



## Student and Parent Handbook 2024/2025 Season

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### West End Academy of Dance, Inc.

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[www.westendacademy.com](http://www.westendacademy.com)

Facebook: West End Academy of Dance

Instagram: @westendacademydance

### Regular Season Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday | 3:00pm - 8:00pm

Friday | 3:00 - 7:00pm

## **1. Introduction**

Welcome to the West End Academy of Dance (WEAD) family! And for returning families, welcome back! This handbook is your one-stop guide to all things relating to WEAD. While we would love for you to take the time to read this information carefully and refer to it as needed, our friendly office staff are always here to help and will happily answer any questions you may have. Nothing is too big or too small, we promise!

## **2. Our Mission**

“Where there is a desire to dance, there is an opportunity to learn.” - MM

It is of utmost importance that all faculty members share our mission that encompasses everything we do both in and outside of the classroom. This vision is shared and demonstrated by the directors, teachers, and staff at our studio and is the driving force behind every interaction with our students and their families.

*Mission:*

*WEAD is a neighborhood dance studio focused on the growth of individual students. We value personal expression and work to cultivate highly skilled, knowledgeable dancers in a fun and safe environment. Creativity and individuality are encouraged, and we strive to develop and inspire a love for and appreciation of all styles of dance and the performing arts. Our professional team of faculty are invested in our dancers and are committed to creating a positive and happy experience for each and every one of our students.*

## **3. Registration**

Before lacing up those dance shoes, all students and/or parents – whether returning or new - must complete their registration in the Parent Portal, so we can ensure we have the most up-to-date contact details for you. This information includes your general waiver..

Please inform the studio of any allergies or medical issues that need special attention either in person or via the Parent Portal.

You may register online ([www.westendacademy.com](http://www.westendacademy.com)) or in person.

Our annual registration fee is \$35 per family, plus a 10% tuition deposit, both of which are non-refundable.

We encourage all of our students and families to try a variety of dance styles, and we are more than happy to accommodate trial classes for students who would like to try something before committing. Please contact the office if you would like to try a new class, and we will fit you in for a trial.

## **Tuition Schedule**

Our regular season runs September to mid-May. When you register for a class, you are registering for the entire season. Tuition is paid on a bi-yearly basis. The remaining first half of the tuition (excluding the 10% deposit paid at the time of registration) is due on August 20th. The second half of tuition is due on December 7, 2024.

**If you wish to drop a class without being liable for the second half of the tuition, you must notify us via email on or before our drop deadline (December 7, 2024).**

Failure to make payment on the due date will result in a late fee of \$25.00. If you do not remit payment, we reserve the right to drop your student from the class.

Monthly tuition payment plans are available and can be arranged by our office staff. If you are interested in a payment plan, please email [info@westendacademy.com](mailto:info@westendacademy.com). There is a one time administrative fee of \$40.00 associated with a payment plan. In order to utilize a payment plan, you must first be enrolled in auto-pay, as we do not accept checks or manual payments with payment plans.

## **4. Communication**

Our primary means of communication is email. You will receive important information via email, so please ensure you have provided us with a current email address that is regularly checked. Please check your spam or junk mail folder to make sure our emails are reaching you.

Communication is a priority of ours, and we promise that no call or email will go unanswered. To keep communication clear and open, please ensure you check your emails and voicemails regularly. Please also note that all questions or concerns must be sent through the office using the contact information on page 1. No parent or student is to contact a teacher directly via phone, email, or social media regarding WEAD-related matters.

Personal meetings with the studio director and a teacher can happily be arranged through the office. You may direct an email to any faculty or staff member through our office email: [info@westendacadmy.com](mailto:info@westendacadmy.com).

## **5. Inclement Weather / School Closing Policy**

We do not follow Henrico County holiday and weather closings. In the case of inclement weather closings, we will notify you via email and/or text message. Please see our annual calendar at [www.westendacademy.com](http://www.westendacademy.com) for scheduled holidays and WEAD closings.

For classes beginning between 10:00am and 3:00pm, inclement weather closings will be decided by 9:00am

For classes beginning between 4:00pm and 8:15pm, inclement weather closings will be decided by 12:00pm.

We will display important information, dates, and studio details on our digital bulletin board in the lobby area. We are happy to chat in more detail about communications you may receive from the studio, so please don't hesitate to give us a call for clarification.

## **6. Code of Conduct**

Below you will find our code of conduct as it pertains to both staff and students. Please ensure you read this carefully so that you have a clear understanding of what we expect from faculty, students, and families. As always, we are open to feedback, so if any of the requirements outlined below are unclear or concerning, please reach out to discuss further. Following a formal meeting, we do reserve the right to dismiss or take disciplinary action on any staff members, students, or parents who breach our studio's code of conduct.

### **Attendance**

Students are allowed four absences per class, per semester.

If your dancer exceeds four absences per semester, per class, they will not be permitted to perform in the recital for that class. Although they would not be permitted to dance in the recital, we would encourage them to continue to come to class when they can. This includes excused and unexcused absences.

Please notify us via email if your dancer will be absent.

-After two consecutive absences without notification, we will make a phone call home.

- After three class absences in a semester (excused or unexcused), you will receive a warning via email that you have one absence remaining.

- After the fourth class absence in a semester (excused or unexcused), you will receive a notice via email that any additional absences will result in your dancer no longer being permitted to perform in the Spring Recital for that class.

- Five or more absences per class per semester will prevent your dancer from being able to perform in the recital for that class.

As students get older and their schoolwork load becomes more rigorous, we encourage families to prioritize academics and take this into consideration when planning your dance schedule.

During the Fall semester, attendance is especially important as we are focusing on technique and building upon our process each week. An overabundance of absences will result in your dancer falling behind their peers. During the Spring semester, attendance is especially important as we are working on Spring Recital choreography. Missing too many classes affects not only the dancer, but the class as a whole. Recital dances are a team effort and having students missing too frequently prevents both students and teachers from preparing appropriately for the recital.

We realize unforeseen circumstances can arise. In that event, please email us at [info@westendacademy.com](mailto:info@westendacademy.com). We would like to try to accommodate when we can. This would include prolonged injury or illness, family emergency, etc.

If a student is injured, they are expected to still attend class to observe, as actively listening is just as beneficial as participating.

### **Expectations Before Class Time**

Students are not allowed to run, play, or use costumes or props in the studio before class time. Yes, dance is fun, and you can have play time during class, but students are not permitted to do any of the above without the teacher's permission. Students will be allowed in the classroom a maximum of 15 minutes

before class begins. This time should be spent quietly stretching, practicing steps, or preparing for class.

## **Behavior**

In the rare case of a parent or student showing disrespect or false statements to any parent, staff member, or student, a meeting will be called immediately and dismissal may be considered at the discretion of the directors. Physical, mental, emotional or cyber bullying by parents, staff or students will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the studio.

Gossiping will not be tolerated while at WEAD, as it undermines our mission statement and is detrimental to the culture we work so hard to uphold. Our culture is what makes WEAD such a unique place to dance, so it takes a sound effort by all involved, staff, parents, and students alike, to ensure we do our best to create a welcoming and supportive environment.

## **Confidentiality**

All client information (including personal, medical and financial information), employee records, financial, and operating data of the studio, and any other information of a private or sensitive nature are considered confidential.

Confidential information should not be read or discussed by any employee unless pertaining to his or her specific job requirements. Examples of inappropriate disclosures include:

- Discussing or revealing confidential information to friends or family members.
- Discussing or revealing confidential information to other employees without a legitimate need to know.
- Disclosing a client's presence in the studio or at a studio event without the consent of the client or their legal guardian to an unauthorized party without a legitimate need to know.

Choreography, costuming, and studio policies remain the intellectual property of WEAD and may not be reproduced or sold by any students, parents, or staff without permission of the owner.

## **Class Disruptions**

No classes or teachers, including during private lessons, are to be disturbed unless it is an emergency. Parents are not to approach teachers or students during class. If messages or food/drink/medication needs are to be passed on to a student, it must be done through an office administrator or Studio Director. All parents must wait in the waiting areas or outside of the studios until classes have been dismissed. Parents are welcome to leave the studio and return for pickup at the end of class time.

### **Hold Harmless**

WEAD does not take responsibility for our students before or after their scheduled classes. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure their child is picked up and dropped off on time. Faculty should notify the office of any continuous tardiness from any student.

### **Personal Belongings**

WEAD takes no responsibility for any stolen or misplaced property on the studio premises. We encourage our families and employees to avoid bringing valuable items into the studio.

Student cell phones and smart watches are NOT permitted in the dance studios unless needed for a medical reason.

### **Correspondence**

Any questions or complaints from a student or parent must go through the office by email, phone, or in person. Parents and students are not permitted to contact teachers via phone, email, or social media. Personal meetings with the studio directors and/or teachers can happily be arranged via the office.

### **Performances**

The directors and staff at WEAD are wholeheartedly committed to ensuring our dancers are not subjected to any inappropriate songs or costuming. We recognize that songs with sexist, explicit, violent, racist, homophobic, or criminal content may influence our dancers and/or audience. We are committed to restricting costumes that project sexuality or contain explicit graphic or textual content. All costumes and performance music will be approved by the Studio Director.

### **Costumes**

Families who do not comply with their fee or costume payment obligations may be charged a late fee, and/or excluded from performances. Costume expenses are the responsibility of the parent, and costumes will not be issued to students with an unpaid balance.

### **Parking Lot**

Cars should not be left unattended in the carpool lane. Please drive safely and slowly in the parking lot. Children are not allowed to run across the parking lot when getting picked up. Either park and come in to pick up your child or use the carpool lane in front of the building. This will ensure a smooth and safe experience for students and drivers alike.

### **Private Lessons**

Private lessons are available at a rate of \$100 per hour. Payment and scheduling of private lessons must be arranged through the office.

### **Right to Amend Class Schedule**

WEAD management reserves the right to change teachers or timetabling when necessary at any time throughout the year. We reserve the right to cancel or change classes due to low enrollment.

## **7. Dress Code**

We're implementing a ballet uniform that includes required leotards and tights purchased from the Nimble website. Leotards and tights not purchased from Nimble will not be permitted. (Leotards and tights for non-ballet genres have not changed from previous years).

In an effort to streamline our dress code, elevate our ballet look, and provide more convenience for our dance families, we now have an online uniform store! The store is currently for ballet classes only. We will be integrating other genres in the coming years. Here, you'll be able to view and purchase required leotards and tights based on your ballet level. You'll also see options for shoes, bags, and other optional accessories! All of these items will be purchased online and shipped directly to you.

Each ballet level has been assigned a leotard color with one or more style options for dancers to choose from. You will notice that if there are multiple leotard style



options, all the styles show as "required." This does not mean you need to purchase all style options. We require that you purchase a minimum of one leotard, along with the required tights.

Please use the sizing chart on the website as a guide. We also have a leotard sizing kit available in the lobby if you're still not sure which size to purchase and want to try one on in person. We will be here weekdays for the month of June from 9am-12pm if you would like to stop in. For the months of July and August, please call before stopping by as our hours are sporadic.

[Click here to view the Nimbly Store](#) where you will be prompted to create an account prior to making any purchases. You will need to add your dancer's name to your account to get started. The website and ordering process will be fully managed by the Nimbly team (contact info below).

**Call us at 800-985-2128 | Email us at [dancers@shopnimbly.com](mailto:dancers@shopnimbly.com)**

We are excited for this upgrade to our dress code and are hopeful that you will find the options affordable and the ordering process seamless! Any questions about dress code, email us at [info@westendacademy.com](mailto:info@westendacademy.com). For any questions regarding your order or the Nimbly website, contact Nimbly customer support.

**\*\*Pink tights and pink slippers are required for ballet classes and performances this year for all levels, a change from last year.**

A note for boys, your dress code has not changed. Boys should wear black athletic shorts or pants with a solid white t-shirt and black ballet slippers. These items can be purchased at Ellman's Dancewear or another dance store of your choosing.

## **Contemporary**

- Bare feet for Contemporary I. Bare feet or socks for Contemporary II and III (socks must be high cotton content for traction)
- Leotard (any color)
- Skin tone, convertible tights or leggings (any color)
- Hair neat (up and out of face)

Boys should wear athletic shorts or pants with a solid color t-shirt.

Please do **not** wear:

- Sweatpants/sweatshirts

- Shirts that show the belly
- Oversized t-shirts
- Trendy tops
- Booty shorts without tights
- Fuzzy socks
- Foot thongs
- Jewelry (small earrings ok)

\*Matching skin tone stirrup tights and shoes/socks or bare feet will be required for recital.

### **Jazz, Musical Theatre Dance, and Modern**

- Leotard (any color/style)
- Skin tone tights, leggings, or jazz pants (any color/style)
- Hair neat (up and out of face)
- Black jazz shoes
- Bare feet for Modern

Boys: Athletic shorts or pants with a solid color t-shirt and black jazz shoes.

Note: Character shoes may be worn sometimes in Musical Theatre Dance. If a dancer does not have character shoes, jazz shoes are fine!

Please do **not** wear:

- Sweatpants/sweatshirts
- Shirts that show the belly
- Oversized t-shirts
- Trendy tops
- Booty shorts without tights
- Socks
- Foot thongs
- Jewelry (small earrings ok)

\*Matching skin tone tights will be required for recital.

## Hip Hop

- Comfortable exercise clothing such as gym or yoga clothes, sweatpants, t-shirts (any color/style)
- Clean tennis shoes that are only worn in the dance studio, no street shoes.
- Hair neat (up and out of face)

Please do **not** wear:

- Shirts that show the belly
- Short shorts
- Dirty tennis shoes
- Oversized hoodies or sweatshirts
- Oversized jewelry

## Tap

Please wear tap shoes with a full wooden bottom, no split sole shoes. Any style Oxford tap shoe is acceptable. No patent leather.

- For girls, a leotard with tights or leggings (any color)
- For boys, a solid colored t-shirt with black, exercise shorts or pants.
- Please avoid baggy clothing and anything with pockets

Please do **not** wear:

- Baggy pants or sweatpants

## 8. Safety

WEAD is very serious about upholding safety policies and Child Protection Laws within the studio, at public performances, and in the digital space.

It is the responsibility of our faculty not to allow students to attempt dangerous tricks that are beyond their capabilities. Please see our injury prevention packet for further details.

Safe dance practice must always be observed in classes of all ages. This includes a sufficient warm-up and stretch session.

We discourage our faculty and staff from privately transporting students to and from classes, rehearsals, or performances at any time except in an emergency. If a faculty member needs to transport students for any reason, it must be with the permission of the Studio Director and with written consent from parents/guardians.

If a student is sick or injured during class, the teacher is required to stop class and tend to the affected student. The Studio Director and the child's emergency contact should be notified immediately. If necessary, an ambulance may be called. All injuries will need to be recorded at the time of injury using the attached WEAD Accident/Injury Report. Two copies of the completed report should be made at the time of the incident. One to be given to the parent/guardian and another to be kept on file at WEAD.

## **9. Privacy**

When you purchase or hire a product or service with WEAD, the information we may collect from you includes your name, address, telephone numbers, email addresses, and medical information. It may also include details of the products and services we provide to you as well as the status of your enrollment. We only collect information directly from our students or their parent/guardian primarily for the purpose of providing services and products and managing invoicing and debt collection.

We will never sell or share any of your information to a third party unless required by government authorities or in the event of debt recovery. Any information passed on will be done so with appropriate privacy and confidentiality protection.

Information is stored securely in paper or electronic form and is accessible only by authorized personnel.

If you would like to know what information we hold about you or wish to update the information, please email your request to [info@westendacademy.com](mailto:info@westendacademy.com).

## **Add / Drop Class Policy**

We will assume you wish to continue for the second semester unless you tell us in writing before December 7, 2024.

Drop notices should be emailed to [info@westendacademy.com](mailto:info@westendacademy.com). WEAD does not accept drop notifications via voicemail.

Without written notification, you will be responsible for second semester tuition charges as well as costume balances for any classes that are dropped.

We also assume your child will participate in our end of the year performance, unless you tell us in writing before December 1, 2024.

## 12. Social Media Policy

WEAD's Social Media Policy refers to all social networking sites, video/photo sharing sites, blogs, micro-blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, and instant messaging (for example, Facebook). Please see below for our regulations regarding Social Media and feel free to contact our office staff if you have any questions.

- Sharing a WEAD post is highly encouraged and the easiest way to promote our studio.
- Any comments or posts perceived to be obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, or hateful towards WEAD staff, students, or families may subject the owner to or legal action.
- Any content revealing or referring to sensitive studio information is not allowed to be shared online.
- We discourage parents, students and faculty from becoming 'friends' or 'followers' on social media, unless there is an existing relationship. We consider all studio members to be family and as such feel the obligation to respect and monitor personal boundaries.
- Personally identifiable information of any featured minors - including names, ages or location - must be removed when posting on social media.  
*We are thrilled to be a part of your family's dance journey this year and are looking forward to growing together to mold this generation of skilled, confident, genuine, and unique performers.*