



Student and Parent Handbook 2023/2024 Season

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West End Academy of Dance, Inc.

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Regular Season Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday | 3:00pm - 8:00pm Friday | 3:00 - 7:00pm

1. Introduction

Welcome to the West End Academy of Dance (WEAD) family! And for returning families, welcome back! This handbook is your one-stop guide to all things relating to WEAD. While we would love for you to take the time to read this information carefully and refer to it as needed, our friendly office staff are always here to help and will happily answer any questions you may have. Nothing is too big or too small, we promise!

2. Our Mission

“Where there is a desire to dance, there is an opportunity to learn.” - MM

It is of utmost importance that all faculty members share our mission that encompasses everything we do both in and outside of the classroom. This vision is shared and demonstrated by the directors, teachers, and staff at our studio and is the driving force behind every interaction with our students and their families.

Mission:

WEAD is a neighborhood dance studio focused on the growth of individual students. We value personal expression and work to cultivate highly skilled, knowledgeable dancers in a fun and safe environment. Creativity and individuality are encouraged, and we strive to develop and inspire a love for and appreciation of all styles of dance and the performing arts. Our professional team of faculty are invested in our dancers and are committed to creating a positive and happy experience for each and every one of our students.

3. Registration

Before lacing up those dance shoes, all students and/or parents – whether returning or new - must complete their registration in the Parent Portal, so we can ensure we have the most up-to-date contact details for you. This information includes your general waiver..

Please inform the studio of any allergies or medical issues that need special attention either in person or via the Parent Portal.

You may register online (www.westendacademy.com) or in person.

Our annual registration fee is \$35 per family. At least a monthly tuition payment must be paid in full by the first day of class. Failure to do so may result in losing

your place in the class. You can make a payment via the Parent Portal or by visiting the office.

We encourage all of our students and families to try a variety of dance styles, and we are more than happy to accommodate trial classes for students who would like to try something before committing. Please contact the office if you would like to try a new class, and we will fit you in for a trial.

4. Communication

Our primary means of communication is email. You will receive important information via email, so please ensure you have provided us with a current email address that is regularly checked. Please check your spam or junk mail folder to make sure our emails are reaching you.

Communication is a priority of ours, and we promise that no call or email will go unanswered. To keep communication clear and open, please ensure you check your emails and voicemails regularly. Please also note that all questions or concerns must be sent through the office using the contact information on page 1. No parent or student is to contact a teacher directly via phone, email, or social media regarding WEAD-related matters.

Personal meetings with the studio director and a teacher can happily be arranged through the office. You may direct an email to any faculty or staff member through our office email: info@westendacademy.com.

5. Inclement Weather / School Closing Policy

We do not follow Henrico County holiday and weather closings. In the case of inclement weather closings, we will notify you via email and/or text message. Please see our annual calendar at www.westendacademy.com for scheduled holidays and WEAD closings.

For classes beginning between 10:00am and 3:00pm, inclement weather closings will be decided by 8:00am

For classes beginning between 4:00pm and 8:15pm, inclement weather closings will be decided by 12:00pm.

We will display important information, dates, and studio details on our digital bulletin board in the lobby area. We are happy to chat in more detail about

communications you may receive from the studio, so please don't hesitate to give us a call for clarification.

6. Code of Conduct

Below you will find our code of conduct as it pertains to both staff and students. Please ensure you read this carefully so that you have a clear understanding of what we expect from faculty, students, and families. As always, we are open to feedback, so if any of the requirements outlined below are unclear or concerning, please reach out to discuss further. Following a formal meeting, we do reserve the right to dismiss or take disciplinary action on any staff members, students, or parents who breach our studio's code of conduct.

Expectations Before Class Time

Students are not allowed to run, play, or use costumes or props in the studio before class time. Yes, dance is fun, and you can have play time during class, but students are not permitted to do any of the above without the teacher's permission. Students will be allowed in the classroom a maximum of 15 minutes before class begins. This time should be spent quietly stretching, practicing steps, or preparing for class.

Behavior

In the rare case of a parent or student showing disrespect or false statements to any parent, staff member, or student, a meeting will be called immediately and dismissal may be considered at the discretion of the directors. Physical, mental, emotional or cyber bullying by parents, staff or students will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the studio.

Gossiping will not be tolerated while at WEAD, as it undermines our mission statement and is detrimental to the culture we work so hard to uphold. Our culture is what makes WEAD such a unique place to dance, so it takes a sound effort by all involved, staff, parents, and students alike, to ensure we do our best to create a welcoming and supportive environment.

Confidentiality

All client information (including personal, medical and financial information), employee records, financial, and operating data of the studio, and any other information of a private or sensitive nature are considered confidential.

Confidential information should not be read or discussed by any employee unless pertaining to his or her specific job requirements. Examples of inappropriate disclosures include:

- Discussing or revealing confidential information to friends or family members.
- Discussing or revealing confidential information to other employees without a legitimate need to know.
- Disclosing a client's presence in the studio or at a studio event without the consent of the client or their legal guardian to an unauthorized party without a legitimate need to know.

Choreography, costuming, and studio policies remain the intellectual property of WEAD and may not be reproduced or sold by any students, parents, or staff without permission of the owner.

Class Disruptions

No classes or teachers, including during private lessons, are to be disturbed unless it is an emergency. Parents are not to approach teachers or students during class. If messages or food/drink/medication needs are to be passed on to a student, it must be done through an office administrator or Studio Director. All parents must wait in the waiting areas or outside of the studios until classes have been dismissed. Parents are welcome to leave the studio and return for pickup at the end of class time.

Hold Harmless

WEAD does not take responsibility for our students before or after their scheduled classes. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure their child is picked up and dropped off on time. Faculty should notify the office of any continuous tardiness from any student.

Personal Belongings

WEAD takes no responsibility for any stolen or misplaced property on the studio premises. We encourage our families and employees to avoid bringing valuable items into the studio.

Student cell phones are NOT permitted in the dance studios.

Correspondence

Any questions or complaints from a student or parent must go through the office by email, phone, or in person. Parents and students are not permitted to contact teachers via phone, email, or social media. Personal meetings with the studio directors and/or teachers can happily be arranged via the office.

Performances

The directors and staff at WEAD are wholeheartedly committed to ensuring our dancers are not subjected to any inappropriate songs or costuming. We recognize that songs with sexist, explicit, violent, racist, homophobic, or criminal content may influence our dancers and/or audience. We are committed to restricting costumes that project sexuality or contain explicit graphic or textual content. All costumes and performance music will be approved by the Studio Director.

Costumes

Families who do not comply with their fee or costume payment obligations may be charged a late fee, and/or excluded from performances. Costume expenses are the responsibility of the parent, and costumes will not be issued to students with an unpaid balance.

Parking Lot

Cars should not be left unattended in the carpool lane. Please drive safely and slowly in the parking lot. Children are not allowed to run across the parking lot when getting picked up. Either park and come in to pick up your child or use the carpool lane in front of the building. This will ensure a smooth and safe experience for students and drivers alike.

Private Lessons

Private lessons are available at a rate of \$100 per hour. Payment and scheduling of private lessons must be arranged through the office.

Right to Amend Class Schedule

WEAD management reserves the right to change teachers or timetabling when necessary at any time throughout the year. We reserve the right to cancel or change classes due to low enrollment.

7. Dress Code

Pre-Ballet

- Black leotard
- Ballet tights with feet (pink)
- Ballet slippers (pink leather, full sole)
- Hair in a ballet bun (or ponytail) off of face and neck

Boys: Black athletic shorts or pants with a solid white t-shirt and black ballet shoes.

Please do **not** wear:

- Pull-on or wrap skirts (skirts are only allowed if they are attached to leotard)

Ballet I - Ballet III

- Black leotard
- Ballet tights with feet (pink)
- Ballet slippers (pink leather, full sole). Ballet III may wear full sole or split sole.
- Hair in a ballet bun

Boys: Black athletic shorts or pants with a solid white t-shirt and black ballet shoes.

Note: Ballet sweaters are allowed in the winter.

Please do **not** wear:

- Colored leotards
- Leg warmers
- Skirts
- Footless tights
- T-shirts
- Dance/booty shorts or dance pants
- Costumes/Tutus

Ballet IV - Ballet VIII, Basic Ballet, Advanced Basic Ballet, and Classical Variations

- Black leotard
- Convertible ballet tights (pink or matching skin tone)

- Ballet slippers (pink or matching skin tone, split sole)
 - Hair in ballet bun
 - Short ballet skirts are allowed for Pointe only (worn around waist, not hips)
- Boys: Black athletic shorts or pants with a solid white t-shirt and black ballet shoes.

Note: Ballet sweaters are allowed in the winter. Colored leotards are allowed in Ballet VIII

Please do **not** wear:

- Colored leotards, except in Ballet VIII
- Leg warmers
- Skirts, except for pointe
- Footless tights
- T-shirts
- Dance/booty shorts or dance pants
- Costumes/Tutus

**Matching skin tone tights and shoes are required for the recital. Please see below for ordering instructions.*

Contemporary

- Bare feet for Contemporary I. Bare feet or socks for Contemporary II and III (socks must be high cotton content for traction)
- Leotard (any color)
- Skin tone, convertible tights or leggings (any color)
- Hair neat (up and out of face)

Boys should wear athletic shorts or pants with a solid color t-shirt.

Please do **not** wear:

- Sweatpants/sweatshirts
- Shirts that show the belly
- Oversized t-shirts
- Trendy tops
- Booty shorts without tights

- Fuzzy socks
- Foot thongs
- Jewelry (small earrings ok)

*Matching skin tone stirrup tights and shoes/socks or bare feet will be required for recital.

Jazz, Musical Theatre Dance, and Modern

- Leotard (any color/style)
- Skin tone tights, leggings, or jazz pants (any color/style)
- Hair neat (up and out of face)
- Black jazz shoes
- Bare feet for Modern

Boys: Athletic shorts or pants with a solid color t-shirt and black jazz shoes.

Note: Character shoes may be worn sometimes in Musical Theatre Dance. If a dancer does not have character shoes, jazz shoes are fine!

Please do **not** wear:

- Sweatpants/sweatshirts
- Shirts that show the belly
- Oversized t-shirts
- Trendy tops
- Booty shorts without tights
- Socks
- Foot thongs
- Jewelry (small earrings ok)

*Matching skin tone tights will be required for recital.

Hip Hop

- Comfortable exercise clothing such as gym or yoga clothes, sweatpants, t-shirts (any color/style)
- Clean tennis shoes that are only worn in the dance studio, no street shoes.
- Hair neat (up and out of face)

Please do **not** wear:

- Shirts that show the belly
- Short shorts
- Dirty tennis shoes
- Oversized hoodies or sweatshirts
- Oversized jewelry

Tap

Please wear tap shoes with a full wooden bottom, no split sole shoes. Any style Oxford tap shoe is acceptable. No patent leather.

Tap I Dress Code (ages 7-9):

- For girls, a leotard with tights or leggings (any color)
- For boys, a solid colored t-shirt with black, exercise shorts or pants.
- Please avoid baggy clothing and anything with pockets

Please do **not** wear:

- Baggy pants or sweatpants

Recommended Tap Shoes for Tap II and Tap III (ages 10 and up):

- [Bloch Jazz Tap Shoe](#)
Style: SO301L
Color: Black
- [Capezio Cadence](#)
Style: CG19
Color: Black

Skin Tone Shoes and Tights

After much research, we have determined the best shoe and tight options for our studio. Reminder, Ballet IV and up dancers **must** purchase skin tone shoes and tights for the recital. Dancers have the option of wearing pink or skin tone tights and shoes to class. Due to limited availability for children's sizes, pre-ballet through Ballet III will continue to wear pink tights and shoes for performances.

Skin Tone Tights:

- [Capezio Ultra Soft](#)
- Visit Ellman's Dancewear to find your perfect shade match.

Skin Tone Flat Ballet Slipper Options:

- [Capezio Hanami Canvas Slipper](#) OR
- [SoDanca Canvas Slipper](#)

- Visit Ellman's Dancewear for shoe fitting and to find your perfect shade match

Pointe Shoes:

- While manufacturers are producing skin tone pointe shoes, they are custom ordered only and take a minimum of 6 weeks to ship. Thankfully the Pointe People have come out with pointe shoe paint in a variety of [shades](#). Visit Ellman's Dance Boutique or their [website](#) to order. Remember, skin tone pointe shoes are not required for class, but they are required for the recital.

8. Safety

WEAD is very serious about upholding safety policies and Child Protection Laws within the studio, at public performances, and in the digital space.

It is the responsibility of our faculty not to allow students to attempt dangerous tricks that are beyond their capabilities. Please see our injury prevention packet for further details.

Safe dance practice must always be observed in classes of all ages. This includes a sufficient warm-up and stretch session.

We discourage our faculty and staff from privately transporting students to and from classes, rehearsals, or performances at any time except in an emergency. If a faculty member needs to transport students for any reason, it must be with the permission of the Studio Director and with written consent from parents/guardians.

If a student is sick or injured during class, the teacher is required to stop class and tend to the affected student. The Studio Director and the child's emergency contact should be notified immediately. If necessary, an ambulance may be called. All injuries will need to be recorded at the time of injury using the attached WEAD Accident/Injury Report. Two copies of the completed report should be made at the time of the incident. One to be given to the parent/guardian and another to be kept on file at WEAD.

9. Privacy

When you purchase or hire a product or service with WEAD, the information we may collect from you includes your name, address, telephone numbers, email addresses, and medical information. It may also include details of the products

and services we provide to you as well as the status of your enrollment. We only collect information directly from our students or their parent/guardian primarily for the purpose of providing services and products and managing invoicing and debt collection.

We will never sell or share any of your information to a third party unless required by government authorities or in the event of debt recovery. Any information passed on will be done so with appropriate privacy and confidentiality protection.

Information is stored securely in paper or electronic form and is accessible only by authorized personnel.

If you would like to know what information we hold about you or wish to update the information, please email your request to info@westendacademy.com.

10. Fee Structure

Please see the WEAD tuition and payment chart available on our website (www.westendacademy.com). *Monthly and quarterly payment plans will incur a one-time \$40 administrative fee due with the first tuition payment.

There will be no refunds for dropped classes, unless there is a medical reason or injury, in which case a doctor's note must be provided.

Add / Drop Class Policy

We will assume you wish to continue for the second semester unless you tell us in writing before December 1, 2023.

Drop notices should be emailed to info@westendacademy.com. WEAD does not accept drop notifications via voicemail.

Without written notification, you will be responsible for second semester tuition charges as well as costume balances for any classes that are dropped.

We also assume your child will participate in our end of the year performance, unless you tell us in writing before December 1, 2023.

11. Attendance

Your child's attendance in class is very important to their peers and to our teaching staff. As a parent/guardian, please commit to ensuring your child arrives to class on time each week. Not only do absences impact the final performance, it also impacts the social and confidence-building principals we work hard to foster in each age group.

If you know ahead of time that your child will be absent due to holidays/vacations, prior commitments, or school trips, please let us know ahead of time. If your child is too sick to attend class, we ask that you inform the office as soon as possible. If your child is not well and not contagious (i.e. allergies, dental work, or aches and pains) then we ask that they come to their scheduled classes to watch and learn.

It is up to the student/parent to make up their missed classes. We give you the entire school year to make up any missed classes. Fall/spring classes may not be made up over the summer. Please ask your instructor or an office administrator for guidance in scheduling make-up classes.

More than two un-notified consecutive absences or more than four absences per semester of any sort, will result in an email and a phone call home. We reserve the right to fill your student's spot in the class with the next student on our waitlist or prohibit the student from participating in the recital.

You will receive an automated absence email anytime your dancer misses class, even if you notified us of the reason.

12. Social Media Policy

WEAD's Social Media Policy refers to all social networking sites, video/photo sharing sites, blogs, micro-blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, and instant messaging (for example, Facebook). Please see below for our regulations regarding Social Media and feel free to contact our office staff if you have any questions.

- Sharing a WEAD post is highly encouraged and the easiest way to promote our studio.
- Any comments or posts perceived to be obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, or hateful towards WEAD staff, students, or families may subject the owner to or legal action.

- Any content revealing or referring to sensitive studio information is not allowed to be shared online.
 - We discourage parents, students and faculty from becoming 'friends' or 'followers' on social media, unless there is an existing relationship. We consider all studio members to be family and as such feel the obligation to respect and monitor personal boundaries.
 - Personally identifiable information of any featured minors - including names, ages or location - must be removed when posting on social media.
- We are thrilled to be a part of your family's dance journey this year and are looking forward to growing together to mold this generation of skilled, confident, genuine, and unique performers.*