



Parent/Student Handbook for the 2021-2022 School Year

Thank you for choosing to be a part of our dance family here at Synergy Dance Academy!

We understand that you have many choices when it comes to selecting a dance studio, but we are so happy you've chosen to learn and grow with us! The following guidelines have been set in place so we can manage a safe, productive, and positive studio atmosphere for every student, family, and instructor. Please read over this packet carefully and review them with your dancers. Thank you in advance for your compliance and cooperation.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide our students and families with a positive atmosphere where dancers of all ages and skill levels can grow into not only wonderfully educated dancers, but empowered and informed young adults that leave a positive impact on the community. We aim to provide quality dance instruction and discipline lead by our highly qualified dance faculty across all genres of dance. We believe dance classes don't just teach young people about dance, they offer a safe and nurturing community of friends and role models, with whom they will learn life lessons and create meaningful bonds they will carry with them throughout life.

Student Expectations

The list below outlines what Synergy Dance Academy believes to be excellent student behavior. Dancers of all ages will be expected to follow these guidelines and respect the faculty and staff enforcing them. The faculty and staff at SDA are here to keep you safe and provide the most positive and productive learning environment possible. Please listen to their instructions and follow the rules and guidelines enforced by them in the studio.

- **Arrive on time for class** - Dancers must participate in the warm up exercises at the start of class. Our faculty will ask dancers who arrive after warm-ups to sit out of the rest of class if they believe it will cause them harm or injury otherwise.
- **Addressing faculty & staff** - Please be sure to use Ms., Mr., etc when addressing faculty and staff.
- **Follow the SDA dress code** - Our faculty will ask dancers to sit out of class if they aren't following the SDA Dress Code as they will not be able to give meaningful feedback or adjust your bodies properly. Please review the Dress Code section below so you can be best prepared for each class.
- **Make every effort to have good attendance** - Attendance is an important part of any educational endeavor and dance is no different. Dancers must have a consistent attendance rate in order to perform in our annual spring recital. Make-up classes are available, and the front desk will help find appropriate classes for you to use as make-ups. Please call or email the studio if you will not be in class for any reason. Dancers who are excessively absent/tardy may be removed from the class without a refund.
- **Avoid leaving the classroom** - Be sure to use the restroom and properly prepare before your class begins. We understand emergencies do happen, so do your best to prepare for class and only leave the room if it is *absolutely necessary*.
- **Be kind** - In order to offer a positive learning environment for *every* student, please do not make negative comments or use hurtful words towards other students, staff, or faculty inside or outside of the studio. *Negative comments and/or mean behavior will not be tolerated in any capacity*. If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all.
- **Only water in the studios** - To ensure the health and safety of our students, and to maintain the cleanliness of our facility, water is the only beverage allowed in the studios. Dancers are encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle into the classroom at the start of class.
- **Thank your teachers and assistants at the end of class** - It is proper dance etiquette to thank your teachers and/or assistant teachers at the end of every class by clapping and saying "thank you".
- **Clean your area before you leave** - Before heading out the door, please clean up your area and make sure you have collected all your personal belongings and trash.
- **Wait for your ride inside** - To insure the safety of our students, we ask that they wait for their rides inside the studio doors. We are not responsible for dancers who leave the premises on their own.

For Parents

- **Communication** - All important studio information is sent through email. Please make sure you have a valid email address on file with us so you can be up to date on the latest studio news. You can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram.
- **Studio Closure Announcements** - If the studio must close due to inclement weather, there will be an email sent out as well as posts on our social media pages (Facebook and Instagram). We will also send a message in our BAND app, so please check these platforms before driving to class. If classes must be canceled for any other reason you will be notified via email.
- **Observation Windows** - Parents are welcome to take advantage of our observation windows located in each of our studios, but will not be allowed in the classroom while class is in session. Please refrain from distracting the dancers in class by tapping on the windows, taking videos, photos, etc.
- **Attendance/Absences** - Attendance is an integral part of a dance education, and excessive tardiness/absence may result in removal from the class without refund. Please call or email the front desk when your dancer will be missing class. Make-up classes are available and our front desk staff can help find an appropriate make-up option. Dancers must have consistent attendance in order to participate in our spring recital. There are no refunds for missed classes.
- **Make-up Classes** - If your dancer would like to do a make-up class, they should notify the front desk in advance. Staff will help your dancer fill out a make-up form to hand to the teacher upon entering the classroom. The teacher will sign the form at the completion of class and return the slip to the front desk. Attendance records will be updated accordingly.
- **Student Pickup** - In the interest of our student's safety, all dancers should wait in the building for their ride. We are not responsible for dancers who leave the premises on their own.
- **Student Behavior** - Any students acting in opposition to our guidelines, policies, or dress code will be dismissed from class. Continued violations may result in expulsion from the school without refund.

Dress Code

All Synergy Dance Academy Students must comply with the dress code displayed below. Specific dress code requirements are listed below by class genre. For your convenience, Synergy Dance Academy sells leotards, tights, and dance shoes at the front desk and can assist with fittings if needed. Students not properly dressed will be excused from class.

General Notes (All genres):

- No hanging jewelry (hoop earrings, necklaces, bracelets, etc), smart watches or gum.
- No street shoes, or rosin are allowed in the dance studios
- No booty shorts or crop tops will be allowed in any class. Booty shorts can be worn only with tights underneath.

Ballet and Tiny Tots

- Hair: Pulled back and secured in a bun. Please be sure hair is secured to avoid distractions during class.
- Uniform: Black leotard, pink ballet tights (tights are designed to be worn without underwear. Students should not have underwear showing from under their leotard).
- Shoes: Pink split sole ballet shoes in leather or canvas (*not* house slippers found in some retail stores)

Jazz, Musical Theater, Tap

- Hair: Secured in a ponytail or a bun.
- Uniform: black leotard paired with black leggings, fitted jazz pants, or black tights.
- Shoes: Black jazz or tap shoes

Modern, Contemporary

- Hair: Secured in a ponytail or a bun
- Uniform: black leotard paired with black leggings or black tights.
- Shoes: bare feet, no shoes

Hip Hop

- Hair: Pulled back and out of your face
- Uniform: Comfortable clothing. Girls must have a leotard or fitted camisole under their outfits. Jeans, midriffs, and booty shorts (without tights underneath) will not be allowed.
- Shoes: Sneakers (high top or regular) that will be dedicated to class and will not be worn outside.

Boys

- For all genres: White t-shirt paired with fitted black tights, pants, or shorts. The appropriate shoe for each dance genre should be worn in black.

Registration and Tuition Policies

- In order to gain maximum growth and technical development, dancers are encouraged to enroll beginning in fall and progressing through our spring recital.
- Tuition can be paid in full at the time of registration OR parents may choose installment billing. Regardless of registration date, tuition for the dance year must be paid in fully May 1st. Please note, accounts with excessive past dues will not be eligible for privileges moving forward.
- For anyone selecting our installment plan, the default payment method will be automatic billing to your credit/debit card on file on the 1st of each month. Anyone wishing to pay by cash or by check my do so before the deadline on the 1st.
- Families are responsible for ensuring their credit/debit card information is up to date. Declined payments and late payments are subject to a \$20 fee if payment is not received one week after the due date. If tuition becomes more than one month overdue, the student may not attend class until payment is received.
- Late enrollment will be considered provided there is room in the class and the instructor believes the new student can transition into the curriculum already in progress successfully. Prior to enrollment, the instructor may request a trail class in order to make this determination.
- Our school has an annual recital in June. We encourage every dancer to participate in this performance opportunity to show off everything they've learned. Although costumes are provided for this event, there are additional expenses which could include tickets, optional DVD's, photos, etc. If your student is not participating in the recital, you must advise the studio in writing by December 1st.
- College and adult students attending on a drop-in basis, must check in at the front desk and make their payment before entering the studio for class.

Transfer & Withdrawal Policies

- Class transfers can occur for two reasons:
 - The instructor is requesting a level adjustment
 - The dancer is interested in studying a different style of dance and/or would like to continue that style of dance at a different day/time.
- If the instructor requests a level change, the studio office will be notified and the transfer will be coordinated through them. Students may not start attending the new class until they receive written confirmation from the office that their transfer is complete. Adjusted schedules will begin on the first of the following month, along with any adjusted tuition rates.
- Transfers requested by students will be considered based on instructor approval and/or room in the new class. Students wishing to transfer classes can fill out a Transfer Request Form, available at the front desk. Students may not start attending the new class until they have received written confirmation from the front desk that their transfer is complete. Adjusted schedules will begin on the first of the following month, along with any adjusted tuition rates.
- Students wishing to withdraw from a class all together must complete a Withdrawal Request Form, available at the front desk. Please note, tuition is for the entire dance year regardless of attendance, and there will be no refunds for missed classes prior to the Withdrawal Request Form. Tuition for that class will discontinue on the first of the next month.

Get Involved

-Teaching Assistant Program

Synergy Dance Academy has a volunteer teaching assistant program designed to provide aspiring teachers or those looking for community service opportunities a valuable hands on experience assisting in the classroom. This program also gives younger students an opportunity to be encouraged and inspired by older, or experienced dancers. TA's must be at least 12 years of age and a current Synergy Dance Academy student. They must also be able to commit to an assigned class for the full dance year, including support at dress rehearsal and recital. For more information, and to request an application please contact the front desk at synergydanceinfo@gmail.com

-Synergy Dance Ensemble

Synergy Dance Ensemble (SDE), housed at Synergy Dance Academy provides additional performance opportunities to dancers ages 5-18. The group learns choreography from SDA staff and performs in various settings as well as local venues and events throughout the year. Ensemble members also volunteer in outreach programs, community functions, and participate in in team building/bonding events. Dancers interested in learning more and/or auditioning can contact our front desk via email at info@synergydanceil.com

-The Nutcracker

Presented by our 501c3 non-for-profit company M3 Dance, The Nutcracker offers all students from Synergy Dance Academy and surrounding schools an opportunity to perform this magical show. Any dancer ages 6-Adult are allowed to audition and participate in our production at the beautiful Hemmens Theater in Elgin. Shows are traditionally the first weekend in December.

Pre-Professional Program

Synergy Dance Academy offers a pre-professional program for serious dancers ages 6-18. Dancers train in programs designed by our school's director, to strengthen their training across the disciplines. At the Intermediate and Advanced levels, we offer the option to narrow each dancer's focus into either the contemporary or ballet genre. Dancers train 2-5 times per week and have the opportunity to audition for our Competitive Programs. All dancers in our competitive programs must be enrolled in one of our pre-professional programs. Dancers train 40 weeks throughout the year and will perform in Synergy Dance Academy's annual recital in June.

Competitive Programs

-M3 Dance

M3 Dance is the non-for-profit (501c3) dance company housed at Synergy Dance Academy providing additional performance opportunities to dancers ages 6-18. The company performs in various concert-level settings as well as local venues and events throughout the year. Company members also volunteer in outreach programs, community functions, and participate in team building/bonding events. M3 dancers also get the opportunity to work with guest choreographers and Synergy Dance Academy staff to set original pieces to be performed in the annual M3/CBC spring concert. Dancers interested in learning more and/or auditioning can contact our Director via email at info@m3dance.com and visit our website at m3dance.com

-Chicago Ballet Conservatory

Founded in 2016, Chicago Ballet Conservatory (CBC) is an upper level, in house classical ballet training and performing program of Synergy Dance Academy for ages 6-18. CBC provides a structured, multi-level pre-professional curriculum designed to maximize the potential of each dancer. We are uniquely committed to the beautiful art form of ballet, and are passionate about guiding and shaping the technical and mental approach to the discipline. CBC students are held to a higher level of discipline and dedication which must be maintained in order to excel in the program. Dancers also have the opportunity to participate in the annual CBC/M3 spring concert. Dancers interested in learning more about CBC can contact our Director via email at cbc@m3dance.com and visit our website at chicagoballetconservatory.com

COVID-19 Updates

For the latest COVID-19 protocols, please see our website under the "policies" tab.

Synergy Dance Academy will follow the CDC guidelines and will take every precaution in protecting its dancers and faculty across the age groups. If for any reason classes need to transition to the Zoom platform for safety reasons, immediate credits and reimbursements may not be made. Families will need to complete the steps for a withdraw from their classes and any changes will go into effect the first of the following month. While much can be uncertain when it comes to this virus, what we at Synergy can be certain about, is that we will do everything in our power to offer quality dance instruction and creative solutions all while keeping our students, staff, and families safe.

For questions please call the front desk at 630-893-1444 or email info@synergydanceil.com

Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday - 4:00-9:00pm

Saturday - 10:00am-1:00pm

Friday and Sunday - Closed

Or by appointment