

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK



MISSION STATEMENT

Dance or Joy is committed to the art of dance. We work hard to introduce and instill just the right amount of self-expression, discipline, and passion in each of our students. Whether a student is dancing for fun and exercise or planning to enter the arts on a professional level, we are here to guide you along the way.

Our goal is to allow each dancer to experience the elements of dance; confidence, coordination, creativity, grace, musicality, rhythm, self-esteem, technique, an appreciation for music and dance, and above all fun!

Class Format

Most dance classes will begin with a circle time or warm up. The activities in the class are all planned to ensure the success of every student. Some of the class will include instructional time where the students are listening to instruction before dancing. Classes longer than 30 minutes are very active and each student should bring a water bottle to class. Students will work on dance steps, combinations and later in the year, a specific dance routine. Each class will participate in the year end dance show. Please see “End of Year Performance” section.

Required Class Wear

Each dance class has specific required dance wear as outlined on the required dance wear page at the back of this handbook. Students are required to wear the specific dance clothing and shoes for each of their classes. Female ballet students are required to wear their hair in a proper ballet bun. For all other classes, long hair must be tied back. No jewelry in class please.

Attendance

Students are learning an art form that takes discipline. Coming to class each week is an important part of the process. In order to take place in the end of the year show, **each student can miss NO MORE THAN 5 classes PER class, from January through May. If a student misses more than 5 classes in one particular discipline they will no longer be permitted to dance in that class's routine.** *(There will be no refund for costumes or tuition).* Just like an athlete, you can not miss all the practices and show up for the game! Class time is when you try to perfect your technique and make new discoveries about yourself and your dancing. We encourage all students to attend all classes but we understand when conflicts and illness arise. Make-up classes are always permitted. If there is no other class equivalent to your level you may take one level below your normally scheduled class. No one is ever too good to take a beginner level class, you can always take something away from it.

Tuition

Tuition is based on 30 weeks of dance class. This 30 week calculation EXCLUDES vacations. Dance For Joy splits up tuition equally over a period of 9 months, from September through May, this is why tuition remains the same even during months that include vacation days. Dance For Joy is closed for three weeks in December.

Cell Phone Policy at DFJ

Dance For Joy is implementing an “unplugged” policy beginning September 2019! You are here to dance. If there is an emergency and a parent needs to get in contact with their child you can call the dance studio at 732-223-5336. Students can either leave their phone at home, or place it in our cell phone holder at the door of each studio. NO PHONES AT WATER BREAK. Dancers can take their phones back at the end of their class. Dancers are not to touch any other student’s phone in the halls. Dancers are expected to be fully present in their dance classes!

Please limit cell phone communication between DFJ faculty/staff to emergency situations or scheduling communications for privates.

Social Media Conduct

Social media can be entertaining, exciting, and an artistic outlet, but it has also been used to bully students. At DFJ we have a no-tolerance bullying policy. As of the 2019-2020 season this will extend to posts that happen outside of DFJ as well as inside the studio. We expect full respect to all your dancing peers inside and outside of the studio. If you are caught bullying another student(s) for any reason, you will be given a verbal warning and a meeting with a parent will be arranged. A second offense will be cause for immediate dismissal from Dance For Joy. This will be decided by the teachers and staff at DFJ.

Good Job Reward Tokens

We want to reward each of our students for doing a good job in class. Several times a year the teachers will hand out Good Job reward tokens. These tokens are earned for attendance, attitude, practice and teamwork. The students can save up these tokens for items such as small prizes from the treasure chest, water bottles, dance bags, etc.

Spring Break

Please note that our spring break does not coincide with all public or private schools. Please see our dance calendar for the dates we are closed.

Class level advancement

Every student progresses at his or her own rate, and we hope that you can respect our professional opinions regarding class levels. There is no set age for each level, everyone is placed according to technical ability.

Pointe is a **privilege** for students who have worked very hard in ballet class. Pointe is **not** a right for all dancers. DFJ staff will determine whether a student is ready for Pointe only. Graduating to Pointe is both a demanding physical and time commitment. It is also a financial commitment for parents. All this should be taken into consideration before the advancement of a student to Pointe.

End of Year Performance

The end of the year show is mandatory for all students with the exception of our pre-ballet students. All classes will rehearse their choreography for the show in their regularly scheduled class. The month of January will begin mandatory attendance month in which all classes will begin to choreograph their end of the year dance. Classes will consist of warm-ups, technique, across the floor combinations and choreography.

The 45 minute Pre- Ballet classes still have the option of being in the show. If you decide to perform, you will learn choreography the last 15 minutes of the hour. If you opt out of the show, you will be dismissed after 45 minutes (the end of your normal class time).

Refunds for Costumes

After December there are no refunds for costumes. Unfortunately, the school is unable to return costumes to their respective companies. Therefore, any student to withdraw after December will still receive a costume and is welcome to pick them up when they arrive.

Dress Rehearsal for Year-End Show

Rehearsals are **mandatory** and the success of the class depends on every member being there. Therefore, it is very important that **all** dancers attend.

Dress rehearsals are **not** at Dance For Joy. The rehearsals and shows are held at the Strand Theater in Lakewood. The dress rehearsal schedule will give you exact details of when you are required to be at the Strand Theater. The rehearsal day will replace your child's regular class(es) for that day. **The rehearsals are not scheduled at the same time as your child's regular class** so you may be required to make special arrangements for that week. We provide you with the rehearsal date in August so that you have time to plan and ensure your attendance. **Please remember dress rehearsals are NOT at Dance For Joy but at the Strand Theater in Lakewood.**

Dance Show Tickets and Video Recording

The dance show is professionally filmed. The video footage of your child's dance at the show will be made available approximately 6 weeks after the show. These videos can be viewed on our vimeo website and downloaded to your own personal computer or mobile device. Each family will be charged a video fee. This is not an optional fee.

Show Day- May 30th and 31st 2020

Each dance show will be approximately 2.5 hours long including an intermission with the exception of our "mini show". Our mini show consists of dancers in pre-ballet, tiny tap and tumble, hip hop 1, ballet 1, tap 1 and jazz/lyrical 1. The mini show is typically an hour and 15 minutes long with NO intermission. Seating is pre-assigned. Tickets will be on sale at Dance For Joy one month prior to the show.

Seniors at Dance For Joy:

Seniors get to perform a solo in their final show IF they have been with Dance For Joy for AT LEAST 5 consecutive years. Each senior can pick a teacher from DFJ to choreograph for them, or they can choreograph the dance on their own under the mentor of a DFJ teacher. This is subject to change according to the amount of seniors graduating in a given season. Other arrangements may be made and seniors notified at the beginning of the season.