

Urban theme fires up young street dancers

DANCE Woking was back in the theatre last week hosting its first Surrey Schools' SLAM, an urban-style dance platform.

The SLAM was held on Thursday last week at Jubilee High School's purpose-built theatre in Addlestone, with the audience seated on three sides of the auditorium to create an intimate atmosphere.

Some 160 students from 10 different school groups across Woking and Surrey, and from as far afield as Esher and Claygate, took part in the platform. For some it was a first time on stage.

The students' inspiration was "the urban environment", which was creatively interpreted by the groups.

They worked with an experienced Dance Woking artist for eight weeks this term, learning their street-dance moves. The students were encouraged to develop their own movement from the steps they were taught and to add their own creative input.

Dance Woking's CEO and artistic director Sam McCaffrey said: "I was so impressed by the energy and enthusiasm of the dancers. To perform in front of family and friends can be extremely

daunting and whilst there were a few pre-show nerves, all of the dancers really excelled on stage.

"The different interpretations and ideas that were developed by the students from the stimulus of the urban environment were varied and creative, for example, Broadmere Primary Academy chose shopping with friends.

"Woking High selected road workers, focusing not just on the hard work they do, but including some comedy moments too.

"With around 160 dancers performing, the platform was a great opportunity for students to build confidence and self-esteem, as well as develop great teamwork skills. And with a very tight turnaround on the day to get the show ready, it was such a privilege to see groups take over the stage."

Dance Woking is a charity that uses dance in all its forms to bring communities together through its Inspire programme.

● **FOR more information about Dance Woking and how to get involved, visit www.dancewoking.com.**



STEPPING OUT – There is no shortage of energy from the group from Westfield Primary School