



**INVITATION
TO DANCE**

STUDENT & PARENT
HANDBOOK



About This Handbook

FOR MORE THAN 25 years our school has been a leader in dance education. We believe that our success comes as a result of providing solid training and quality service, as well as our underlying belief in the strength of our organization. We have created this handbook to offer our students and their parents a clear understanding of their commitments and responsibility to the school.

Invitation To Dance Important Dates

September 5 - Studio opens. First day of classes for full year students

September 18 - Fall session classes begin

October 9 - Thanksgiving. Studio closed

October 31 - Halloween. Studio closed

November 13-18 - Parent observation for Studio A

November 20-25 - Parent observation for Studio B

December 11 - End of fall session classes

December 24 - January 7 - Winter break. Studio closed

January 15 - Winter session classes begin

January 22-27 - Parent observation for Studio A

January 29-February 3 - Parent observation for Studio B

February 15-19 - Family day and teachers convention. Studio closed

March 4 - In school exams (tentative)

March 25-April 1 - Spring break. Studio closed

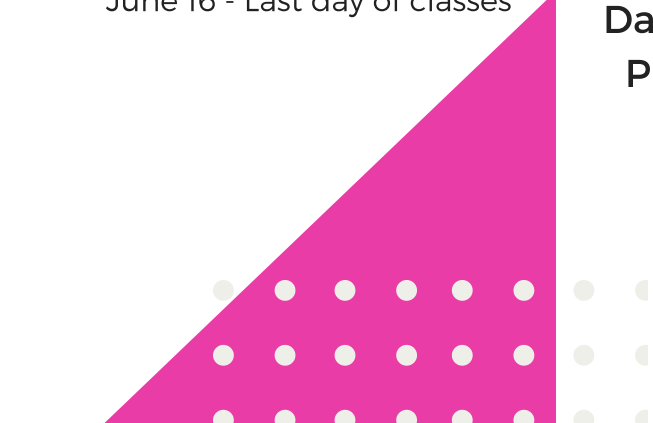
April 21 - End of winter session classes

April 23 - Spring session classes begin

June 2 - Spring session classes end

June 3-9 - Recital week (tentative)

June 16 - Last day of classes



**Dates listed in this handbook are subject to change.
Please check the website and your newsletters for updates.**

invitationtodance.ca
1, 1215 Lake Sylvan Drive SEi
403-278-4849
dancewithus@invitationtodance.ca



A Guide for Students and Parents

As a condition of enrollment at Invitation To Dance, students and their parents or guardians agree to abide by all the policies set forth by Invitation To Dance, its director, faculty, and staff. Invitation To Dance reserves the right to terminate any student's enrollment at any time for misconduct or inappropriate actions by either the student or his or her parent(s).

Welcome To Invitation To Dance!

This handbook will serve as your guide to Invitation To Dance (also known as ITD) and its philosophy of dance education.


We take our roles as a mentors and teachers in your child's life very seriously. It is our objective to inspire a passion for the art of dance in every child who passes through our doors. In the process, we strive to set the right example and help your child (and you) create memories that will last a lifetime

Philosophy


ITD is committed to providing high-quality dance classes in a non-competitive environment. We provide a safe and child-centered environment to encourage our students to explore dance with qualified, nurturing teachers.

We believe that a non competitive environment encourages young people to develop a positive self-image as well as a strong sense of community. Along with improving coordination skills and developing muscular awareness, we encourage our students to support their peers and develop their individual sense of expression.

The highest educational standards are expected from all ITD faculty members. They are lifelong learners who continue to educate themselves through certification programs, teacher-training schools, conferences, and other learning opportunities.



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Special Information for Parents of Preschool Students

Our purpose is to provide the highest-quality preschool education in a secure, nurturing, and stimulating environment. Invitation To Dance serves the physical, emotional, and intellectual needs of the preschool students. We meet these goals with our age-appropriate curriculum and ongoing communication with parents.

The first few weeks of classes serve as an introductory phase to help students become comfortable with the overall dance experience, the classroom, their teacher, and their classmates.

Right from the beginning we focus on your child's coordination, listening skills, musical awareness, and developing imagination. We accomplish this through age-appropriate music and song, simple stretching exercises, ballet, jazz, tap and tumbling basics and games in an environment of creativity.

Preschool dance is about helping children learn to tap into their imaginations and express themselves creatively, not necessarily about learning steps (although they do get introduced to some basic steps). So don't be disappointed if your child doesn't pirouette around the house or look like a budding ballerina right away.

Ballet/Tap, Jazz/Acro combo and Preschool students dance for the full year and perform in a dance routine in our annual recital. Whereas Creative Movers is offered in 12 and 6 week sessions with no recital opportunity.



Separation From The Parent

The process of separating from the parent as the child attends dance class is an important accomplishment of preschool children.

As children mature, they begin to identify themselves as independent personalities. In separating from you, the parent, your child is learning:

- to develop an interest in the activities of the dance class
- to feel comfortable with other children in the class
- to understand that his/her parent will come back and pick him/her up
- to understand that all parents leave their children and come back for them

It is important to know that at times young children will explore the limits of attending dance class and say they don't want to go. This period may occur anytime, but it is usually short-lived. Here are some suggestions that might help you handle the situation:

- Emphasize what the child is doing at the dance class rather than what you do while he/she is in class.
- Before you leave, see that the child is involved in an activity or is in the hands of a teacher.
- Avoid prolonged good-byes.
- Ask the teacher for help in separation. We expect the crying (and usually the tears are for the parent's benefit).



It May Not Be The Right Time

If your child cries or does not want to take class, don't panic. If we push children and create more stress than they are already experiencing, they may come to perceive dance class as a bad experience. That kind of negativity could make them apprehensive about dance for a long time, which isn't good for anyone involved. Never force your child into the classroom.

If your child stops attending class within the first month, the registration remaining class fees will be credited to the following year. We encourage you to have your child try again next year.

We recommend that children be encouraged to practice at home but not forced to do so. Repetition is one of the key elements for success with preschool dance students; the more they practice, the more confident they will feel. Practicing with your child allows you to join in the dance experience.



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For All Parents And Students

Understanding Dance Education

As a parent, you play an important role in supporting your student financially, but your emotional support is of equal—and perhaps even greater—value. Encourage your child to be the best that he or she can be regardless of what others may achieve. Dance is an individual art form and children need to be allowed to achieve at a pace that's comfortable. No two students will progress at the same rate, even if they experience the exact same training. It's important to encourage children to focus on themselves, give their all, and be satisfied with their own accomplishments.

Not all children will develop into professional dancers. One of the primary goals of our faculty is to teach life lessons and skills that offer children the best chance for success. Dance education encompasses far more than technique and the steps your children learn. We believe the discipline of dance training gives young people a better understanding of commitment through learning, experiencing the spirit of teamwork, and discovering what they can accomplish through hard work. Our goal is to educate the minds, bodies, and souls of our students, teaching them the skills needed for a successful life, whether or not they stay involved in dance.

Class Placement

The school faculty meets regularly to discuss the students' progress and/or placement. It is our policy to offer appropriate opportunities to every child.

Placement decisions are derived from many years of teaching experience. Often a child is placed in a particular group or class where he or she will feel confident, in order to promote the development of self-esteem. Some students who are placed in a higher level become discouraged, only to lose their passion for dance. Others respond to the challenge of being in a class with students who are more proficient by pushing themselves to work harder. Placement is highly individual and the factors that go into the decision are complex.



Classroom Observation

In-class observations take place in November and again in late January/early February. This is the chance for you to see firsthand what the classroom experience is like for your child. Please do not bring infants or other children to the in-class observation week if at all possible.

Never disrupt class. During the in-class observation week (or at any time if the door to the classroom is open), please refrain from shouting instructions or distracting your child in any way.

Medical Information

Parents must notify the director/and or teachers regarding children who use an inhaler or who may require medications during their time at Invitation To Dance. It is also important to inform the director and/or teachers about your child's existing medical conditions or learning disabilities at the time of registration and throughout the school year. Our teachers are trained professionals who are excited to work with all children and personalities, and the more we know about your child, the better the dance experience will be for all involved. All information about our students is confidential



Dos and Don'ts

Some parents may compare their child's progress or class placement to another child's. Watch for this behavior in your children as well and encourage them to focus instead on their own accomplishments.

Looking to other students for inspiration is good; however, making negative comparisons distracts children from focusing on becoming stronger dancers. In addition, speaking negatively about your child's teachers, fellow students, or other parents in front of your child—or other students—could result in problems far beyond your original concerns. Often children will imitate a parent's behavior with other adults or authority figures.

Children learn important lessons from their teachers and parents, acquiring behavior patterns through their example. Our school's faculty takes that responsibility seriously. It's our philosophy to encourage our students to feel, think, and act respectfully toward their peers, the adults in their lives, and themselves.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's dance education (such as progress or class placement), please discuss them with your child's teacher or the director. Talking only to other parents can lead to misinformation and confusion. Please contact the school office to set up an appointment; do not approach your child's teacher or the director between or during classes.

If you do request a conference, please listen carefully to what your child's teachers have to say. They spend a significant amount of time with your child and offer expertise in the field of dance education



Staying Informed

We work hard to make the dance experience organized and fun. Keeping you informed is one of our primary goals. Please read all newsletters and other school information.

Newsletters and important updates are emailed out to our students at the beginning of each month. The same newsletters and updates are posted on the Invitation To Dance website and Facebook page.

If you have any questions regarding the information distributed, we encourage you to contact the office at 403-278-4849.

We answer email on a regular basis, except on weekends. Feel free to email questions to the office at dancewithus@invitationtodance.ca

Website: invitationtodance.ca

We are constantly updating our website. News, important parent and student information, contact information and more are available online 24 hours a day.

Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/InvitationToDance

“Like” the ITD page on Facebook to receive updates on school events. Please invite your family and friends to “like” the school.

Please do not post questions on the school’s Facebook page. Instead, email them directly to dancewithus@invitationtodance.ca



Dress Code Requirements

Invitation To Dance maintains a dress code to encourage concentration and a sense of inclusiveness (variations in attire can be distracting and contribute to feelings of inequality). Uniformity in dance wear allows the teachers to assess how well the students are implementing the technique being taught, problems with alignment, and other important aspects of dance training.

- Students should carry their dancewear, shoes, and other belongings in a dance bag. Please print your child's name on the bag as well as on all of its contents. Storage is available inside the studios for your child's dance bag and water bottle.
- Dancewear is to be kept in good repair and laundered on a regular basis.
- Boys age 10 and older are recommended to wear a dance belt.
- Watches, jewelry, and safety pins should not be worn to class.
- Dance shoes should never be worn outside.
- Female students should wear their hair tightly secured and styled away from the face; a neat bun for ballet classes is required.
- Students are expected to observe good personal hygiene habits. Deodorant is required for students age 10 and older.



For Our Students

The first step to becoming a successful dancer is making a solid commitment to your classes. Strong technique is a key ingredient and class is where you develop that technique. Come to each class prepared to learn and without personal distractions. Class time is your chance to focus on yourself, so try to leave your concerns or worries at the studio door. True progress is made when you look at each class as an opportunity to become better at what you love to do. Dance full-out, stretch a little further, become more aware of your technique, and make the most of every class.

Respect for the teachers is essential. Listen to each correction given, whether it's directed at you or another dancer. A correction is an honor; it shows you how much a teacher cares about your progress as a dancer. Always say thank you when a teacher or choreographer offers you constructive criticism. Nothing can stop those students who apply themselves in every class and appreciate their teachers' knowledge and experience.

For The Parents

We believe that children's success depends on the support of their parents or guardians. Because your commitment to the process makes an enormous difference, we encourage you to be a part of your child's dance education.

Our programs rely on a positive atmosphere and educational experience for our faculty, students and their parents. Cooperation between all parents is expected. Showing respect—for other parents, the students, and the faculty—makes an important impression on the children. You are a role model for your child about how to interact with others in a professional setting.

Your child's presence at all classes is imperative. The spirit of teamwork and the lesson of dedication are a big part of our school's educational process.

Parents and teachers may look at a child's learning from different perspectives. However, we believe they share a common goal: to ensure that every child receives the best possible training, both physically and mentally. Mutual respect among our faculty and our students' parents provides the children with the ultimate care and education.

Dress Code Requirements

Ballet/Tap Combo

Girls - Pink tank strap leotard, pink convertible tights, pink ballet shoes, black tap shoes

Boys - Black sweatpants, white T-shirt, black ballet shoes, black tap shoes

Jazz/Acro Combo

Girls - Black leotard, black convertible tights, black jazz shoes. (The Acro portion of the class will be in bare feet)

Boys - Black sweatpants, white T-shirt, black jazz shoes. (The Acro portion of the class will be in bare feet)

Preschool

Girls - Pink tank strap leotard, pink convertible tights, pink ballet shoes, black tap shoes

Boys - Black sweatpants, white T-shirt, black ballet shoes, black tap shoes

Ballet - Primary & Level 1

Girls - Pink tank strap leotard, pink wrap skirt, pink tights, pink ballet shoes.

Boys - Black shorts, white T-shirt, black ballet shoes.

Ballet - Level 2 & up

Girls - Black tank strap leotard, pink tights, pink ballet shoes. (Pointe shoes will be required on an individual basis from Standard 5 and up)

Boys - Black shorts or tights, white T-shirt, black ballet shoes.

Jazz

Girls - Black tank strap leotard, black tights, black jazz shoes. (Bare feet will be required from Bronze and up)

Boys - Black dance pants or shorts, white T-shirt, black jazz shoes. (Bare feet will be required from Bronze and up)

Acro

Girls - Black tank strap leotard; black footless or convertible tights, bare feet.

Boys - Black dance pants or shorts, white T-shirt, bare feet.

Tap

Girls - Black tank strap leotard; black tights, black tap shoes.

Boys - Black dance pants or shorts, white T-shirt, black tap shoes.

Hip Hop

All - Comfortable clothes (not jeans) and clean, predominantly white sneakers.

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Policies and Fees

Registration Fee

An annual registration fee of \$25 per family covers the cost of mailings, insurance, handbooks, rehearsals, and so on. Registration fees are not refundable with the exception of preschool students who are determined to be unready for dance and may receive a credit for the following season.

Costume Rental Fee

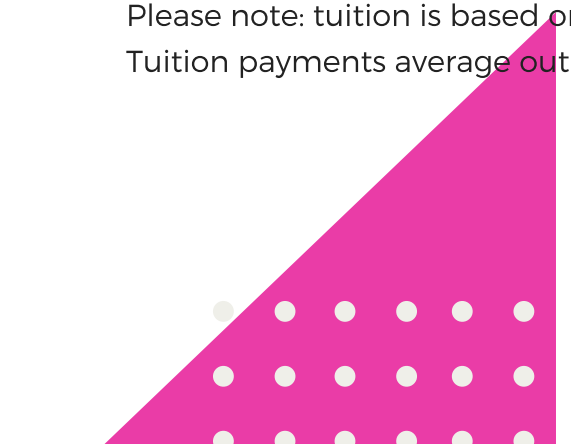
All costumes for the year end recital are covered by a \$30 - \$70 costume rental fee per child., dependent on the number of classes they are enrolled in. This non-refundable fee is due at the time of registration, with the exception of session classes and classes not involved in the recital. This fee helps us to maintain and replenish our costume supply. Tights and shoes are the responsibility of the students.

Tuition & Expense Policy

Tuition can be paid annually or monthly by credit card or postdated cheque payment. Full monthly tuition is due by 1st of each month. No refunds given after February 1st. There is a \$20 service charge for all NSF cheques. Repayment must be by cash or money order for the class amount plus service charge. If a student wishes to withdraw from any class, one month's written notice is required (notices not given at the beginning of the month will be deemed given the beginning of the following month). A 5% charge will be applied to all overdue accounts after a period of ten business days and will accumulate an additional 5% charge on the 1st of every month thereafter.

Please write your child's name in the memo portion of the cheque and make cheques payable to Invitation To Dance.

Please note: tuition is based on the season regardless of how many weeks are in a given month. Tuition payments average out to four classes each month.



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Discipline Policy

In order to maintain a happy, healthy, professional environment, students are taught the importance of being a part of the group. We encourage students to have respect for other students, the teachers and staff, and studio property, and we foster the development of good habits and compliance with rules of conduct.

Our staff and faculty are trained to use constructive techniques of discipline to maintain class control and handle individual misbehavior.

- Children who exhibit unacceptable behavior or attitudes are told what is wrong and directed to a positive alternative approach or behavior.
- If a child strikes another child, the two are respectfully separated and each is asked to explain what happened. They are then asked to help solve the problem, talk to each other, and reconcile with one another.
- Children who are disruptive will be respectfully asked to stop the behavior. If the behavior is repeated, they will be reminded of it and told how it affects others. If the disruption continues, the children involved will be asked to sit down for a short period of time (usually three to five minutes) before rejoining the class.
- If a child's misbehavior continues to disrupt the class, the parent or guardian will be called to pick up the child.



Arrival & Departure

We encourage students to arrive 10-15 minutes before class starts. For their safety, children under age 10 should be picked up immediately after class. Students ages 10 and older must be picked up no more than 15 minutes after their class is completed.

Attendance

All students are expected to attend their regularly scheduled classes. Each class offers a step forward in the educational process. A missed class could leave a child one step behind the other students. During the months of February through May, choreography for the recital will be taught and rehearsed. It is important for children to feel completely confident with the choreography in the year-end performance. Missing class during this period could result in frustration for the students and their teachers and classmates.

Class Visitors

Safety issues and legal responsibilities make it impossible for us to allow students to bring visitors into the classroom. Students should not invite siblings, other relatives, or friends to their classes with the exception of special events such as “Open House Week” and in-school performances.

Make-up Classes

Students who miss a class will have the opportunity to make it up with another similar class. Please check with the office to determine the best make-up class for your child.

Lost & Found

Please mark all dancewear, shoes, and personal items with your child's name. 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. There is a lost and found located in the waiting room of Studio A.



Illness

Colds, flu, and other contagious diseases occur frequently and spread easily among children. To help protect your own child's health and to minimize the possibility of contagion at school, please keep your child at home if you observe any of the following symptoms:

- Nasal discharge that is green or yellow
- Complaints of ear pain
- Consistent cough
- Severe sore throat
- Eyes that are pink, burning, itching, or producing discharge
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Fever

If these symptoms or other conditions deemed contagious are observed in your child during a class, you will be called to pick up your child immediately.

When your child has a fever, please keep him/her at home until the temperature returns to normal. If there are any lingering signs of illness, such as glassy or watery eyes, listlessness, and drowsiness, please keep your child at home. This will help to ensure that the illness has passed and that your child will be well enough to resume class activities the following week.



Student and Parent Use of Social Media

Use of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other online social-media vehicles is commonplace. This policy is intended to provide Invitation To Dance students and parents with guidelines to eliminate any confusion concerning the use of social media.

- You DO NOT have permission to reveal any information that compromises Invitation To Dance. By that we mean you are forbidden to share personal information about the director, other students or their families, or anything that is proprietary and/or confidential to them or ITD.
- Students and parents should neither claim nor imply that they are speaking on behalf of ITD.
- Never post anything that could compromise the self-esteem of students who attend ITD.
- If you post videos of class or rehearsals, don't post any choreography in its entirety; ITD owns the copyright to all choreography taught at the school.
- Respect the law, including those laws governing defamation, discrimination, harassment, and copyright and fair use. As stated in this handbook, parents and students should never post negative comments about other schools or teachers. Also, please do not post negative comments about school activities such as exams, conventions, and performances or about the directors of those events.
- Ensure that your social networking conduct is consistent with all of the policies contained in this handbook.



General Policies

- Use of the school telephone is limited to emergencies only.
- Parents and students should never interrupt a class in session.
- Please treat our studio with respect and clean up after yourselves in the waiting rooms. This means disposing of food and drink in the proper receptacles provided and cleaning up after any spill that may occur.
- 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 school premises. Children must be supervised at all times and are not free to run around the lobby or classroom areas.
- Please do not dispose of dirty diapers inside the school. Large trashcans outside the studio are better suited for such disposal.
- No cell phones or computers may be used during class time.
- Students and parents are restricted from contacting teachers by phone, email, text messages, etc. All communication with teachers or the director must go through the ITD office.
- Never speak negatively about teachers, students, or parents from other schools.
- All students must show respect for their teachers at all times. Inappropriate behavior could result in dismissal from the school.



Annual Recital

All students participate in our annual recital to be held at Glenmore Christian Academy. Please note that all students must participate in the dress rehearsal in order to perform in the recital and all students must perform in both recitals. There are no exceptions to this policy.

The recital offers our students a professionally directed performance that allows them to present to their families and friends the results of a year's hard work, dedication, and progress. All students perform one time in each of the styles of dance they are registered for.

A big part of dance training includes learning through performance. Although performance opportunities can help prepare some students for a possible career in dance, they also contribute to children's success in non-dance activities. The experience helps build self-esteem and confidence, which can result in better in-school presentations, improved social skills, and strong college and job interview skills. The rehearsal process is a tremendous learning experience as well. It helps the children develop retention skills, and by working with their classmates on a group performance, they learn the positive aspects of working as a team to create the best end result.

Recital Notice

In April of each year we distribute a recital notice with all the information parents and students need to know to make the recital experience enjoyable for all. Ticket sales and other important information will be available at this time.



Open House Week

The first after recital is “Open House Week.” Students may bring a friend (similar in age) to the school to experience a fun class designed for them and their guests. Students will also have the opportunity to perform their recital choreography for their friends. Students’ friends attend class free of charge during this week.

Studio Rental

The studios are available for rental for meetings, rehearsals, and other activities. Tables, chairs, sound systems, and yoga and fitness supplies are available. Whether you’re planning a one-time, weekly, or monthly event, give us a call to determine whether we can accommodate your group or activity.

**WELCOME TO INVITATION TO DANCE ! WE LOOK FORWARD TO AN EXCITING,
REWARDING SEASON!**



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