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Parent Handbook – 2024-2025

About To The Pointe Dance Academy

To The Pointe Dance Academy is committed to providing a superior dance program with a focus on the fundamentals of dance technique and fresh, fun choreography for ages 2-adult. We will enhance each dancer's self-confidence by offering several dance opportunities throughout the year including a Christmas show, a spring recital, competitions, and other community appearances. Our professionally trained instructors focus on the fundamentals of dance and technique, inspiring students to make their experience rewarding and memorable! We offer a well-rounded program for all levels of dance with classes in Acro Dance, Ballet, Competition, Creative Movement, Hip Hop, Jazz, Lyrical, Musical Theater, Parent & Child, Pointe, Production, Tap, and Tumbling. We believe that dance is a gift in that it promotes and instills Coordination, Dedication, Concentration, Self-Esteem, Respect, Leadership, Pride and Physical Endurance.

About The Owner

To The Pointe Dance Academy is humbly owned by Angela Charnstrom.

Angela Charnstrom, Owner/Dance Instructor/Business Manager

Angela began her dance instruction in Farmington, Minnesota, at three years of age. Early dance focus included classes in tap, ballet and jazz. Throughout high school she competed in high kick and jazz for the Farmington High School dance team. At Gustavus, courses of study included ballet, jazz, and modern dance classes, choreography, and dance history. Angela taught dance at a local dance company, focusing on ballet and tap for younger children, as well as high kick and jazz classes with the older kids. She has been a MSHSL judge with DX Judges Association. Angela has several years of business experience in Account Management, Project/Implementation Management, and client training. She instructs dance classes, choreographs and manages the business of To The Pointe Dance Academy.

Our Dance Instructors

To The Pointe Dance Academy employs qualified instructors that focus on continuing education in order to offer a superior dance program. Visit our website www.ttpda.com and select the 'ABOUT' tab and click 'Our Team' from the dropdown menu for further details on our instructor backgrounds and experiences.

To The Pointe Dance Academy Events

We will enhance each dancer's self-confidence by offering several dance opportunities throughout the year including a Christmas show, a spring recital, competitions, and other community appearances (parades, Czech Out New Prague, Dozinky, Parade of Lights, etc.). Please visit our website for event dates, information and sign up.

Christmas Show/Recital

In December, we will have a Christmas show/recital. Preparation for the Christmas show takes much commitment and work from the Instructor, students, and parents. We will begin working on choreography for the Christmas show right away at the beginning of the dance season. All 9-month recreational and 12-week fall classes will participate in the show. We will have a mandatory dress rehearsal on Friday, December 6 and the show will be held on Sunday, December 8. The Christmas show will take place at the Tri-City United Performing Arts Center in Montgomery.

Spring Show/Recital

At the end of the dance year, we will have a spring show/recital. Preparation for the spring show takes much commitment and work from the Instructor, students, and parents. The spring show (and rehearsal) will be held in May. Ticket sales will help cover the cost of this show. We will have a mandatory dress rehearsal prior to the show where there will be an opportunity to practice on stage. We will use this time to set spacing, lighting and sound.

Class Placement

Class placement will be determined by grade level and prior dance experience. Students will be reviewed each year by the teaching staff and assigned to an appropriate class based on current abilities, attitude and commitment.

Costumes

The cost for each costume is approximately \$90 (recreational classes) and \$135 (competition classes - if embellishments are required, additional fee may apply). If the costume requires tights, one pair will be included with the costume. The costume fee does not include any shoe requirements.



Costume payments will be due October 1. We do have personal payment plans available. Please contact us at 952-758-5552 if interested. Costume fees are nonrefundable. Each dancer must have the required shoes, tights, and accessories for competitions and the recital.

Although we make every effort to make costume accessories and prop fees minimal, occasionally a group requires additional pieces (wigs, props, accessories, rhinestones, etc.) outside of the initial costume budget. We will notify parents immediately of extra charges and will do everything possible to keep costs low.

In the fall, all dancers will need to be measured for dance costumes. Parents will be required to submit their child's measurements and costume size in September. Sizing charts will be provided. If an exchange of a costume is required, a \$25 return shipping and restocking fee will be charged. Exceptions would include costume defects and mistakes made by the costume company.

Competition Information

Our competition program is student-centered and dancers are encouraged and inspired to do their best. Competition classes are more challenging than recreational dance classes and will focus heavily on dance technique, flexibility, jumps, turns, and other performance aspects.

To The Pointe Dance Academy will attend 2-3 competitions and Nationals (if applicable) each year. Competition dates will be announced at the beginning of the dance season. Additional fees for competition participants are required and are spread evenly for regionals in January, February, and March. Nationals fees will be charged in May. Accounts with unpaid competition fees will incur a \$30 late fee per competition routine. These fees are non-refundable. A mandatory dress rehearsal will take place prior to the first competition. Any additional extra practices scheduled in preparation for competition are also mandatory. Keep in mind that we will not receive the official competition schedule of events/routines until approximately 1 week prior to the competition. Students are expected to attend competitions/award ceremonies and must not schedule any other commitments for competition weekend(s); failure to abide by this requirement will result in forfeiture of future team placement. Competitive teams who place in the top three overall will attend nationals. Attendance is required; failure to participate will forfeit placement in the upcoming season. Competition groups may also perform at other community events throughout the year.

In the summer months, current competitive dancers will be reviewed/placed for the upcoming season by the teaching staff and assigned to an appropriate team based on current abilities, attitude and commitment. Dancers interested in trying out for competition will have ample time to learn routines and/or technique prior to a group tryout. Students who make the competition team will be required to take summer classes and must attend a minimum number of hours as determined by the Director. Frequent absences hinder formations and choreography. Unexcused absences for competition classes may affect future class placement. Students can "make-up" a class if needed, however if a student does not know the routine well enough to perform then they will not be able to compete with their group. Private lessons (and associated fees) might be required to continue in competition.

Attendance

Attendance to dance class is very important because dance is a cumulative learning experience with each class building on the previous one. If your child will not be attending class, please inform the instructor by completing the Online Absence Form via the TTPDA website or emailing dance@ttpda.com. If a child misses more than two weeks in a row, a phone call may be placed to the parent or guardian. The teacher spends a substantial amount of time preparing for each class, and when a student misses, it takes time away from the whole class to teach the child what was missed. If a dancer misses more than four times in the year, without a serious illness/injury or death in the family, the dancer may not be able to participate in competition and/or recital. Our attendance policy is strictly enforced. In addition to good attendance at dance class, practicing at home is essential. "If you want to dance seriously, *do*. You must think about it day and night, dream about it,--desire it. Practice is a means of inviting the perfection desired." *Martha Graham*

Being on time is very important because not only does each class build on the previous one, but in class, each exercise builds on the one before. If a dancer misses more than the first fifteen minutes of class, she/he would not be properly warmed up. Injuries are less likely with properly warmed up muscles. Late arriving dancers may be asked to warm up on their own before joining the rest of their class.

Please encourage children to use the restroom prior to class. Bathroom breaks are disruptive to the other dancers. Dancers should bring their own water and please, no gum or candy.

Parent Watch Week

Parents will have the opportunity to come into their child's class for 15 minutes at the beginning or end of class, twice each year. During this time, instructors will go over important dance information and be available for questions. You might even get a "sneak peek" of dance routines. A schedule of "Parent Watch Week" will be available at the beginning of the dance year and will be posted on the Dates section of our website.

Spring Dance Pictures

Dance pictures will be held in the Spring. We will offer individual, buddy and group picture opportunities and reasonable packages for purchase. Purchase is not required. However, we ask that all dancers attend as we would like complete group photos for our studio.

Dance Attire

It is important in every class for both the instructor and student to see the student's body and legs. Therefore, baggy clothing is not an option for a dance class. Leotards and tights are appropriate for any class. Fitted dance attire such as dance pants/leggings, dance shorts, fitted tank tops, and



ballet skirts are all acceptable. Black or pink dance attire is preferred. Denim and other fabrics that restrict movement should **not** be worn. We require dance clothing to be worn in every class. School clothes are not acceptable. Please label all dance shoes, bags, costumes, etc. as many dance items look alike. Dancers must always keep their hair pulled back for class. Please no jewelry or long fingernails.

Appropriate dance shoes must be worn in every dance class. To The Pointe Dance Academy offers shoe sales onsite and are available for fittings as needed. Please contact us for details.

After the first month of class, students who do not wear dance shoes for class will be asked to sit and watch until they have proper shoes. No street shoes are to be worn on the dance floor. Students, parents and siblings need to take off their street shoes in the lobby, before entering the studio.

Code of Conduct for Dancers

- Have fun!
- Respect your team members, all other dancers, and all instructors
- Keep talking to a minimum
- Abide by the dress code
- No gossip or negative comments; we seek an uplifting, positive environment
- Give 110% in class
- Practice often at home
- Work together as a team, encourage and support one another
- Never make negative comments about any other studio or dancer from another studio

Consequences

1. Have one conversation with the Studio Director.
2. Studio dismissal.

Lack of following protocols and behavioral guidelines may result in disciplinary action. No refunds for the season will be given.

Parent Expectations

Parents must trust TTPDA staff to do what is best for your child and for TTPDA. Many decisions are made behind the scenes to create the best possible teams, performances, opportunities, and TTPDA environment as a whole. Please respect the decisions we have made or contact us directly if you have questions/concerns. Respect all dancers and staff. No gossip or negative comments; we seek an uplifting, positive environment. Never make negative comments about any other studio or dancer from another studio.

Consequences

1. Have one conversation with the Studio Director.
2. Potential removal of presence in viewing room.
3. Studio dismissal.

Lack of following protocols and behavioral guidelines may result in disciplinary action. No refunds for the season will be given.

Holidays

When New Prague Area School District is closed for MEA, Thanksgiving, Winter break, and Spring Break, To The Pointe Dance Academy will not have classes. See Important Dates on our website for details.

Weather Closings

If New Prague Area School District is closed/released early due to dangerous conditions such as cold/snow, To The Pointe Dance Academy will not have classes. If the District declares it unsafe to go to school, we do not want to risk the safety of our dancers/instructors either. If more than two weeks of classes are missed in one month, a make-up session will be offered.

Tuition/Fees

An emailed invoice will be sent at the end of the month for the approaching month's tuition. Tuition is due on the 1st of each month beginning September 1. A \$30 late fee is applied to all accounts with balance. Payments are applied to the oldest outstanding balance at the time payment is received. Students are automatically enrolled through May 31. Notice of a drop must be in writing, 30-days prior to the first of the month in which the drop occurs. If an account goes unpaid beyond 1 month, the dancer will not be allowed to take any more classes until the bill is paid in full. If you have questions about your invoice, please email us at dance@ttpda.com.

All are required to be on an Automatic Payment Plan via Visa or Mastercard which will be charged on the 1st of each month. Some exceptions apply.

- Payment plans available. If interested in a personal payment plan, please contact us at 952-758-5552. 8% interest fees apply on all payment plan arrangements.
- Costumes are \$90 each (Recreational Dance Class Costumes) and \$135 each (Competition Dance Class Costumes). Costume fees are due in full by October 1, 2023.



- Competition fees/competition group routine; production/solos/duets/trio (competition fees may vary) are spread evenly for regionals in January, February, and March. Nationals fees will be charged in May.

Registration/Registration Fee

A registration fee of \$35 for 1st dancer and \$30 for each additional member of the same family (each dancer receives a To The Pointe Dance Academy tank top/t-shirt FREE with registration) and is required with registration form. The registration fee is non-refundable.

Return Check Policy

A charge of \$30.00 per returned check will be assessed. The extra charge plus the amount of the check should be paid as soon as possible. After two returned checks, only cash payment will be accepted.

Private Appointments/Parent Meetings

During the year, if a parent/dancer would like to meet with an instructor, please make an appointment by calling 952-758-5552. Please do not expect a meeting prior to or immediately after a scheduled class. We value parents' opinions, ideas, questions and concerns, but instructors have very busy, tight schedules. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the business office and we promise a return call within 1-2 business days.

Weekly Newsletter

At the beginning of each week, To The Pointe Dance Academy will distribute a newsletter via email. This will be the easiest way to communicate important information to our students' families about upcoming events, schedule changes, pressing deadlines, and general news about our studio. Please make sure that you read each newsletter for important information.

Social Media

Please follow us on Facebook and Instagram for updates, event reminders, fun pictures and announcements.

Sportsmanship

To The Pointe Dance Academy strives to promote friendship, good sportsmanship, hard work, and sharing the love of dance with all. We want all parents and dancers to show respect at TTPDA towards dancers, instructors, other families, as well as at competitions and other community events while taking pride in dancing at To The Pointe Dance Academy.

Thank you for being a part of the To The Pointe Dance Academy FAMILY!