

## Faculty

**Kate Blackburn - Academic Principal:** Kate was born and raised in west London; after gaining a BA in English Literature at University College London, she completed an MA in Victorian Media & Culture at Royal Holloway, University of London. Kate has twenty years' experience working with children and young people, as a play leader, camp counsellor in Connecticut, tutor and teacher of English and History. She joined YDA in 2006 as a teacher becoming Examinations Officer in 2010 and Academic Principal in 2014.

**Emma Hughes - Music and Private Singing coach:** is a professional musician and educator based in London, having graduated with a Degree in Music from the University of Wales, Cardiff and a Postgraduate Diploma in Vocal Studies from Trinity College of Music, London. Prior to starting at Young Dancers Academy, Emma spent five years Head of Music and Singing on the BTEC Performing Arts Course at the Welsh Sixth Form College, Coleg Gwent.

Emma is an active professional soprano and, informed by her own performance experience in Musical Theatre, Opera, Oratorio and commercial entertainment, she takes great pleasure in training young singers to find their voices.

**Evelyn de Villiers – SEN:** has taught in a number of vocational Dance schools including The Royal Ballet School, where she taught Science and Elmhurst Ballet School, where she taught Anatomy, Physiology and Health to Level 4 Ballet students in their sixth form.

Evelyn also trained in Classical Ballet and Contemporary Dance, co-founding a Contemporary Dance company, touring London and the South East. Her work as Dancer in Residence in Battersea Arts Centre widened her knowledge of Community Dance.

She has a degree in Zoology from King's College London and Master's degree from Birkbeck College London. Recently, Evelyn has focused on language acquisition and mindfulness and their application to the teaching of students with Dyslexia. She firmly believes in the multi-sensory approach to learning, which she developed whilst teaching dyslexic students in Hornsby House School.

**Katrina Watson - Science teacher:** grew up on a farm in South Africa and got a B.Sc degree in Human Physiology before moving to London. She worked as a Personal Trainer and Spin instructor before retraining as a Science teacher. Kat worked at a large comprehensive school for 5 years before joining YDA

**Madame Clayton - French Year 7 & 8:** studied Modern Foreign Languages at Durham University reading French and German and majoring in French, in which she achieved a 2:1. She spent a year living and working abroad in Orleans, immersing herself in the French language and culture whilst also pursuing her ballet. After completing her degree, she studied at the Royal Academy of Dance gaining her Registered Teacher Status, Advanced 2 and Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Dance with Distinction. Since then, Mme. Clayton has pursued her teaching at La Sylvaine and Kristi's Dance Academy and is now delighted to be teaching French to budding dancers!

**Carol Creevey - French Years 9, 10 & 11:** Born in Yorkshire but with a French mother languages, have always been in her blood. After school in Halifax, and University at Nottingham and Oxford, she moved south to teach in schools in Kent and then Surrey, teaching French and Spanish at Epsom College for over twenty years. Teaching part-time at YDA she combines this with regular visits to my house in the South of France, supporting QPR and Halifax Town football clubs, walking in Yorkshire and travelling.

**Judi Swinney – English and Drama:** Studied at Digby Stuart College, Roehampton University, graduating in 1995 with a 2:1 Honours Degree in English and Education. Judi is a drama specialist having studied and taught at theatre school, worked professionally as an actress and taken acting exams with the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art through to becoming an Associate.

Judi loves teaching and endeavour to foster enthusiasm, a love of learning and a sense of the dramatic in my pupils in order to make studying fun as well as instructional and so that students increase self-esteem alongside knowledge and develop into well-rounded, confident and secure individuals.

**Alice Roots – Maths and Geography KS3:** After obtaining my BSc in mathematics from Imperial College, London I completed my PGCE at the Institute of Education before teaching Maths in secondary schools in central London and Hertfordshire at all levels including GCSE, International Baccalaureate and A Level. I joined YDA in 2016 where I teach Maths and Geography.