

LOVELY NEWS: After examining **Essex Dance Theatres** teaching, senior students, facilities, policies & practises & staff interviews with a panel of 3 from the ROH The **ROYAL BALLET** has invited **Essex Dance Theatre** to be one of the 5 schools affiliated to their 'Chance to Dance' programme.

Chance to Dance gives primary school children from across the country that do not have access to ballet/in areas facing numerous disadvantages their first opportunity to engage creatively with ballet, connecting closely with the inspirational repertory, choreographers and dancers of The Royal Ballet. To create more opportunities for aspiring young dancers to engage in further training, the Royal Opera House works collaboratively with local and national dance education partners to model best practice in the creative teaching of ballet and establish more accessible pathways, especially for those who face difficulty accessing existing opportunities.

A member of staff has started training with the RB teaching team in Covent Garden. Work is then done in schools and students who would seem to benefit are given a scholarship to come and take classes at EDT. Last term 20 EDT seniors went to the opera house to watch a final dress rehearsal with orchestra.

With its 27-year track record for excellence, **the Royal Opera House** is now building a national presence and being the catalyst for systemic change in who has access to ballet and the opportunity to train professionally.

Created by Debbie Holme for Essex County Council in 1975 **Essex Dance Theatre**, is now in its 44th year serving the young people of Essex. It was established to reach a diverse population and provide access to excellence for those whose interest and ability would benefit from inspirational teaching by qualified and experienced staff.