

Grand River Dance Academy

STUDIO GUIDE

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to all the new and returning members of the Grand River Dance Academy. We hope you are as excited as our staff, and are ready to learn many new skills in the art of dance.

This handbook is meant to be an informative tool for both parents and students. It will provide useful information that pertains to the course of the dance season including class descriptions, dress codes, special events, examinations, dance recital information and much more. Although newsletters will be sent home at the beginning of every month, it is the hope that this handbook will be used as a guide to reiterate important information throughout the school year. Please remember to check current newsletters for other valuable information. If you have not received a monthly newsletter check the bulletin boards around the studio to find a current copy or ask an instructor.

CLASS DESCRIPTION

Ballet – offers well-structured classes, which develop good posture, movement quality, co-ordination, balance, musicality and sense of line. Ballet is an important basis for all other dance forms. We offer exam classes in R.A.D. Students wishing to participate in exams must be recommended by their instructor.

Jazz - offers students a fun and energizing experience. The classes consist of a warm up, stretch, isolations, barre work, combinations of terminology and progressions across the floor. Jazz proves to be an exciting class, while developing the dancers' co-ordination, balance, rhythm, posture, spatial awareness and music appreciation. We offer classes for 5 year olds to adults in a recreational or exam focus.

Tap – classes are available for 5 year olds up to adults. Dancers will learn tap technique following the C.D.T.A. syllabus. Within the syllabus they will focus on music, timing, rhythm, co-ordination and a combination of tap steps.

Hip Hop – based on the 90's break dance moves students will thoroughly enjoy this fast paced class, with moves that will challenge their co-ordination abilities and skills. Jr. Hip Hop students 7 – 11 years of age; Inter Hip Hop 12-15 year olds and Sr. Hip Hop 16 and older; and occasionally we also offer an Adult Hip Hop course. No previous dance experience necessary.

Salsa – this 10 week course offers couples and individuals the flavour of Latin dance such as Merengue, Bachata, Salsa and Cha Cha. This class will provide the basic skills and fundamentals as well as the distinction between the different Latin dances. These highly exhilarating Latin dance forms will provide the dancers with an appreciation and exhilarating experience of the Latin culture.

Stretch and Strengthen – offers the participant a combination of yoga, tai chi, core strengthening and meditation. This class will provide a full body workout and condition the body to its maximum potential.

Intro to Dance and Creative Movement – These introductory dance classes are specifically intended for ages 3 – 4. These classes consist of a combination of jazz and ballet elements. These elements are designed to improve and develop rhythm, creative movement, spatial awareness, musicality, levels and loco motor skills all in a fun and exciting environment.

Ballroom - Taught in both American and International styles. Our ballroom program helps couples and individuals improve their attitudes and gain confidence on the ballroom floor. Most of all, serves as a great stress releaser for dancing is a mild aerobic workout with out the boring part. Students will learn to recognize music and choose which dance best fits to the music. Our ballroom classes are a fun and relaxing environment where everyone is in a good mood. Partners recommended but not required.

Standard/Smooth Dances offered: Fox Trot, Waltz, Tango, Quick Step, and Viennese Waltz.

Latin Ballroom offered: Rumba, Cha Cha, Mambo, Jive, Samba, and Bolero.

Specialty Dances offered: Argentine Tango, West Coast Swing, East Coast Swing, and Hustle.

RECREATIONAL VS. EXAM CLASSES

Recreational classes focus on technical material and personal achievement without an exam focus. Students will learn the required skills for their specific class. These classes are geared with a more relaxed atmosphere and fun-loving appreciation for dance.

In graded exam classes students will learn specific elements set out by dance organizations such as: the Royal Academy of Dancing (R.A.D. - Ballet) and the Canadian Dance Teachers Association (C.D.T.A. – Jazz & Tap). In these classes we prepare them toward examinations where a third party will mark exam candidates on a specified day. It is not however to say each child will participate in an examination this year. Not all students in the Grade classes will be ready. The final decision is left up to their teacher. Please understand that this decision to participate will be made based on the child's attendance, as well as their physical, emotional and mental (remembering the exercises) readiness for the examination. We will not ask a child to participate if we feel it may not be in the child's best interest. Please understand that this does not reflect on your child's learning skills, we just want each child to have a positive experience. Commitment and daily practise is expected. **Extra classes leading up to the exam will be mandatory.**

DANCE ATTIRE

Street wear is prohibited in dance class as it can be distracting for the student and is disrespectful to the class and the instructor. Anyone not abiding by this may be asked to sit out or leave the class until they have changed.

The only exception to the dress code will be to those students who participate in more than one dance class in the duration of an evening. Current uniforms are listed below.

Intro to Dance & Creative Dance Uniform

- black tank leotard (girls)
- shorts & t-shirt (boys)
- black gymnastic slipper
- beige tights

Ballet Uniform

Hair: bun only (instructions on next page)

Pre-Primary and Primary

- baby blue tank leotard with matching waistband
- baby blue semi-sheer gathered skirt
- white ankle socks
- pink leather ballet slippers with pink elastics

Grades 1 and 2

- baby blue tank leotard with matching waistband
- pink tights
- pink leather ballet slippers with pink elastics
- black character skirt with school colour ribbons
- black low heel (1/2") character shoe

Jazz Uniform

Hair: bun or pony tail

All Recreational Jazz classes, and Grades 1 - 4

- black tank leotard
- beige footed tights
- black jazz oxfords (full sole)
- black dance pants optional

Tap Uniform

Hair: bun or pony tail

- black tank leotard
- beige footed tights
- beige tap shoes
- black dance pants optional

Instructions for hair bun

1. Secure hair using hairspray &/or gel in a tight ponytail in the middle of back of head.
2. Hold ponytail and twist hair, then wrap it around the elastic in a circular motion.
3. Secure hair all around bun using at least 6-10 bobby pins. (See photo)
4. Using hairnet, place over bun and wrap around bun.
5. Secure net by twisting excess net around bun and finish with a bobby pin – pushing pin into bun.

Grades 3, 4 and 5

- navy blue tank leotard with matching waistband
- pink tights
- pink leather ballet slippers with pink elastics
- black character skirt with school colour ribbons
- black 1 1/2" Cuban heel character shoe

Grades 6, 7 and 8

- dark green spaghetti leotard & waistband
- matching chiffon skirt
- pink tights
- pink leather ballet slippers with pink elastics
- black character skirt with school colour ribbons
- black 1 1/2" Cuban heel character shoe

Grades Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced

- black tank/spaghetti strap leotard
- beige footed/convertible tights
- black & tan jazz oxfords (split sole optional)
- black dance pants optional

Hip Hop Uniform

Hair: undecided

- anything comfortable
- clean "no scuff" sneakers
- **ABSOLUTELY NO JEANS**

6. Using hairclips secure back bangs or loose hairs.

7. Finish with hairspray.



REFUNDS

Refund deadline every year is November 15 for full year classes. If a student wishes to withdraw before the deadline date, only the classes taken will require payment for services rendered. After this date, however, fees and recital deposits are non-refundable. No refunds for 10-week courses.

NSF CHEQUES

NSF cheques will be subject to a \$30 service charge. A second NSF cheque will result in cash only payments.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, the director will make the decision to close the studio. There will also be an announcement left on the studio answering machine. It is the studio's policy that all attempts will be made to notify students via phone call at home in case of such cancellations.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- The G.R.D.A. reserves the right to remove any student(s) expressing inappropriate behaviour towards staff, self or other dancers. Appropriate consequences that are fair and logical will be applied first, but if the behaviour is very serious, the home will be notified, and dancer will be asked to leave the class until the nature of the incident has been resolved.
- Any student coming to class not wearing the required class attire may be asked to sit out, as it may be dangerous, distracting and/or disrespectful.
- Any child entering an Intro to dance or Pre Primary Ballet class must be toilet trained and out of diapers.
- When in the studio please respect the facility (NO jumping on the furniture, climbing on the ledges or writing on the walls)
- Students caught disrespecting the facility are responsible for compensation for any damages or destruction thereof.
- Parents and/or guardians are requested to notify the studio when a child is absent due to a communicable/infectious disease.

DANCE SWAP

Each year we have an opportunity for parents to sell previously used dancewear and shoes. If you have items to sell, please place them in a Ziploc bag and label them with your name, telephone number and price. * *Be sure to tie shoes together.* Items and Ziploc bags should be dropped off a.s.a.p. in the shoe bin drop box in the studio foyer. Please remember the dance swap is based on the honour system. G.R.D.A. is not responsible for lost or unclaimed items. There will be a designated day for the dance swap so please be fair to all G.R.D.A. members and wait until then to see all items displayed. Dates and times will be posted around the studio as well as in a newsletter.

PARKING

For the safety of all the students I encourage all dancers to wait for rides within the double door entrance of the building, instead of outside the premises.

Drop off and pick up of the older students should be done in front of the studio entrance. Parents of younger students are requested to accompany their child to and from the studio for their own safety. Parking is available behind the building and selected areas around the fence.

Parking is prohibited along the side of the building and in front of the fenced gate directly across from the entrance of the studio. For the safety of the students, drivers please be aware of students entering and exiting the studio at all times. Students are asked not to run in the parking lot.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES

Being on time for drop off and pick up are extremely important. With the exception of the Intro to Dance, Pre Primary Ballet and Primary Ballet, our classes are 1 hour long. So please allow enough time to change before and after class. For the safety of all students, I encourage students to wait for rides within the double door entrance of the building, instead of outside the premises.

Drop off and pick up of the older students should be done in front of the studio entrance. Parents of younger students are requested to accompany their child into the studio for their own safety. Parking is available down by the auto body shop and selected areas around the fence. Parking is prohibited along the side of the building and in front of the fenced gate directly across from the entrance of the studio. For the safety of the students, drivers please be aware of students entering and exiting the studio at all times. Students are asked not run in the parking lot.

RECITAL – “SPECTRUM”

Grand River Dance Academy provides students with an exciting performance experience through its June recital – the annual staple of the Academy. It’s a rite of passage for thousands of youngsters, a chance to shine in front of family and friends that they anticipate with nervous excitement.

The recital offers our students a professionally directed performance that allows them to present to their families and friends the results of a year’s hard work, dedication, and progress.

A big part of the dance training process includes learning through performance. The experience helps build self-esteem, self-assurance, and contributes to a sense of confidence. Although performance opportunities can help prepare some students for a possible career in dance, they also contribute to children’s success in non-dance activities. That onstage experience can result in better in-school presentations, improved social skills, and strong interview skills for future college or job opportunities. The rehearsal process is a tremendous learning experience as well. It helps the children develop retention skill, and by working with their classmates on a group performance, they learn the positive aspects of working as a team to create the best end result.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class. It is important that your child attends class every week and is on time. Good attendance is imperative. Absences and tardiness not only hold back the individual student, but can hold back an entire class. If a student has missed more than 3 classes in a row it they risk the possibility of not participating in recital.

Dedication to recital commitments is the responsibility of both students and their parents. We have created this section in an effort to clarify what we expect in terms of commitments and responsibility to the annual recital, the studio, and other students and parents.

RECITAL UPDATES

As the season progresses, additional recital information or updates will be posted on the GRDA bulletin board. Make it your responsibility to be up-to-date with this important information. It’s a team effort; students, their parents, the teachers, and the director are key players in the success of the show.

HOME STUDY

To ensure that students feel confident about their performance, we ask parents and guardians to encourage them to rehearse their recital choreography on a regular basis.

RECITAL FEE

Recital fees go towards recital expenses. These expenses are: rental of the hall, any applied taxes, props, cross-border duties and costumes, technical expenses, tickets, programs etc.

COSTUMES

We spend many hours determining the correct costumes for each class. They are always age-appropriate. Costumes will be distributed one week prior to photo day. Additional costume expense may apply if the initial expense exceeds the recital fee. Additional charges are the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian. Costumes are either purchased through costume/dancewear catalogs, bought locally or need to be made. The G.R.D.A. is always pleased to have parents who know how to sew help volunteer with costumes. If you are able to help sew costumes, please inform an instructor and fill out the volunteer form at the back of this handbook as soon as possible, as costumes are usually organized late December/early January.

ACCESSORIES, HAIR AND MAKEUP

An information package will be handed out with the distribution of the costumes.

PRE-PLANNING

The recital isn't a one-day activity. Gather all costumes, accessories, shoes and makeup several days in advance so you'll know if something is missing or isn't right. Make a checklist of your child's routines, listing their costume, tights, shoes and any accessories, and refer to it to make sure you have all your supplies before going to the theatre. Bring at least one extra pair of tights of each color, also bring extra hair supplies. Other handy extra include:

- Baby wipes (to fix makeup mistakes or wash hands)
- Baby powder (for itchy costumes)
- Clear nail polish (to repair minor holes or runs in tights)
- Safety pins (for emergency costume repairs)
- Your pain reliever of choice
- Band-Aids (the "invisible" kind)

DRESS REHEARSAL

The dress rehearsal allows the students to become familiar with the auditorium surroundings and feel comfortable with their performance, costume(s), and being onstage. Lighting, music cues, set changes, and all other logistics for an organized and professional performance are rehearsed so that the students make the best impression possible. Participation in the dress rehearsal is mandatory.

We strive to run an organized and timely dress rehearsal; your help with the process will guarantee a professional production. Please arrive 30 minutes prior to dress rehearsal; all dancers must sign in at this time.

All junior classes will be run prior to the finale. A schedule will be posted on the GRDA bulletin board 1-2 week's prior rehearsal. Only parent volunteers and volunteers may remain as dress-rehearsal guests.

DRESSING-ROOM ETIQUETTE

Student must respect other students' space and property in the dressing rooms. The students will spend more time in the dressing rooms than onstage or in the auditorium, so please do your best to keep them organized and clean.

DRESS-REHEARSAL AND RECITAL DROPOFF AND PICKUP

The safety of all dancers is the Academy's number one concern. We ask for the parents or guardians **patience with drop-off, sign in and pick up.** Parents or guardians should bring the students to the sign in tables, where they will be checked in and placed under the supervision of a class mom(s). Dancers will remain in the dressing rooms with their class moms during dress rehearsal and the recital when they are not onstage. **Parents are not allowed in the dressing room after the children have been checked in for the rehearsal and the recital.** Please be advised that only one parent/guardian is asked to pickup their dancer after the shows. This is to limit the amount of traffic in the dressing room area.

BACKSTAGE

Family members and friends do not belong backstage or in the dressing room during rehearsal or the recital. The same applies during intermission and after the show. There is a lot of backstage activity in a limited space, and dressing rooms are a private area. Please remind your family and guests to be respectful of these areas. Those who wish to greet a performer after the show or present flowers should do so in the lobby areas.

RECITAL PHOTOS

Class photos usually are taken 2-3 weeks before the recital. Look in newsletter and on the bulletin board for dates and times. It is **EXTREMELY** important to attend Photo Day. Please make every effort to be there for the class photo. Arrive 15 minutes prior to scheduled time. Wearing an oversized button down shirt overtop of the costume will help avoid makeup/food or spillage on the costume. If you are having difficulty with doing hair and/or applying makeup, please inform the instructor and arrangements will be made to have someone assist your dancer on the day of the photo shoot.

RECITAL TICKET POLICY

Tickets will be available to purchase on photo day. Tickets can also be purchased following Photo Day at the studio during class time and at the door on the day of the shows. Please check bulletin boards for more information.

RECITAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Any one interested in volunteering to help backstage is welcome. A volunteer form is required and is included in this handbook. There will be an orientation for all volunteers, and all must abide by the policies set forth by Grand River Dance Academy. The recital weekend is a hectic experience; all volunteers must work in a cooperative manner at all times. Our backstage manager's work very hard to put a system in place that works; we ask that all volunteers rely on their experience and follow their instruction.

All volunteers will receive an identification badge at the dress rehearsal, which must be worn in the theatre at all time. Please do not bring guests, including children, with you while you are volunteering.

VOLUNTEER FORM

Grand River Dance Academy relies on the assistance of many dedicated volunteers to provide a high-quality performance experience for you children. Your child is a direct beneficiary of this volunteer effort, so we hope that you will become an enthusiastic member of our volunteer pool.

Most jobs require limited commitment at a specific time during the dress rehearsal and/or recital. There are many positions available for men as well as women, which makes it reasonable for families to assume their volunteer responsibility. We encourage every family to become involved with our volunteer program and welcome any contribution you are willing to make.

Please check any of the items listed below that you are interested in. At the appropriate time, we will contact you with more information about the opportunities you have expressed an interest in.

_____ Sewing Costumes: Sewing groups of costumes

_____ Class mom: Ensure that children are safe and accounted for when not onstage. Check for proper attire.

_____ Security: Check dancers in as they arrive at the theatre and release them when they are picked up.

Ensure that only authorized personnel volunteers are backstage and in the dressing rooms.

_____ Usher: Escort ticket holders to their seats, open doors for intermission.

_____ Flower sales: Arrange and sell presentation bouquets at the theatre.

_____ Tickets sales: At the door on the day of recital.

NAME: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____