



Prospectus

Welcome to **best!**

What people say about **best**

*I just wanted to say thank you – she loves coming to **best**. She performed beautifully in her show – and with enormous confidence... all down to you.*

*You have something very special going on at **best**. I really don't know how you do it, but I'm glad you do!*

You are unique – quite different to other schools. I wish I'd heard of you earlier.

Thank you for everything you've done for him. If I hadn't seen it happen I never would have believed it possible!

What you do for the children is wonderful. My daughter would never have stood up in front of her whole school by herself and sung her heart out.

It's fun! I've made loads of friends and the teachers are cool!

*Thanks for all the amazing stuff that you are doing for our wee ones, I can think of little that gives us such a sense of community as **best**.*

It's given me confidence. I was shy when I arrived, but now I've just gone mad!



A message from our founders

Our aim is to give young people between the ages of 4 and 16 the best possible introduction to the theatre.

As well as acting, dancing and singing, **best** can help teach confidence, self-discipline and communication skills that are as useful in life as they are on the stage.

When we established **best** in 1998, we set ourselves clear aims:

- To offer the best theatre arts training possible
- To provide a caring, relaxed and fun environment where children have the opportunity to realise their individual potential as well as learning to value team work
- To build a relationship with each student and their parents, and to provide them with attention tailored to their needs
- To treat all students equally
- To deliver excellence in every area

We're thrilled that we've been able to meet all of them. Today, we enjoy an unrivalled reputation for the quality of the training and pastoral care that we provide.

We often hear that schools have noticed a positive difference in children who have attended **best**.

Our reputation means that we are able to attract high calibre theatre professionals to work with us. All have excellent references, and have been fully police checked. Each school takes place inside normal term times, and in venues that have been carefully selected for the quality of their facilities, security and location.

To make sure that we deliver the best experience for your child our schools are divided into **first class** (4 – 6 years old) and **best** (6 – 16 years old).

Both groups are about having fun and about creating a place full of friends, inspiration, achievement and excitement. We are proud of what **best** has become, and want to share it with everyone who is associated with us.

If you want to experience the unique buzz that **best creates, come and see us in action at any of our schools – we look forward to welcoming you!**

Annette Holland and David Bevan

Our founders

Annette was a solicitor in The City when the stage called. She trained at Drama Studio, London before working on television and the professional stage, including touring with both adult and children's theatre companies across the UK and Europe. She taught extensively before launching **best** in 1998, and now dedicates herself to the schools.

David gained a degree in Drama and English from the University of East Anglia before studying acting at the Webber Douglas Academy. His professional theatre work almost exclusively centred around Children's Theatre and Theatre in Education giving him a rare insight into performing for, and working with, children. His touring has covered over

500 schools in the UK, middle-sized venues and major theatres. He has also written and directed a number of musical plays for children.

Annette and David are married with two children.

“Never underestimate the value of what you do for our children.”



first class experiences for younger children



first class provides younger children with a gentle introduction to the exciting world of performance. We channel each child's expressive energies at the same time as encouraging them to respect others. It's a safe, caring and friendly atmosphere where even the most timid child will feel able to join in.

Each term the group activities are based on different themes. At the end of the spring term, the children put on a show for their parents and relatives, and at the end of the autumn term, there is often a seasonal get together.

Teaching takes place for 1½ hours each week in small groups that allow children to receive individual attention while progressing at their own pace.

Parents' input is warmly welcomed, and they are encouraged to become part of each **first class** family.



*"My son always comes away from **best** smiling.*

It's a brilliant way for your child to gain confidence.

You seem to have time for everyone."

best times for young people

best is a place where young people aged 6 to 16 can build their confidence, discover new talents and meet new friends. **best** is more than just a theatre thing – it's a social thing!

Each week, our students have an hour of coaching in acting, dancing and singing, adding up to three hours of expert tuition.

Acting

As we explore different techniques and styles of acting, we work with texts, learn how to build characters and invent our own stories. Each term has its own distinct and dynamic programme which can be anything from improvisation to Shakespeare. The emphasis is on group work and there are plenty of opportunities to perform.

Dance

Our approach encourages everyone to give it a go. Students build confidence quickly, and classes are lively and loud. Jazz and modern musical styles are the key elements, but we bring in everything from hip-hop to the foxtrot.

Singing

There's more to singing than just hitting the right notes. We teach rhythm, listening and vocal variation, encouraging our students to tackle different styles like musical, pop and modern.

Performance

Naturally performance is an important part of what we do, and all **best** students will be given every opportunity to put their new skills to good use.

Summer term – we often end this term with the different classes showing their term's work to each other. It gives everybody chance to shine – and guarantees an appreciative audience!

Autumn term – at the end of the term we stage our own 'event,' maybe an open class where families can see what happens at **best** or perhaps a panto with mince pies and coffee afterwards.

Spring term – time for the annual production. We promise that everyone will have a worthwhile part to play, even if we have to write a show to make it happen. These take place at suitable local venues and are open to family members and the public.

best choice for parents

While your child is with us, they will be inspired and challenged within a safe and supportive environment.

best is different. We are totally inclusive and make sure every child has the same opportunities to progress.

We work by building a partnership between our staff, parents and children. We are accountable for the quality of the care and teaching we provide and communicate with you through newsletters, e-mails and regular updates on our notice boards. We produce written progress reports outlining each term's plans and conduct annual 'About Me' interviews when children can tell us about their likes, dislikes and ambitions.

As a part of our commitment to excellence and openness we invite feedback each term. Quality runs through everything we do and we're always seeking new ways to make things even better. Many of the successful changes we have made have come about through the suggestions of a child or parent.

Clothes

Children like to express themselves through their clothes, which is why we don't have a uniform. All we ask is that dress should be comfortable and practical. Students in the **best** school should wear black jazz shoes for all classes and should have a set of black clothing available for rehearsals or performances. Jazz shoes are preferred but optional for students in **first class**. Many students like to wear **best** t-shirts, which are available from the principal.

Joining us

Please phone or e-mail if you'd like to find out more about us, or to discuss your child's needs in more detail. Before you make your mind up, we strongly recommend that you come and see the school in action. Just call us and we'll arrange a convenient time.

If you decide to join, simply fill in the application form (enclosed or available on-line at www.besttheatrearts.com) and send it off to us together with the appropriate deposit cheque or credit card details. We'll be in touch as soon as we receive it. There's no need to send a CV and there are no auditions.

Each new arrival at **best** has a '**best** buddy' who will help them through the first few weeks. Our students love being selected to be a **best** buddy, and they'll be on hand to answer questions, help with introductions and generally make sure that each child is happy. And of course we stay in close touch with parents throughout.

The first day at **best** is a treasured memory for many of our students, and we look forward to seeing you and your child soon.

"You have the knack of bringing out the best in the children."

"It's excellent training - I just love it!"

