredited qualifications in Speech and Drama.

Over the last 10 years Youth Lyric theatre school has successfully entered between 150-200 pupils for exams each year achieving a 100% annual pass rate in Grades 1-8.

New Era Examinations may be taken by individuals, by pairs or by groups of three or more. All examinations offer candidates opportunities to demonstrate performance skills appropriate to their individual interests and aspirations. These examinations are not compulsory and pupils opt in if they wish to avail of this opportunity. Pupils will be assessed in class by their teacher and entered for the appropriate grade. Grades 6-8 in Acting and Speaking are recognised by UCAS and qualify for tariff points as indicated below:

30	Grade 8 ~ Distinction
27	Grade 8 ~ Merit
24	Grade 8 ~ Pass
16	Grade 7 ~ Distinction
14	Grade 7 ~ Merit
12	Grade 7 ~ Pass
12	Grade 6 ~ Distinction
10	Grade 6 ~ Merit
8	Grade 6 ~ Pass

This examination will take place in April for Grade 7 and Grade 8 and June for all other grades, when a visiting examiner will come to Stranmillis College to assess the pupils. Those entered, will be prepared by Youth Lyric staff with additional rehearsals organised, if required, nearer the time.

COST OF NEW ERA EXAMINATION – May be subject to change

Youth Lyric is a Registered Charity and our mission is to reinvest profits back into the organisations to ensure its longevity. To offer formal examinations and operate as an examination centre, we must cover the costs to the organisation. The costs of the examination to the parent are outlined below and we would emphasise that this charge covers the requirements by New Era and any administrative costs required to host the examination.

The tutors will inform pupils and parents on the grade they are being entered for. The grade chosen will be reflective of your child’s skills.

As children are usually entered in groups of 3-6, this means that it is vital that your child attends all classes and rehearsals. Failure to do so will jeopardise the success of the other children in the group. To that end, we will furnish you with the dates of New Era examination days and dates well in advance. As these are stipulated by New Era, we do not have the ability to change them. We would therefore ask that you keep these dates clear in your diary and avoid booking other appointments during this time. We understand that during the month of May and June, our pupils may have music and dance examinations whilst they are in the run up to New Era exams. We would kindly ask you to ensure that your child has the time to prepare fully for exams before they commit to it. This is to reduce pressure on the other children in their group. If your child fails to attend regular classes and

rehearsals in preparation for exams and others in the group are being disadvantaged by this, we may have to remove them from their group. Unfortunately, we will not be in a position to refund the examination fee as this will have already been paid to New Era.

If you would like to enter your child for their New Era examination, payment will be required a the term before the date of the exam.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social networking sites (such as, but not exclusively, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter etc.) are a useful way for keeping in touch with friends, family and Youth Lyric pupils and are also a great way to exchange information. However, pupils, relatives and staff must not forget that what they post on social networking sites may be seen across these networks and are reminded that they must not bring Youth Lyric into disrepute or cause any distress to any other member. We would, however encourage you to follow us on **Facebook: www.facebook.com/YouthLyric** Or **Twitter: @YouthLyricNI** or **Instagram: @youthlyric**

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PUPILS

A Code of Conduct (or a group agreement) for children outlines appropriate and inappropriate behaviours (including language), which should be valid for the duration of a group's involvement with an organisation (e.g. on an annual basis or for a one-off workshop). It is good practice to involve children in developing a code of behaviour that is specific to their activity. The following key principles should apply:

DO:

- ✓ Wear clothing that is appropriate to the activity including Youth Lyric top.
- ✓ Include and encourage the participation of other group members.
- ✓ Listen to others.
- ✓ Ask questions if you are unsure about something.
- ✓ Respect other children and adults at all times.
- ✓ Use allocated toilet and changing facilities where available.
- ✓ Tell a leader straight away if you (or another child) feel uncomfortable or frightened by the actions or words of another adult or child.
- ✓ Say 'no' if you feel uncomfortable at any time (e.g. during an activity).

- ✓ Follow safety guidelines and instructions for an activity and adhere to social distancing guidelines

DON'T:

- ✓ Shout, swear or use inappropriate language.
- ✓ Make fun of others.
- ✓ Exclude or make assumptions about others.
- ✓ Fight/push/pull/hit/nip/bite – even in fun.
- ✓ Tell jokes or stories that are rude or may offend or hurt others.
- ✓ Run in corridor areas/backstage.
- ✓ Keep bullying or inappropriate behaviour a secret.
- ✓ Promise to keep secrets.
- ✓ Use mobile telephones during activities (including breaks) or take photo or record or take a video during a break, at rehearsal or after class, unless specifically requested to do so by the tutor.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR GROUPS:

Safety is paramount while participating in an activity.

If it is necessary to review and amend the content of the code of behaviour at any time, Youth Lyric will advise groups and will regularly revisit and apply to amended group codes of behaviour. Consideration will be given to each activity Youth Lyric embarks on. Youth Lyric should also consider how best to include a child who has been known to pose a risk to others. In such instances, Youth Lyric will undertake an assessment and ensure it consults with the child as well as those who know the child well (e.g. parents/guardians, teachers, social workers). Youth Lyric works with children and adults (aged 18 and over) and has procedures and guidance to protect all participants. All participants are aware of, and adhere to, the code of behaviour. If supervisory responsibilities are to be given to a participant, they should be subject to an Access NI check.

Participants aged 18 and over should be made aware of issues such as appropriate behaviour (including language and topics of conversation) and being a good role model to the younger participants within the group. Daytrips and residential activities should be carefully planned using Risk Assessments, with particular attention given to accommodation needs and supervision of group members.

SNACKS

We appreciate that some of the children attending Youth Lyric may wish to bring snacks and drinks. All our venues have stated that this is not allowed and only water in a sealed container is permitted.

WHAT TO WEAR

We are proud to have our own Youth Lyric branded clothing. Your child can have up to four initials embroidered on their hoodie, e.g. EMMA or E.L. (initials of their name and surname). Payment for the hoodie or t shirt will be required before your order can be processed. Please use the same bank sort code and account number. You will need to confirm the age/size/initials by emailing the Administrator.

The cost of the junior hoodie (N-P7) is £25 and the senior hoodie (Yr 8-Yr 14) is £30. The Youth Lyric branded t-shirts are also available at a cost of £14-£16 depending on size/type required. We would kindly ask that all students purchase one of these as they will require this for classes, auditions and both Festival and New Era examinations and when we are representing the organisation on trips. It also provides a warm layer when working in class each week and on stage. Pupils are requested to wear black / dark coloured leggings or trousers for classes, Festival and New Era examinations with their Youth Lyric t-shirt or hoodie.

SANCTIONS

A breach of procedures and guidelines must be taken seriously and staff, children, parents/guardians and other service users should note the following:

Sanctions for children who breach the Code of Conduct may include taking time out from participating in an activity or temporary suspension from the organisation.

Contacting the child's parents/guardians will also be considered in some instances and in the most extreme cases, it may be necessary to consider permanent suspension.

Early intervention and dialogue with children should minimise the need to apply more serious sanctions. Staff members are trained to have a positive behavioural approach in all situations, endeavouring to support the pupil who is in breach of conduct whilst minimising the impact on other pupils.

PARENTAL CONSENT & SHARING OF INFORMATION

Youth Lyric needs to gain information about children in its care and parental consent in relation to medical/dietary requirements, activities, day trips and emergency situations. Consent to share information must be given by those with Parental Responsibility.

Records using the Parental Consent & Student Information form should be maintained and updated regularly for the following information:

- ✓ Name of the child (as it appears on the child's passport),
- ✓ Name, addresses and contact numbers for children and their parents/guardians;
- ✓ information about health issues/medication/dietary requirements/allergies & intolerances will be collated in the parental consent and student information form issued when the child joins YL;
- ✓ parental consent for all activities/emergency situations (including emergency contact numbers);
- ✓ special educational needs;
- ✓ permission to photograph and film the child;
- ✓ permission to share parent's email address with casting agencies when they contact us, as appropriate;
- ✓ an additional consent form will be issued to parents/guardians for any specialist activities over and above the normal ones (e.g. a residential weekend, a visit to another dance school or a theatre and/or chaperoning a child for an audition).

Youth Lyric makes parents/guardians aware of their commitment to ensuring the safety and welfare of all children and the requirement to know of any medical, dietary or behavioural conditions in relation to a child. The need to provide Youth Lyric with all information (even that which is not considered significant) should be clearly communicated, in order to ensure the needs of the child can be met and to minimise placing a child and/or others at risk of harm.

Youth Lyric will make every effort to communicate to all involved, regardless of language and communication needs. The main means of communication will be **via email or text**. Regular emails will be sent out to parents and Whats App groups will be created per class. Youth Lyric's commitment to inclusiveness, pointing out that a condition is very unlikely to preclude a child from being involved and that efforts will be made to provide appropriate methods of support. We work closely with the child, parents/guardians and support organisations (if appropriate) to maximise a child's participation.

Youth Lyric will provide as much information about regular activities as possible (e.g. wearing make-up and costume) and specify any requirements that parents/guardians, and children, should be aware of (e.g. to wear loose clothing when engaging in dance or free movement activities, for example). Guidelines should also be given, for example, with regards to inappropriate clothing. Children will be requested to wear their Youth Lyric branded hoodie, t-shirt and black/dark coloured trousers/leggings for classes and events including theatre trips, for Festivals, Productions and New Era examinations.

CHILD PROTECTION

Youth Lyric has an up to date Child Protection policy which has been ratified by the Board of Trustees. Parents can receive a copy on request from the Administrator. It is also available on our website www.youthlyric.co.uk

All members of staff have up to date Child Protection training and the following staff are **Designated Officers**, who can be contacted by parents via the Administrator for the centre if the need arises:

- Ali Donovan (Belfast)
- Natalie Gilbert (Belfast)
- Joanna Dickey (Antrim)

CONTACT US

If you have any further questions, please get in touch with Rachel Robinson, Senior Administrator at info@youthlyric.co.uk and we will be happy to help.

Thank you for choosing Youth Lyric!