

# footlights

ACT • SING • DANCE



A proven model. A creative future.

## Franchise with Footlights

A stage school franchise shaped by professionals and inspired by children.

# Why franchise with Footlights

When people first speak to me about franchising with Footlights, they often say it doesn't feel corporate. That's intentional.

I founded Footlights in 2005 with a simple belief that every child, regardless of background, deserves the chance to grow through creativity and performance, in an environment that is safe, inclusive and genuinely enjoyable, with high standards that put their confidence and development first.

Two decades on, I remain hands-on in the day-to-day running of the business, continuing to run my own schools and working directly with franchisees across the network.

Footlights has been running **high-quality stage schools for over 20 years**, offering acting, singing and dance training for children and young people aged 3–18. What began as a single school has grown into a national franchise network, expanding carefully while holding onto the values and ways of working that shaped Footlights from the outset.

This overview is here to give you a clear and honest picture of what franchising with Footlights looks like in practice, the support we provide and whether running a Footlights stage school could be the right next step for you.



Jo Fisher - Footlights Away Day 2025

**Jo Fisher, BA (Hons), PGCE**  
Founder & Managing Director

# Why franchise with Footlights

Footlights combines a **values-led ethos** with a **professionally run operating model**, shaped by experienced educators working alongside industry professionals. Decisions are informed by real experience of education, current creative practice and sound business judgement.

The franchise model is **established, realistic and designed for long-term sustainability**, with **ongoing support built into the structure** rather than added as extra cost. Refined over more than two decades of delivery, it supports franchisees in building **financially viable schools rooted in their local communities**.



As a franchisee, you benefit from a **clear and structured support framework**, including:

- **Guidance on selecting a suitable territory**, grounded by demographic insight
- **Structured pre-launch training** covering creative and operational foundations
- **A comprehensive Operations Manual** setting out systems and processes
- **Ongoing guidance** across **safeguarding, staffing, marketing and enrolment**
- Access to an active and **collaborative franchise network**

This support is **practical, responsive and grounded in real delivery**, with direct access to Jo and an experienced team from the very beginning and throughout your time as a franchisee.

**Footlights has been recognised for:**

- **Impact with young people**
- **Business performance**

Including awards at the British Franchise Awards and the Salford Business Awards.

# What running a Footlights stage school looks like

Running a Footlights stage school is a **hands-on ownership role**. You operate **your school as your own business** within an agreed territory, supported by a **proven framework developed through years of delivery**.

You set the creative direction of the school, uphold standards and support your staff, **ensuring a high-quality experience** that families trust and return to week after week.

Most schools operate at **weekends during term time**, with **additional opportunities** through holiday provision and after-school clubs. Delivery is typically concentrated at weekends, with administrative work planned around that rhythm.

**You are not required to teach classes yourself.**



For many franchisees, the role is **demanding but deeply rewarding**, centred on seeing **children and young people grow in confidence** and skill, and **building a school that becomes an established part of its local community**.

“ Opening my Footlights franchise has been nothing short of a dream come true. The personal and professional support from Jo and the Head Office team has been outstanding throughout the entire process. The training gave me the confidence and tools I needed to launch successfully, and within 12 months my school was at full capacity. ”

**Anna Morgan, Franchisee – Footlights Sale and Altrincham**

# Training, guidance and the Footlights network

All Footlights franchisees receive **structured initial training** and ongoing guidance, covering both the creative and operational aspects of running a stage school.

## Training and guidance includes:

- Delivery frameworks and curriculum standards
- Safeguarding, compliance and best practice
- Administrative systems and business processes
- Staffing, recruitment and leadership development
- Marketing strategy, enrolment and retention

The systems and resources provided allow franchisees to focus on **leadership, quality and sustainable growth**.



What sets Footlights apart is that this **guidance is shaped and delivered by people who continue to run Footlights schools themselves**. The founder remains directly involved in delivery, alongside franchisees who actively **share ideas, successes and learning across the network**.

## You will also have access to:

- A hands-on Marketing Manager
- An active WhatsApp group used daily for advice and shared successes
- Regular opportunities to connect in person, including an annual away day
- Ongoing access to Head Office

This approach is **personal, consistent and genuinely invested in each franchisee's success**.

# Who Footlights franchisees are

Footlights franchisees come from a **wide range of backgrounds**, reflected across the network.

What they share is a **genuine enthusiasm for the performing arts** and a **desire to build a high-quality, people-centred business**. Many bring creative, educational or leadership experience, while others develop these skills through the role itself.

You do not need prior franchise or business ownership experience, or a formal teaching qualification. **What matters is readiness to take ownership** of building and leading a school, grounded in high professional standards and a genuine interest in working with young people through the performing arts.

Footlights franchisees remain in their territories long term, **building schools that become trusted parts of their communities**, with some choosing to expand further as their schools grow.

**A small snapshot of franchisees from across the Footlights network.**



Anna  
Footlights Sale & Altrincham



Khara  
Footlights Old Trafford



Aydin  
Footlights Epsom



Vicki  
Footlights Bury & Middleton



Richard and Debbie  
Footlights Worcester



Serena and Alex  
Footlights Bracknell



# Our journey

Footlights was founded in 2005 with one school and 15 children. Since then, it has **grown steadily** into a **recognised UK franchise**, supporting thousands of young people each week.

Through sustained delivery, **consistent demand and careful expansion**, Footlights has developed a national franchise network with **established schools across the North West, Yorkshire, West Midlands, South East and London**.

Alongside its schools, Footlights also operates **Footlights Personal Management**, a children's acting agency supporting our young performers into professional roles across stage and screen.

Today, Footlights is defined by **consistent standards, long-term relationships** and the **same commitment to children and young people that has shaped the company from the start**.

## Next Steps

Thank you for taking the time to read this overview.

### You may find it helpful to reflect on:

- Why you would like to run a Footlights stage school
- Which area you would be interested in operating
- How much time you are able to commit

If you would like to explore the opportunity further, the next step is an **initial conversation**.

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Kind regards

**Jo Fisher, BA (Hons), PGCE**  
Founder & Managing Director

**footlights**  
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