

Dance Connection Studio Handbook

Welcome to the Dance Connection! We hope this tool can help you navigate the many questions you may have as a member of the Dance Connection community. We are so happy to have you as a part of our studio.

Why Dance Education?

- Firstly, dance is a fun and effective form of exercise that allows children to develop muscle strength, increase flexibility, and improve aerobic capacity. Dance education allows children to develop gross motor coordination and fine motor skills that can be utilized to control the largest and smallest muscle groups of their growing bodies.
- In addition to this, dance training aids in the cognitive development of children. Dancing improves memory, develops spatial awareness, and allows children the opportunity to develop social skills and problem-solving skills. Through dance classes, students also develop musicality, self-expression, and are encouraged to explore their own creativity and personal artistry.
- Your child is not only learning to dance, but they are also receiving physical, mental, social, and emotional benefits. They are developing valuable life skills that will benefit them in their daily lives.

Studio Philosophy

- For 35 years the Dance Connection has prioritized excellence in dance. As a studio, we strive to provide our students with the highest quality dance training possible to help them reach their fullest potential. We employ a teaching staff of highly trained, qualified, and professional instructors who specialize in differing areas of dance to ensure a diverse, thorough, and unique dance education experience. We offer our students exam opportunities to maintain the quality of training within our studio and to ensure that our students' efforts are recognized by esteemed organizations. We also offer competition opportunities to encourage our students to work towards their own personal goals, work alongside their teammates towards common goals, and to share their passion for dance with other dancers across the provinces.
- We believe that excellence is best achieved through dedication and teamwork. Dedication requires us to stay committed to developing our craft as dancers. We believe in our students' abilities, and we encourage our students to prioritize their training and persevere as they strive towards excellence. Teamwork is what keeps us connected as a studio community. We encourage our students to support, uplift, and motivate each-other to achieve excellence.

Studio Information

Address: 1622 96 St
North Battleford, SK S9A 0H6

Studio email: dance.connection@sasktel.net

Phone: 306-481-6224

 Instagram: @danceconnectionnb

 Facebook: @danceconnectionnb

New Parent/Pre-School Parent Information

➤ **What to Expect:**

The Dance Connection is home to over 150 students of all ages. During the weeknights, we typically operate multiple classes simultaneously, making the studio a very busy and exciting place to be. It is important to know the level, time, teacher, and location of your child's class upon arrival. While your child is in their dance class, we encourage you to wait in one of our waiting areas to watch or visit for the duration of your child's class. However, please know that parents are typically not allowed in the classroom.

We find children achieve better learning outcomes and get the most from their dance classes when they are separated from their parents (with the exception of our Parent and Tot classes). Having a parent or guardian nearby can often be a distraction to your child or others. Separation from parents allows children to develop independence, focus on learning tasks, and helps them to develop their social skills. For many children, this newfound independence can be exciting, however, we understand that parent separation can be challenging for some children. Tears sometimes happen, it can be a big step to enter dance class alone for some children. Our teachers and assistants will do their best to comfort your child and motivate them to participate, but it may take time for them to get comfortable. For some children, it may take a few lessons before they feel comfortable, but others may not be ready yet. This is okay, and it is not necessary to push your child to join in if they aren't ready. Be patient with your child and allow them to decide what they are most comfortable with. If it's not their time yet, a refund can be issued, and they can always try again at a more appropriate time.

We have a wonderful staff of teachers and assistant teachers who are committed to making sure your child has a wonderful dance experience. While they are in class with us, we will do our best to make sure all of your child's needs are attended to. However, after their class finishes, our teachers and assistants typically move onto another group of children. Therefore, it is essential that you ensure you arrive on time and come into the studio waiting areas to pick-up your

child. Pre-school age students should never be left waiting on their own inside or outside of the studio after class time. The studio is a very busy place, and although we try our best, it is challenging for our staff to keep track of each and every student at all times. If you are running late for pick-up, please inform your child's teacher so they can inform your child and keep an eye on them until you arrive. We appreciate you doing your part to keep all of our dancers safe and happy.

Parent Expectations

➤ Staying Informed

It is essential that parents keep themselves informed about what's happening at the studio. Throughout the year there will be many important events, activities, and opportunities to keep track of, and it is important for parents to stay informed to ensure their children don't miss out. Staying organized and well informed ensures that your child has a smooth and successful dance season.

Parents are **required** to join our studio page on **the Band App**. The Band App is a free app that can be downloaded from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store and installed on your device. All newsletters, announcements, and important deadlines are posted to the Band App frequently throughout the dance season.

Parents are also encouraged to join our parent-teacher group chats via Facebook Messenger. Many of our teachers utilize these group chats to send practice videos, updates, and recital/competition information as it pertains to your child's class. This is an efficient way for parents and teachers to stay connected and share information regarding your child's specific group.

As previously mentioned, the studio is home to over 150 students and their parents. Our teachers do their best to keep everyone well informed, but please be mindful that this is a very large group of people for our staff to keep track of. We really do appreciate it when parents do their part to stay informed. It truly makes a world of difference when we are all on the same page. **Should you have general questions about recital, exams, showcase, or competitions, always refer to the Band App or Facebook Messenger Chat first before reaching out to a teacher.** Our teachers are busy people who are not always able to respond immediately to parent questions. You can often find the answer to your question more efficiently by checking one of the above resources first. However, if you aren't able to find an answer to your questions through these resources, you are welcome to email a teacher directly for further clarification.

Parents are encouraged to watch classes and visit with other parents in the waiting area while their child dances. This allows parents to see what their children are learning in their classes, get to know other parents, keeps everyone

informed on upcoming events, and leads to long-lasting friendships between dance parents.

➤ **Respect for Others**

All parents are expected to respect their fellow dance parents, other students, and our staff. We think of our studio community as a team, and parents are included in this. We expect parents to be supportive of other students and our faculty. We expect parents to demonstrate respect and kindness in their interactions with teachers, parents, and students. We also expect that parents ensure their children are prepared for class and maintain good attendance.

Our teachers are dedicated to helping your children reach their best potential. You may not agree with every choice your child's teacher makes, but we kindly ask that you respect the expertise, teaching methodology, and judgement of our teachers. If there is a serious grievance, parents should request to arrange a phone-call or in-person meeting with the teacher in question to resolve the issue. In these sensitive cases, texting is not an efficient form of communication to resolve a problem.

Speaking negatively about a teacher, other student, or another parent often leads to unnecessary social conflict within the studio. Remember, parents are the models for their children's behaviour, so please be gracious when speaking about other members of the studio community in the presence of your children. It is important that parents do their part to help us maintain a positive, uplifting, and nurturing atmosphere at the studio.

➤ **Be Your Child's Biggest Supporter**

Every child is unique, and each child has individual strengths and weaknesses. It is important that parents realize that every student will have a different trajectory in their dance training and will develop differently from the next. There is no need to make comparisons between your child and another child. Instead, we encourage you to focus on your own child's progress, development, and accomplishments.

There may be times when your child feels frustrated or finds that they are falling behind. We encourage you to talk to your child about their feelings and help them to devise a plan of action. Difficulties may arise, but it is more valuable to help your child find solutions rather than to simply file complaints with their teacher. Our teachers are fully committed to supporting your children in their dance training, but we need parents to be supportive too in order for our students to be successful.

Student Expectations

➤ **Attendance & Tardiness**

Students are expected to arrive at their classes on time and fully prepared for class. Students are also expected to maintain good attendance. Students who are

chronically absent from a class may be subject to be removed from the class at the discretion of the teacher.

➤ **Being a Team Player**

Students are expected to be team players. We believe each member of our team offers something different to their group, so it is vital that we value the contributions of others and support each-others' successes. Showing up for your teammates also plays a role in this, so maintaining good attendance and attending all rehearsals and performances is paramount.

➤ **Respect for Peers & Parents**

Students are expected to show respect for their fellow students, their parents, and the parents of other students. Please be mindful of how you speak to others both in and out of class. The studio is a safe space, and all students deserve the opportunity to learn and grow in a friendly environment. Conduct yourself respectfully on social media, within student group chats, and within text messages. Once you put something online it's there forever, so think twice before you post. Bullying of any kind will NOT be tolerated and should always be reported to a parent and/or teacher immediately.

➤ **Respect for Teachers**

Students are expected to show respect for all teachers. Your teachers care about your progress as dancers, and they are doing their best to help you succeed. Students are expected to act in a considerate, respectful and polite manner.

➤ **Respect for Studio Property**

Students are expected to respect studio property. We are proud to provide a clean and professional space for our students to utilize, but we expect students to do their part to help keep the studio maintained. The following rules are expected to be followed:

1. Outside shoes will be neatly placed on the shoe-rack upon entry.
2. All dance bags, jackets, and outerwear are to be kept in the dressing rooms. Please do not leave your things on the benches and seats in the sitting areas. Keep your things together so as not to misplace or lose them.
3. No outside shoes are allowed in class. Please make sure you wear clean indoor runners for hip-hop classes.
4. No colored liquids, juices, or pop are allowed in class. Only water is allowed in class.

5. No cellphones are allowed in class. Students may choose to give their phone to their teacher for safekeeping, but otherwise should not utilize their phone during class time.
6. Pick up after yourself. Throw trash and recycling into the appropriate containers. Do not leave trash in the dressing rooms or kitchen. Wash any dishes you borrow from the kitchen.
7. No running, yelling, or rough playing will be tolerated. Students who choose to stay at the studio during their supper breaks are expected to behave respectfully. Failure to comply may result in these privileges being revoked.
8. In general, show respect for our building. Treat furniture in the common spaces with care. Treat all props and equipment utilized in class with care. We are happy to provide numerous resources to our students, but in order to continue doing so, it is important that students treat our facility with care.

Team Building Activities

- Throughout the dance season we like to offer spirit days, movie nights, and other activities to encourage team building and socialization. On Holidays, we often do special dress-up days and activities – this includes things like “Pyjama Day” before Christmas and wearing a costume for dance classes on Halloween. We typically do a couple of movie nights each year, usually one during dance camp and one leading up to Christmas. As we get closer to competition and recital time we also like to “show and share” our dances with other classes to watch each other and be inspired. In past years we have participated in the Territorial Days Parade and in the future, we hope to try even more activities as a studio. Information about upcoming spirit days and team building activities will always be posted in the Band App.

Giveaways and Prizes

- Throughout the dance season we like to provide students with opportunities to win prize baskets filled with goodies and merchandise. Students who demonstrate a strong work ethic, improvement, and good attendance may be nominated by their teachers to win one of these special prizes. The studio also often does giveaways for dancers and parents on social media, so make sure you follow us and don’t miss out on the chance to win! We also love to give out treats on special occasions or when we feel we need to celebrate our students’ hard work at the end of a particularly challenging class. We know that our students work hard when they come to dance class, and we do like to ensure that they feel appreciated.

Class Placement

- **Assessment Process:**

New students with no experience are typically placed based by age. However, older students with no experience may be placed in a class with younger students to accommodate their current beginner level. New students with previous experience will be assessed by our teachers and placed based by which class best suits their current level. All students are continuously assessed throughout the year and considered for promotion at the end of the dance season. All students may be subject to moving from one level to another the following dance season depending on what is most appropriate for the student.

➤ **Respect for Teacher's Choice**

As mentioned, teachers are constantly evaluating student progress and are trusted to determine which level best suits each individual student. This ensures that your child receives appropriate training, gets the most from their classes, and has the best dance experience possible. We as teachers are open to discussing why and how we come to our decisions about class placement with parents, but we ask that you ultimately respect our choices regarding class placement.

Dress Codes

➤ **Why are they Important?**

Dress codes are important because they show respect for the artform of dance. When students come dressed appropriately, their overall performance in class improves. We consider it dressing for success - when you look and feel the part, you eventually become it!

➤ **Ballet:**

- Female students are required to wear tights and a bodysuit for all ballet classes. Full-sole leather ballet shoes in pink are required. **Hair should be neatly secured into a classical bun.**
- Male students are required to wear black shorts and a white T-shirt. Full-sole leather ballet shoes in white or black are acceptable. Hair should also be neat and kept off the face.
- Tutu skirts are acceptable for pre-school students. Wrap skirts and chiffon skirts are acceptable for students in Primary and above.

➤ **Jazz and Lyrical:**

- Students may wear tights and a bodysuit, shorts, leggings, sports bra, tank top, or t-shirt. No baggy or loose-fitting clothing.
- Beige jazz shoes are required for non-competitive female students. Black jazz shoes are required for non-competitive male students.
- Competitive students may wear jazz shoes in either color or turners, see your teacher for details.
- Hair should be neatly secured in a bun, ponytail, or braids.

➤ **Contemporary:**

- Students may wear tights and a bodysuit, pants, shorts, leggings, sports bras, tank tops, or t-shirts.
- Socks, bare feet, or turners are acceptable.
- Hair should be neatly secured in a bun, ponytail, or braids.

➤ **Tap:**

- Students may wear tights and a bodysuit, shorts, leggings, sports bras, tank tops, or t-shirts.
- Students from Tiny Tots – Grade 1 Tap wear beige heeled tap shoes (Mary Jane Style)
- Students from Grade 2 - Grade 3 wear beige high heeled tap shoes.
- Students from Grade 4 – Advanced wear black lace up tap shoes.
- Hair should be neatly secured in a bun, ponytail, or braids.

➤ **Hip-Hop:**

- Students may wear sweatpants, shorts, leggings, tank-tops, sports bras, and t-shirts. Bodysuits and tights are okay as an underneath layer.
- Non-marking indoor shoes are required. No socks, jazz shoes, or bare feet please. See your teacher for details about shoes for recital and competition.
- Hair should be secure, however looser styles such as high-ponytails and braided pigtails are allowed.

➤ **Acro:**

- Students may wear a bodysuit, shorts, leggings, sports bra, tank top, or t-shirt. Tights are not recommended as they can be slippery. No baggy or loose-fitting clothing.
- Bare feet
- Hair should be neatly secured. However, some hairstyles such as high ponytails and classical buns can be problematic for rolls and headstands – so we recommend a low-ponytail, braids, or lower bun for acro classes.

Pre-School & Recreational Program Information:

➤ **What is Offered:**

Our pre-school and recreational program offer weekly classes that run September – May and also sessional classes that run up to 10 weeks at a time. These classes are offered to students of all ages and ability levels. This program focuses on keeping classes fun while learning new skills and exploring student creativity.

➤ **Expectations & Commitments:**

Students are expected to maintain good class attendance. Students enrolled in classes that run September to May are required to be in our year-end recital. These students are also required to attend dress-rehearsal and pictures for recital.

Exam Program Information

➤ What is Offered:

Exams are offered to students with several years of dance experience. Exams are hosted by the studio in the fall and winter, during which students are evaluated by a professional examiner and receive feedback and credit for their accomplishments. Advanced Level Exams can be utilized for high-school credits, resume builders, or as pre-cursors for entry into dance teaching accreditation programs. In addition, exams of all levels teach students valuable lessons in time management, discipline memorization, professionalism, and goal setting.

➤ Ballet Exam Information:

The Dance Connection is proud to offer ballet training that follows The Royal Academy of Dance Syllabus. Founded in 1920 in London, England, The Royal Academy of Dance is one of the world's most influential dance education organizations. RAD exams set standards in classical ballet worldwide.

RAD Ballet Exams and Class Awards may be offered to students at the Dance Connection from Primary – Advanced II. See Miss Cassandra or Miss Gillian for details.

➤ Tap Exam Information:

The Dance Connection is also proud to offer tap training that follows the Canadian Dance Teacher's Association – Saskatchewan Branch Syllabus. CDTA has recently become a fully national organization that is recognized across Canada for advancing dance education and providing quality dance training to Canadian dancers.

CDTA Tap Exams may be offered to students from Primary – Advanced. See Miss Daylan for details.

*Additional Fees regarding dates, uniforms, exam entries, mock exams, and extra lessons for all exams will be sent via email and through the Band App in the fall. Stay tuned for details.

Competition Program Information:

➤ What is Offered?

Competitions are offered to students with several years of dance experience and typically take place from late March to early May. Competitions provide an opportunity for our students to perform onstage and share their talents with others. Students receive feedback for their performances and may receive awards and scholarships for their efforts. Competitions also provide our dancers with the opportunities to connect with other dancers from across the provinces and be inspired. Training for competitions teaches our students the value of teamwork and requires them to be committed and dedicated to their team. Training for

competitions also develops student professionalism, adaptability, time management, and teaches children how to manage stress and pressure in a healthy way.

➤ **Expectations & Commitments:**

Competitive and exam students are required to maintain excellent attendance. Students are also required to know and memorize all class content and choreography. For most students, this means committing to additional practice at home during free evenings and weekends. Failure to attend class, retain exam content, or execute choreography sufficiently may result in the student being pulled from their exam or competition number.

Students who have excellent attendance and who demonstrate proficiency and independence in their weekly classes may also be considered for extra dances. Solos, duets, trios, and small groups are specially selected by our teachers for our dancers to perform at competition. Solos, Duets, and Trios are also performed at our Solo, Duet, and Trio Showcase which is typically held at the Dekker Center in mid-March. Extra letters and more information about extras will be sent out by email in the fall.

Extra letters usually get handed out near the end of September for you to discuss with your child on what you will allow them to take on. These extras will be done outside of class time, so be prepared to have your child come in on weekends or during school hours. If you are hoping to seek outside choreography, a thorough discussion will need to be held with your teachers beforehand.

We typically attend two competitions each year with the entire competitive program. Usually, we attend the BDFA's Elevate Competition in North Battleford and the Performer Competition in Saskatoon. However, additional competitions may be offered to experienced students who wish to attend more. Additional details regarding competition dates and locations will be provided in the fall.

Entry fees for competition groups and extras and choreography fees for extra dances can be paid by cheque or e-transfer.

Recital Information:

- Our Recital Week is typically held the second week of May but may vary year to year depending on events. Our recital shows and dress rehearsal for recital will be held at the Dekker Center. Dress-Rehearsal and pictures typically take place earlier in the week. The Friday and Saturday evening recital shows include mostly our older students from Grade 1B – Advanced. Saturday afternoon matinees mostly include our younger students from Tiny Tots – Grade 1A. Further information regarding recital will be announced in the early spring.

Registration Fee:

- There will be a one-time yearly registration fee. This fee covers administrative costs, insurance fees, studio supplies, classroom equipment, etc.
- At the time of registration students are also required to purchase Dance Connection T-shirts that will be used for the finale of our year end recital. T-Shirts are \$20.00.
- There will be a \$20.00 to cover the cost of the professional videographer for our year end recital. In which you will receive the link to both Matinee and Evening shows to download and keep.

Tuition and Payment Policy:

- We offer the following options for tuition payments:
 - Tuition payments can be made upfront September 1st by cheque or e-transfer.
 - Otherwise, tuition may be paid in 9 equal payments by post-dated cheques only. E-transfers are not available for this option.
- Late payments will receive a late fee of \$15.00 if not received after 10 days of the due date. Late fees will continue to increase in \$15.00 increments for every 10-day period that payment is not received. Bounced Cheques will receive a fee of \$25.00.
- Outstanding fees may result in termination of enrollment.

Costume Fees:

- All costumes for recital and competition routines will be ordered in the early fall. Prior to ordering, we will ask that all parents measure their children and provide us with their sizing information so we can ensure we order them the most accurate fit. Costume fees are as follows:
 - Non-Competitive Groups: \$85.00 + GST & PST
 - Competitive Groups: \$100.00 + GST & PST
- Costume Fees may be paid by e-transfer or cheque. Please note that costume fees are a flat rate because they cover not only the price of the garment, but also the shipping and/or duty fees, exchange rate, and administrative fees associated with the costume.

- All costume fees are due by November 15th, 2022.

Safety Information:

- The studio is equipped with 24hr video surveillance both inside and outside of the building. However, we recommend abiding by the following guidelines to ensure everyone's safety:
 1. Students should always stay inside the studio when waiting to be picked up. Students should also refrain from wandering outside the building after class. Again, in the event you are running late for pick-up, or if there has been a change of plans for your child's pick up, please let their teacher know.
 2. Students are responsible for their own property. Please do not bring valuables into the studio and keep track of your things.
 3. Outside visitors are not allowed in the studio. Although parents, guardians, and siblings are encouraged to enter the studio for pick-up and viewing purposes, we kindly ask that you refrain from bringing friends or extended family into the studio. Instead, we suggest inviting friends and family to support your dancer at competitions and recital.

Medical Information:

- It is important to notify teachers of any relevant medical conditions, allergies, or previous injuries your child may have. Please ensure that you have provided emergency contact information upon registration.

Disciplinary Action & Termination of Enrollment:

- Students who demonstrate problematic behaviour may be subject to the following disciplinary action:
 - Students who demonstrate disruptive or disrespectful behaviour in class will be asked by their teacher to modify their behaviour immediately. If this behaviour continues to occur frequently, a parent will be contacted.
 - After this, if the student continues to demonstrate disruptive or disrespectful behaviour, they may be asked to sit-out from class activities or leave the classroom temporarily if necessary.
 - In some cases, a parent may be called to retrieve their child if the behaviour is irreparable.

- Students who repeatedly violate student expectations including maintaining attendance, respect for teammates, and respect for teachers may be terminated from enrollment.
- Vapes, cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol are not permitted on the premises. Any student caught bringing these items into the studio will be subject to termination of enrollment.
- Theft will not be tolerated. Any student caught stealing studio property, or the personal property of another student will be subject to termination of enrollment.
- Students who demonstrate dangerous, violent, or abusive behaviours towards others will be terminated from enrollment.

Emergency Situations:

- **Weather**
In the event of dangerous weather conditions, classes may be cancelled or rescheduled. Updates will be posted to the Band App and studio social media pages regarding these changes.
- **Fire**
In the event of a fire, there are exits located at the west side of the building (through the main entrance area), east side of the building (through the main entrance area and through the add-on studio), and the north side of the building (through the stairwell adjacent to the large upstairs studio).

**We appreciate you taking the time and effort to read all of this important information.
Thank you!**