



PRINCIPLES OF ADAPTATION

Big Dance have been working with Candoco Dance Company to look at general principles of adaptation that can be applied to the Schools Pledge to make it accessible to dancers with different capabilities and physicalities.

Candoco dancers are disabled and non-disabled. When making adaptations the company look at the fundamentals of a movement in order to make it work for the individual and their different physicalities. This means the movement does change, but retains the same fundamental action and intention as the original. It is important to develop an approach to adapting movement when necessary. This is relevant when a dancer is asked to perform a specific movement, which they have not devised themselves and might feel a bit strange to their bodies or natural style of moving.

When adapting, it's important to take dancers capabilities into consideration whilst keeping the integrity of the work intact. It's also important to try and maintain the same level of challenge apparent in the original movement. So adapting is not simply making it easier, but more like finding another version of the same thing. Some of the principles that we think might be relevant to the Schools Pledge are as follows:

With travelling movements, aim to maintain the overall direction.

This can be tricky if someone using a wheelchair is asked to move sideways for instance. In this case a quarter turn may be added or instead a shift of the torso.

Maintain the same facing and similar posture of the original material

Facing and posture are strong elements of non-verbal communication, so it is important to maintain them wherever possible. The same applies to levels - If someone is naturally working at a different level to others, it is still likely that they will be able to make higher and lower variations to their usual working mode. If dancers are unable to go fully to the floor – how might they represent the change in level in a different way?

A gesture or detail of a movement can be executed by a different body part.

Try to maintain overall direction and movement qualities such as speed and flow. A reach with an elbow may be as effective as a reach with a knee for instance, if the action of reaching is the principal aspect of the movement.

Be aware of dynamics and particular movement qualities.

Again sometimes these can be more relevant to maintain than a specific body part.

If a variation in time is needed, identify key moments to be respected and adapt the movement around them.

This is particularly important when working closely with music and in unison. Key moments in the Schools Pledge are those positions or actions linking to specific sports or Olympic images.