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STUDENT HANDBOOK

2011-2012

**Your Hometown Educational
Dance/Cheer/Music Resource!**

STUDIO PHILOSOPHY



Children and adults entering Valley Dance & Arts Academy (VDAA) have the opportunity to experience dance in a non-competitive and non-threatening atmosphere. Beginning as early as age 2, a young child is allowed to still be a child while learning about dance through creative play and movement with music. Our classes for 3-11 year olds are based on solid technique in ballet, tap, and tumbling. Ages 12-18 combine lyrical, jazz and tap so they can become well rounded dancers. Adults are encouraged to jump back into dance as an alternative form of fitness or to continue their love of the art form. The teachers at VDAA strive to give children freedom to experience movement while also teaching about classroom and team etiquette in a safe and friendly environment. We work on sharing, caring and physical development to project a lifelong passion for the arts. It is our goal to provide each student with an opportunity to grow individually and as part of a team with their peers and to develop safe fitness routines for the rest of their lives.

STAFFING

Classes are staffed by 1 teacher per class. Our 3-5 year old classes are not larger than 10 students/class. Our 4-11 year old classes are not larger than 14 students/class. Our 12-18 year old classes are not larger than 18 students/class. In addition, we often have a student assistants helping with many of our younger classes. Our assistants are age 10 or older.

TEACHER CERTIFICATIONS

All teachers and staff are certified in CPR. All new instructors go through a back-ground check prior to their employment. Our teachers continue their training throughout the year by attending workshops/classes to keep up-to-date in their teaching.

OUR PROGRAMS

VDAA is your premier hometown dance studio for children and adults, both male and female. Dancers may choose to make dance their “sport” or may use dance to enhance other activities. They may use dance to go along with their love of music or may take a class to help them better understand their own physical capabilities or, perhaps, to learn the latest dance craze. Adults may take dance as an alternative to other fitness forms, to keep their muscles supple, or as a continuation of their enjoyment of movement from when they were a child. Boys may take dance to help enhance or get an edge in their school sport. Many families find dance a way they can engage in an activity together or to continue their enjoyment of music and rhythm.

CLASSES OFFERED

Our core dance classes give a basic-advanced knowledge and enjoyment of dance movement:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Type of Class</u>
PK-G1	Ballet/tap/tumbling
Grade 2-12	Lyrical/tap/jazz

Additional Opportunities: Play-N-Learn, Hip Hop, Ballroom, Tumbling, Musical Theatre & Drama, Cheerleading, Ballet/Pointe, Adaptive, Dance Company, Competition Solo/Duet/Trio

Music Opportunities: Vocal, Piano, Drums, Guitar, Woodwinds, Musical Theatre, Small Groups

TUITION / FEES / DISCOUNTS

(applicable to Stillwater and Osceola locations, not St Croix Falls)

Registration: There is a one time per year, non-refundable registration fee of \$25 per family. (Family rates are parent and child or siblings living in same household.)

Tuition: Please see class schedule for current pricing. The first payment for fall classes is due upon registration. All other monthly tuition is due the 15th of the month prior to the following month. (Example: October tuition is due the 15th of September.) Class tuition is based on 10 months from late August through early June for the regular dance year. Music is year round. An abbreviated summer session is available July-August with payment due at the time of summer class registration.

Discounts: There is a 10% discount for the entire year's class tuition if paid in full at registration. There is no full session discount for summer. Check out our multi-class discount per student on our class brochure. No double or triple discounts—you choose which discount works best for your family.

Late Fees: All tuition payments not received by the due date will incur a \$15.00 late fee. Class discounts will be terminated if late payments continuously occur.

Refund Policy: There is no refund on missed classes. You have the opportunity to make-up missed classes any time your schedule allows in an equivalent or lower level class. (Studio snow days are re-scheduled in another class of your convenience.) There is no refund on the full year class payment option. Please be sure this is option works well for you prior to paying the year in full!

ENROLLMENT

Upon registration and prior to the dancer's first class, the following forms are to be completed and on file: Online registration with waiver agreement. **Late enrollment:** After the dance year has begun, new parents and children are always welcome to observe a class prior to enrolling if you prefer. Once a class choice has been confirmed, the above forms are to be completed and on file before the child's first day of class. We do not pro-rate monthly tuition.

CLASS CHANGES / WITHDRAWALS

All class changes (switching day/time) must be done no later than October 31st. If you are withdrawing, you must inform the office by the 15th of the prior month. (If you wish to discontinue for March, you must inform the office in writing by February 15.) You will not receive a refund for withdrawing mid month. You will continue to be charged your monthly tuition until you have contacted the office and given proper written notice as indicated above.

OBSERVING CLASS

Parents are encouraged to observe classes from the hallway on the first week of each month September through February. Peek through the door or window but do not linger or cause distractions. Our teachers may choose to invite parents in once between March and May to see a preview of the dances.

SHOWCASE / PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

We hold an optional winter show at our Stillwater and Osceola locations (St Croix Falls is welcome to participate in Osceola). In addition, at the end of each regular dance year, our dancers have the opportunity to showcase their skills that they have worked on all year. This is our big annual showcase early June. All are invited to participate but may choose not to do so. If you choose not to participate, you will still learn the dance and be included in class and on picture day.

*****Please see our red Showcase brochure for all showcase information and costs*****

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Friends are not allowed in class. We host a bring-a-friend week in the fall so please wait until then to bring your friends to class. If there is an extenuating circumstance where a friend will be with, you must get prior approval (not same day) from the office.

Food—Students may not have food or gum in class. If food is needed for medical reasons (i.e. diabetes) please record this on your registration form. Our teachers occasionally hand out treats in class for special occasions. Only water is allowed in class as long as it is in a container with a tightly sealed cap. *Please note:* from time to time our teachers may eat a light dinner or snack during class. Please understand that many of our teachers work through their dinner hour and may need a bite to eat to keep their energy levels up.

Toys—Our littlest dancers often feel a sense of security by bringing a stuffed “friend” with them from home. We do allow stuffed “friends” in class, at the teacher’s discretion, for the beginning of the year while the dancer acclimates to the studio. By December the dancer should feel comfortable to enter class without their stuffed “friend.” Parents, please help by allowing only 1 “friend” that is small in size. During class our stuffed “friends” will be our audience and will watch over their dancer from a special place by the mirrors.

ILLNESS

Parent(s) should be sure their child is in good health before coming to class. We understand they may need to miss due to illness. When your child will miss class, please give us a courtesy call or email so we can inform their teacher. Missed classes can be made up in any equivalent level class based on your schedule. Please check the office for other class times.

BIRTHDAYS and HOLIDAYS

Birthdays are a fun way for the dancers to celebrate with each other. Dancers may bring a small wrapped treat to class to share anytime during the week of their birthday.

Holidays: Please check our online calendar for all holiday breaks. We do not break for school Spring Break as we have dancers from many different school districts.

DRESS CODE

DANCE: Girls - A leotard and tights must be worn to all classes, even in warm weather months. Leotard and tights may be of any style and color. Ballet/Lyrical—hot shorts or a ballet skirt (not tutu) may be added at the instructor’s discretion. Jazz and Tap—hot shorts or capris may be added at the teacher’s discretion. Boys - Sweatpants or athletic pants/shorts that don’t drag on the floor. Tight fitting tee or tank, which must be tucked in.

TUMBLING: A leotard and hot shorts for girls, shorts and tank/tee for boys.

CHEER: Cheer shorts and tee with correct cheer sneakers.

HIP HOP: Yoga pants and tighter tee or tank. No clothing that exposes the midriff. No jeans.

ADULTS: Athletic wear of your choice.

ALL: NO baggy shirts, shorts or sweatshirts/jackets can be worn to class. The teacher will ask the dancer to remove all baggy clothing items. NO pants that drag on the floor. NO jeans or pants with zipper or button closures. Shoes must be appropriate to each dance discipline.

In colder months, the dancer may wear tighter dance sweaters or cover-ups to begin class. Once muscles are warmed, they will be asked to remove extra layers. If your dancer needs to stay bundled in extra layers, they are not working hard enough in class! Please note: the teachers may wear layers since they are *teaching* and not dancing full out in every class.

SHOE REQUIREMENTS

PK-G4 combo classes:

Ballet	Pink, full sole, leather ballet shoe <i>(no satin dance slippers from Walmart/Target—these are bedroom slippers!)</i>
Jazz	Black jazz boot (STW & OSC) Black jazz shoe w/ laces (SCF)
Tap	Black patent tap with tie

G5-12 combo classes:

Ballet	Pink split sole leather ballet slipper
Lyrical	Dance Paw modern shoe
Jazz	Black jazz boot (STW & OSC) Black jazz shoe w/ laces (SCF)
Tap	Black jazz tap with laces or pull on boot
Hip Hop	Black dance sneaker <i>(no outdoor shoe can be worn on the studio floors)</i>
Ballroom	Any style ballroom shoe with a suede bottom
Can Can	Black lace up Can Can boot
Cheer	Program approved cheer white sneakers <i>(no outdoor shoes)</i>
Musical Theatre	Tan jazz boot, tan grecian sandal or tan character shoe

Valley Elite Dance Company and Competition: Please see Elite Handbook for requirements.

You may purchase dance shoes from anywhere but all shoes must be approved by our office staff. The dance shoes sold at VDAA have been tested by the owner for over 10 years. We provide quality shoes that are appropriate to the growing needs of the child's foot as well as shoes that work well with the maturing foot. You will find our prices very comparable to the cheap brands found at discount retailers and our service unmatched! We offer used shoes at low cost (based on availability). We stick with a tried and true shoe for most of our disciplines – we do not follow the “trendy” fashion shoe craze or require you to purchase the hard to find colors or styles that pop up every other year!

IMPROPER DRESS ATTIRE

After 3 classes of improper dress, the student will be asked to sit out of class and a note will be emailed to the parent. Please see above dress code. Please make sure your child is properly dressed for all classes, including hair being pulled back and out of face. A football player would not be allowed in the game without the proper clothing and shoes!

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE PLAN

Children are constantly learning appropriate behavior through their surroundings, actions and words. Our teachers guide the dancers' behaviors by being a good role model. We teach through praise and encouragement of good behavior.

When inappropriate behavior is shown in class, our teachers use the following guidance plan so that all of our dancers can get the most out of each class:

Step 1: Teacher Presence

The teacher may stand near, look at, place hand on shoulder of student.

Step 2: Verbal Warning

The teacher may inform the student that their actions are unacceptable and if they continue, they will be asked to sit out of class movement for a time.

Step 3: Removal from Activity

The teacher will have the student sit out of the activity for a length of time. The child will be asked to rejoin when the teacher sees that the student is ready to return to the activity. At this time the child may be asked to apologize to any student they may have interrupted. Parents will be informed of a student's disruptive behavior and repetitive behavior issues.

ARRIVING TO / DEPARTING FROM CLASS

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR CHILD(REN); Please do not leave your young child(ren) unattended!!! Please clean up after your child(ren)!!!

Bring your younger dancer to their designated classroom on time. If your child has separation issues, please feel free to let the teacher know that you will wait for a few minutes with them just outside the classroom to help them calm down before entering class. Or, if you choose, send them into class and discreetly check on them in a few minutes to see if they are doing satisfactorily. Many times, sending them into class to be with their classmates and teacher is enough to calm them within a few minutes of the beginning of class. Routine is most important for our littlest dancers.

Older dancers may be dropped off and get themselves to class. Please be advised that there may not always be adult supervision in our studio waiting area and that your child is your responsibility.

If you choose to wait for your child during class, please keep your voices low and courteous of others and the classroom. If you are waiting with other children, please be responsible for them at all times. While we strive to keep our environment safe, younger children must be watched by their parent or caregiver while on our premises. Do not allow them to run or play down corridors or wander from your site.

Be sure that your dancers are waiting inside when it is time for them to be picked up, if you do not get them directly from their classroom. We do not want any dancer to wait outside, even if the weather is pleasant. We do not have visual access to our parking lot and are concerned for the safety of all dancers. Children should be picked up within 10 minutes after their class ends. We do understand from time to time you may run late due to traffic or unexpected delays. Please let their teacher know if you will be late.

Late pickup charge: If parents consistently arrive late to pick up their child/children after class, you will be assessed a late fee of \$5.00 per 15 minutes, per child.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In case of a weather closing, (i.e., snow/cold), Valley Dance will announce on our voicemail and website calendar if there will be classes or not. Often times the weather has cleared by mid-day even if school has been cancelled the entire day. Please always check as we may hold classes even if school had been cancelled. Because everyone’s schedule varies outside their regular dance day, snow days are made up at your convenience in another class of an equivalent level.

Tornadoes—In case of a tornado emergency, the staff will make sure all children are accounted for and move them to the designated shelter area located in the hallway.

Fire Evacuation—Children will be taken out of the environment by means of the nearest exits and taken to a central meeting spot. Primary exits to outdoors are located through out the building. Fire Department will be contacted: 911.

COMMUNICATING COMPLIMENTS, CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS

Your appreciation, ideas and feedback help us make continual improvements to our programs. We will work with you in resolving any problems that may arise. In order to address concerns and suggestions at the most appropriate and effective level, we suggest the following: Parent/guardian should direct any concerns by emailing the owner at vdinc@hotmail.com or scheduling a time outside of class hours with the teacher and owner. We strive to make this educational experience excellent for all. At no time will foul language or disrespectful communication be accepted.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Valley Dance & Fitness does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its admissions policies, tuition and fees or auditioned programs.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Dancing with Angels Scholarship program began in 2006 with the passing of Tim & Tibbe’s daughter, Trientje. She was an extremely active pre-born who never made it into the world to experience the beauty of dance. In December of 2007, their son Birkten was delivered prematurely with Down Syndrome. With both losses, Tim & Tibbe wanted to reach children who may not have the opportunity to dance because of financial need or other circumstance. If you would like to contribute to this Scholarship Program, feel free to make a donation at any time to the office. You may do so anonymously if you choose—just mark your envelope “Dancing with Angels.” If you know of someone who would truly enjoy a chance to dance but is unable to make the financial commitment, please let us know so we can try to help them through our scholarship program. We also partner with Youth Advantage to provide dance/cheer/music opportunities to underserved families in Washington County. You can join us

in helping support Youth Advantage by making donations of used sports and music equipment anytime throughout the year by dropping your gently used items with the office in Stillwater.



THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING VALLEY DANCE & ARTS ACADEMY!

Tibbe has been in the dance/music business for over 20 years. She has been successful with her studio teaching, guest choreographer for many theatre productions, gymnastics and cheer programs, community school and homeschool programs, Music Together level 1 certification and the professional ballroom competition world. In addition, she has been developing her preschool and adaptive programming for the past 5 years and finds the greatest joy working with anyone who truly wants to learn.

It is her goal to provide quality educational and progressive dance curriculum to all families at a fair cost. She believes in sustaining community partnerships and strives to break down the walls of the competitiveness that is so prevalent in dance and arts.

She believes in preparing dancers to maintain a lifelong interest in the arts in a fun, safe and educational environment that will allow anyone to go as far as they dream without having to “keep up with the Jones’”. A good arts education can be obtained by anyone who believes in themselves and is willing to put forth effort, not exuberant amounts of money!