



DREAM. BELIEVE. ACHIEVE.

Welcome to Stage Door Dance Arts, a state-of-the-art dance studio in Conway, AR, owned and operated by Michelle and Kevin Knell. All students and responsible parties should read this handbook thoroughly. We look forward to many years of “raising the barre” in dance education.

Mission Statement:

Stage Door Dance Arts, LLC is a dance-centric performing arts facility dedicated to offering the highest standards of classroom technique, excellence in the creative process, and quality performances. We seek to instill a life-long passion for the arts in every student we encounter. We operate each day according to our motto: "Dream. Believe. Achieve."

For more information, please call 501-336-7306 or check us out online at www.stagedoordancearts.com. You can also find us on Facebook, Instagram.

Student and Parent Handbook

Our Philosophy

The philosophy of Stage Door is simple and clear: ***arts education empowers and defines self-esteem, discipline, creativity, self-confidence, respect, and a sense of community.*** We desire to make dance a **joyful** experience for all involved! SDDA strongly believes in making dance accessible to everyone and strives to provide scholarships and tuition assistance through contributed income and student internships, or through our 501C3 Non-Profit, Stage Door Collective. Our fundamental mission is to maximize the physical, social, emotional, and academic benefits of dance in the students we educate, in a **loving, encouraging**, yet professional environment.

Studio Description

Stage Door Dance Arts is a privately held recreational, pre-professional, and competitive dance education center for students ages 2 through adult.

Owned and operated by Michelle Knell, SDDA has the benefit of being managed by a former professional ballerina and actress with 11 years of performance history, more than 30 years of teaching experience, and over 20 years of studio management experience. In addition, Michelle has authored a progressive dance education curriculum for use across all levels of dance. It has been used in studios across the United States for the past 20 years and will also be in use at Stage Door Dance Arts.

SDDA is excited to have co-founder, Haley Ashford, on staff. Haley has over 25 years of dance experience. While she is highly skilled in all disciplines of dance, Haley is a member of Untapped, Arkansas' only professional tap company. She has emerged as the "go to" dance educator of Tap, Modern, Musical Theater, and Hip-Hop in the Faulkner County area.

The final member of the SDDA leadership team is Kevin Knell. Kevin has a Bachelor of Science degree in Business and lends his knowledge of technology, finance, and business management to Stage Door Dance Arts as the CFO.

Together, along with our teaching and support staff, we provide a wonderful environment for children ages 2 and up to receive high-quality instruction in the disciplines of ballet, tap, jazz, pointe, modern, contemporary/lyrical, musical theater, hip-hop, acro, and other supplemental technique classes.

GENERAL STUDIO POLICIES:

1. **Please sit quietly while waiting for students in classes.** Excessive noise in the waiting area is a distraction to the teachers and ALL students. PLEASE BE RESPECTFUL.
2. We love babies and young children and appreciate the chance to meet our students' siblings. However, our priority is the safety of every child on the premises. Children **MUST BE SUPERVISED AT ALL TIMES AND ARE NOT FREE TO RUN AROUND THE LOBBY, PLAYROOM, OR CLASSROOM AREAS.** Siblings are not to be left unattended in the waiting area.
3. Do not wear dance shoes outside. This is destructive to the shoes and to our floors.
4. Please label your child's dance shoes and belongings.
5. There is a lost and found located in the waiting areas. We will make every effort to locate and return lost items; however, we cannot be responsible for any items that your child brings to class.
6. Parents and students should not enter the office space of the school. This is a staff-only area.
7. Parents and students should never interrupt a class in session, except in the case of an EMERGENCY.
8. If you need to speak with a teacher or the owner, please leave a message at the office. The teacher or owner will return your message as soon as possible. Interrupting class time to ask a question or to have a conference takes away teaching time that other families are paying for.
9. Students and parents are expected to clean up after themselves. All snacks, drinks, and trash should be taken with you or put in the trash before you leave.
10. Bullying. **SDDA has a zero-tolerance policy on bullying.** Any student behaving in an abusive manner – towards any person, including other students, teachers, staff, parents, or any other person, on or off-premises of SDDA – is subject to immediate dismissal from the studio. Any parent behaving in an abusive manner – towards their child, another child, a teacher, a staff member, a fellow parent, or any other person, on or off-premises of SDDA – will cause his or her student to be subject to immediate dismissal from the studio.

Any student who is dismissed from SDDA, for any reason, shall be unenrolled from classes immediately.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

1. NO ONE is allowed in a classroom unless a teacher is present.
2. Water bottles are permitted in the studios.
3. No food is allowed in the studio classrooms.
4. No gum chewing is allowed in class.
5. No jewelry is to be worn in class.
6. Phones in the classroom must be in silent mode and stored in the dancer's dance bag for the duration of class. In the event of an emergency, the student must ask to step out of the studio to make a call.

7. Enter the studio ready to dance. This means being properly attired and having hair neatly done according to our Dress Code. Students not abiding by the Dress Code may not be allowed to participate in class.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Know, understand, and help enforce the rules and policies of SDDA.
2. Be Aware of Dates & Events: It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to be aware of all studio activities, such as parent observation weeks, recitals, extra classes/rehearsals, picture day and dates the studio is open or closed. SDDA publishes a list of key dates in every monthly newsletter. We also keep a studio calendar populated on our studio website (under the 'Customers Only' tab). We may also provide bulletin board updates and reminders via handouts, signs, text messages, or emails.
3. Check Email Often: The parents/legal guardians will give SDDA their email address to email important notices home. It is their responsibility to regularly check their emails.
4. Check Bulletin Board Often: Important information is also posted on the bulletin board in the waiting area. It is the parent's/legal guardian's responsibility to regularly check the bulletin board as they enter or leave the studio.
5. Notify the Office of Changes: It is the responsibility of the parents/legal guardians to notify the SDDA Office Staff of any changes to email addresses, payment methods, mailing addresses, or phone numbers.
6. Be On Time: It is the parent's/legal guardian's responsibility to make sure their dancer arrives to class on time and is prepared for class. On-time really means you should arrive a few minutes early.
7. Take your child to the bathroom before class begins. History proves that once one child leaves class to go to the bathroom, they all will need to go. Please let the teacher get the most of the time she has with your dancer and help avoid this unnecessary distraction.

DROPPING OFF & PICKING UP STUDENTS

1. Students under the age of 10 must be walked to and from the studio door. No student under the age of 10 will be released into the parking lot.
2. SDDA is not responsible for providing child care for students before or after class. If you choose to drop off your dancer, please pick up your child promptly when class is over. Older students may arrive early to stretch and prepare for class; however, they must always behave appropriately in the lobby and will NOT be directly supervised. If you choose to drop off early you do so at your own risk.
3. Students must be picked up no later than 15 minutes after their class ends. Students who are continually left 15 minutes or more past the end of their class may be subject to a \$10.00 late pick up charge.
4. Once your child arrives at SDDA (non-drivers) they are not allowed to leave the premises without an adult. Due to safety concerns, dancers will not be allowed to walk to area businesses, restaurants, etc. unless accompanied by an adult.

WHAT TO EXPECT IF YOU ARE NEW TO DANCE

1. The halls are very crowded the first few weeks of classes. This will settle down after everyone settles into their routine.
2. The first few weeks are a time for review and for teachers to get the dancers comfortable with the class setting. This is also the time for teachers to assess and make sure the dancers are in the right class. If dancers are not in the class that is right for them, we will place them in the correct class.
3. The youngest dancers may have tears or anxiety the first few weeks. This is normal. The teachers are trained to get children “on task” quickly. The best way to ensure success is to assure them they are going to have fun. Leave as quickly as possible and please refrain from staying near the classroom door and talking as they can hear you and this serves as a distraction to your dancer and all the dancers in the classroom.

CLASS PLACEMENT POLICY

Class placement decisions are derived from many years of teaching experience. A child is placed in the group or class where we feel he or she is best suited, based on their age and ability, where they will feel confident enough to develop self-esteem. Some students who are placed in a higher level will become discouraged, only to lose their passion for dance.

Placement is highly individual and the factors that go into the decision are complex. Our staff is extremely careful and concerned when choosing the correct level class for each student. It is very important to remember that all students are individuals with very different talents, skills and ability levels. Dancers progress at different rates. In maintaining a high quality of dance instruction, it is therefore impossible to keep the same students together in class year after year.

If your child’s class name doesn’t change, that does not mean they will not learn anything new. The class names are simply a way of identifying the classes separately for business and scheduling purposes. Our teachers plan each class level to the ability level of the students in the class each year.

If your child's class placement creates a scheduling conflict for you, we will be happy to discuss moving your dancer into another class at their ability level or lower. Due to the safety of our dancers, we cannot grant requests to move students into a higher-level class. Each class level is designed to strengthen the dancer and prepare them, and their bodies, to move into the next level. Skipping levels can lead to injury. Students are reassessed the first few weeks of each new dance season, and if they are not in a class suitable to their ability, we retain the right to move them into the correct class.

DRESS CODE & HAIR POLICY

Students who are not properly attired, and do not have their hair properly fixed, may not be allowed to participate in class. They may, instead, be asked to watch class and take notes.

Our attire guidelines are put in place to honor the classical world of dance and provide structure and safety for our dancers. The uniformity allows teachers to focus on proper technique and serves to minimize distractions. The staff at SDDA appreciates your cooperation and attention to our dress code.

Tippy Toes:

Girls: Black, or Pink leotard (no detachable skirts please), pink tights, pink ballet shoes, black ribbon-tie tap shoes; hair pulled back from face neatly. If hair is longer than shoulders, hair must be in a bun or ponytail.

Boys: Black shorts or athletic style pants with white t-shirt, black ballet shoes, and black tap shoes.

Pre-School Rhythm and Moves:

Girls: Black or Pink leotard (no detachable skirts please), pink tights, pink ballet shoes, black ribbon-tie tap shoes; hair pulled back from face neatly. If hair is longer than shoulders, hair must be in a bun or ponytail.

Boys: Black shorts or athletic style pants with white t-shirt, black ballet shoes, and black tap shoes.

All K-2 Ballet/Tap Classes:

Girls: Black or Pink leotard (no detachable skirts please), pink tights, pink ballet shoes (split sole), black tap shoes with ties and attached elastics, hair in a neat bun or ponytail and pulled back from face.

Boys: Black leggings or warm up pants, tight white t-shirt, black ballet and black tap shoes, hair neatly off face.

Junior Ballet/Tap/Jazz and Junior Inv. Ballet/Tap Jazz:

Black leotard, pink tights, pink ballet shoes (canvas split sole), black lace up tap shoes (no split soles); hair in a neat bun or ponytail and pulled back off the face.

Boys: Black leggings or warm up pants, tight white t-shirt, black ballet and black tie up split sole tap shoes, hair neatly off face.

Level I, II, III, IV, V Ballet Classes:

Black leotard, pink tights, pink canvas split sole ballet shoes; hair must be in a neat bun or ponytail off the face.

Level I, II, III, IV, V Tap Classes:

Any color leotard and tights; jazz pants, leggings or booty shorts (tights MUST be worn under shorts), black lace up tap shoes (no split sole), prefer hair in a bun if longer than shoulders; otherwise, ponytail is fine.

All Jazz Classes, Musical Theater Classes, and Supplemental Technique Classes (All Levels):

Any color/style leotard and tights; leggings or booty shorts (tights MUST be worn under shorts), black slip-on jazz shoes; no t-shirts or cover-ups of any kind are allowed to be worn in class; hair in a bun if longer than shoulders, otherwise ponytail is fine.

All Contemporary/Lyrical Classes (All Levels):

Any color/style leotard and tights; leggings or booty shorts (tights MUST be worn under shorts), tan slip-on jazz shoes; no t-shirts or cover-ups of any kind are allowed to be worn in class; hair in a bun if longer than shoulders, otherwise ponytail is fine.

All Modern Classes:

Any color leotard and footless tights, leggings or booty shorts are acceptable (Footless tights must be worn underneath); bare feet, long hair in a bun otherwise low ponytail is fine.

All Hip-Hop Classes:

Clothes they can move in (suggestions are harem pants, sweat pants, or leggings coupled with t-shirts, camis, etc.) Sneakers or combat boots are appropriate footwear. Hair pulled away from face.

All Acro Classes:

Clothes they can move in (suggestions leotards, shorts, and tank tops, etc.) Bare feet preferred. Hair pulled away from face. No baggy clothing that could interfere with spotting is allowed.

Cheerleading Classes:

Clothes they can move in (suggestions leotards, shorts, and tank tops, etc.) Both bare feet and tennis shoes will be utilized. Hair pulled away from face.

Please label your child's dance shoes and belongings. Any misplaced items found in the facility will be placed in the Lost and Found box in the lobby.

STUDIO FEES

Stage Door Dance Arts strives to remain competitive with both our fees and our tuition structure. Our fee structure is very straight-forward, as follows.

REGISTRATION FEE

Registration is on a first come, first served basis. Students are NOT fully registered until the registration fee is paid.

The registration fee is charged for each season and is currently \$30.00 for the first student and \$10.00 for each additional student in the family for School Year Seasons. It is \$10 for the first student and \$5 for each additional student in the family for Summer Seasons. *The registration fee is non-refundable.* The only exception is if all classes a student is registered for are cancelled due to zero enrollment.

MONTHLY TUITION

Tuition is charged based on a student being enrolled for the entirety of the season, and it is divided into 9 monthly payments. For this reason, some months will have 5 weeks of classes, and some will have two or three weeks. The structure of our tuition is based on the hours of a student's weekly enrollment.

PERFORMANCE PACKAGE

SDDA charges a per student recital fee to offset the costs of producing the Spring Recital. Putting on a professional production is a complicated endeavor, and some of those costs include theater rental, insurance, security, stagehands, lighting and sound techs, custodial services, props, transportation, sets, etc.

SDDA'S INCLUSIVE PERFORMANCE PACKAGE for the 2022-23 season is \$150 for the first student in a family, \$100 for the second student in the family, and \$75 for each student thereafter. This affordable package includes participation in recital, production costs, a Recital t-shirt for each student, 2 Recital Tickets, Media Fees for digital downloads of all professional recital photography and videography, plus a Recital Award.

Performance Package fees are posted and payable on September 15th and October 15th of the school year season. It is divided into two equal monthly payments.

Example: Student A in a family will pay \$75 in September and October. Student B in the same family will pay \$50 in September and October. Student C in the same family will pay \$37.50 in September and October.

For a student who enrolls in the school year season after October 15, this fee is immediately posted and payable upon enrollment.

Recital Fees are non-refundable.

COSTUME FEES AND DEPOSITS

To help families spread out the cost of dance over a period of months, SDDA has instituted a costume deposit system. Each student will be assessed two costume deposits, which are posted and payable in November and December, respectively. Any remaining costume balance is posted and payable in January.

SDDA uses a "flat fee" structure to keep costume costs to a minimum, and to allow families predictability. Costume deposits are based on the respective costume fees associated with your child's class enrollment, according to the schedule below:

- Pre-School Classes: \$75 plus tax per costume (2 per class)
- Tippy Toes Classes: \$75 plus tax (1 Costume)
- Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd Grade, Junior Classes, Intro to Classes, and Pre-Professional classes: \$90 plus tax per costume
- Hip-Hop Classes: \$130 plus tax per costume (includes shoes)
- Adult Classes: \$90 plus tax per costume
- Cheernastics Classes: \$130 plus tax per costume (includes shoes)

Students enrolled in hip-hop or Cheernastics only are assessed deposits of \$65 for November and December. All other students are assessed deposits equal to per-class costume cost.

STUDIO FINANCIAL POLICIES

Monthly Tuition

Tuition is due on the first day of every month. Unpaid tuition is considered late after the 5th day of the month. Late fees are posted on the 6th day of the month.

Payment Options

Our preferred method of payment is automatic debit or credit card draft through our Parent Portal. If you do not wish to sign up for automatic drafts, we accept cash, checks, money orders, and credit cards (VISA, MC, Discover and AMEX) in the office. However, families enrolled in Auto Pay will enjoy a \$5 discount on tuition.

We DO NOT accept post-dated checks!

Missed classes can be made up in a concurrent class or one level down but must be made up within 2 weeks of the missed class.

Family Discount

We offer a 10% discount off tuition for the second sibling and each additional sibling in a household. Discounts may not be combined.

Late Fees and Delinquent Accounts

It is your responsibility to keep your dance account current. Tuition not paid by the 5th of the month will incur a \$10.00 late fee.

There is a \$35.00 charge on all returned checks. If a check is returned, all future payments must be made in cash, money order or credit card.

If your account is more than 30 days delinquent, your dancer may be refused entry into class until the account is brought into good standing, or until other arrangements have been made.

If a student's account has an outstanding balance at the time of any performance, then the student will NOT be allowed to perform until all outstanding balances are paid in full.

If a student's account has an outstanding balance as of December 15, the spring recital costume(s) will not be ordered for your dancer until the account is in good standing. If your child's costumes are not ordered with the rest of class's costumes, we cannot guarantee it will arrive in time for Picture Day or recital. In addition, the parent may be charged an extra \$25.00 fee for shipping and handling charges outside the normal ordering window.

If a student's account has an outstanding balance at the time of our Costume Week in April, then that student will not be allowed to take costumes home until the account is in good standing.

ONLINE CUSTOMER ACCOUNT ACCESS

You can access your studio account online. You can make payments, view enrolled classes, and update account information. To access your account, go to our webpage at www.stagedoordancearts.com and click on the Parent Portal button.

OTHER STUDIO POLICIES

Withdrawal Policy

Registering for our school-year Dance Season is a nine-month commitment.

The school-year dance season runs from September through May. You may withdraw by September 30 for a full refund, minus any classes taken. After this date, you will be responsible for providing written notice by the 25th of the month to be financially dropped from the next month's classes. However, the registration fee and recital fee are non-refundable, as are any costumes that have been ordered.

Attendance

Good attendance is imperative as absences and tardiness can hold back an entire class, and the studio cannot jeopardize its responsibilities to the rest of the class for one student.

Recital Participation Attendance Policy

Any student who misses more than 8 classes from January through May FOR ANY REASON may not be allowed to perform in the recital.

An extended illness or injury will be reviewed by the staff on a case-by-case basis.

Recital Week Attendance Policy

Attendance at events during recital week (run-thru, dress rehearsal, special rehearsals) is mandatory.

Excused Absences:

Graded school class functions will be excused (please give us at least a week's notice of any absence).

- The death of an immediate family member will be excused
- An extended illness will be reviewed by the staff on a case-by-case basis.

Tardies

Dance is a physical activity that requires the body to be warmed up to execute movement safely. Late students miss the proper warm-up and therefore may sustain injury.

Students who arrive more than 10 minutes late may be asked to observe the class for reasons of personal safety.

Illness Policy

Parents are asked to keep their students at home for the following conditions:

- Fever
- Eyes that are pink, burning, itching, or producing discharge
- Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea
- Children with known or suspected communicable diseases or lice.
- Any verified case of Flu, Pneumonia, Covid 19, Strep, etc.

Please observe the 24-hour fever free and symptom free rule before allowing your child to return to dance. In the case of Covid 19, please follow the ADH and CDC recommendations.

Class Observation

Parents are always welcome to watch classes on our HD, closed-circuit televisions. In addition, Parent Observation Days are held in December and during Costume Week in March/April. We provide this opportunity for parents so they can observe the growth of the dancers and to experience the class from "inside." It is a great time to take photos and videos of your little stars. Please note that some dancers might become shy when there is an audience in the room. We also offer the Spot TV App for viewing classes from anywhere. There is a \$10 per month charge for this service.

In November and December, we will measure for spring recital costumes. We measure with growth in mind, but any alterations are the responsibility of the parent.

In March/April, students receive their costumes and important information is given out concerning the May recital and future classes.

We ask during these observation weeks that any non-dancing siblings not be brought to the studio. Class space is limited, and we need distractions to be minimal. There is a lot of information covered during this time. Siblings are not to be left in the waiting area unattended.

Insurance

Stage Door Dance Arts does not carry medical insurance for its students. It is required that all dance students be covered by their own family insurance policies. If injury occurs, it is understood that the student's own policy is your only source of reimbursement.

Liability Release

All students and/or responsible parties of SDDA students must sign our liability form before taking part in classes.

Snow or Inclement Weather Policy

The studio will follow the Conway Public Schools schedule for inclement weather. If Conway Public Schools are closed, then the studio will be closed. This does not apply to late start days. If the weather worsens after school hours, SDDA will make an educated decision erring on the side of safety and alert all clients in a timely manner.

Our Facebook page will also be updated with information about closings so be sure to "like" Stage Door Dance Arts on Facebook.

We understand that road conditions can vary greatly from one area to the next so in the event that classes are held, and you feel it is unsafe to travel the roads in your area, please call or email the studio and let us know. Your child's absence will be excused.

Holidays

In general, we follow the Conway Public School Holiday Calendar. The only exceptions are in-service days. The studio will not be closed on those days.

PERFORMANCES

Community Performances

Community performances such as Artsfest, Toad Suck Daze, etc. are a wonderful way to bring dance to the community. You will be notified if any of your child's classes are involved in these performances and what is required. Participation is highly encouraged as these performances are often of a charitable or community service nature.

Spring Recital

Our spring recital is for all students enrolled in our full dance season. Our recital will be held at the end of the dance season with a dress rehearsal the same week. The 2022-23 recital is scheduled on June 2nd and 3rd. Dress rehearsals are the same week. Recital will be held at Maumelle High School's Performing Arts Center. All students MUST be at all rehearsals to participate in the recital.

Recital Pictures

Professional pictures for the 2022-23 season are scheduled for April 7th-9th and are held at SDDA. Individual and group pictures will be taken by our professional photographer. Purchases are optional, but we love having every student present for the group pictures. Each student in attendance will incur a \$10 sitting fee. Photos are ordered directly from the photographer.

Media Policy for Performances

- There is NO flash photography.
- Professional digital downloads of all performances will be available to each family. The cost is covered in your performance package and there is no need for order forms or extra costs. We hope this serves as a wonderful opportunity for you to be able to enjoy the performances in person while having a low cost, professional download to share with all your friends and family.
- Please turn off or silence all cell phones and other electronic devices during the performance and refrain from using anything with an illuminated screen while the show is being held.

Photography Release

All students are required to sign a media release giving permission to Stage Door Dance Arts, LLC to video and photograph students for use in educational, advertising, or other promotional purposes. Permission will be granted to use students' names in conjunction with the studio name. Photographs and filming of students by Stage Door Dance Arts, LLC, or members of the press, become the property of Stage Door Dance Arts, LLC and may be used for future publicity.