



CHARLOTTE BALLET ACADEMY®

STUDENT HANDBOOK

SCHOOL YEAR 2023/2024

I. WELCOME LETTER

Dear Students, Parents, and Student Supporters,

Charlotte Ballet Academy®, founded in 1993, is proud to be the official school of Charlotte Ballet.

Our leadership's vision for the organization is fueled by creativity with a commitment to diversity, equity, access, education and expression. In all parts of the Charlotte Ballet organization, we strive to create a culture that is safe and motivational surrounded by the opportunity for your personal growth.

Charlotte Ballet Academy's mission is to sustain a nurturing and structured environment that encourages individuality, creative expression and an appreciation for the art of dance. The Academy provides expert instruction to students who are training for a professional career in dance, as well as those who are interested in simply experiencing the joy and benefits of dance training. Charlotte Ballet Academy offers programs for students in a range of ages and with different levels of ability. Students attain life skills such as a strong work ethic, discipline, respect for instructors and peers, poise, self-assurance and an awareness of the physical body through their dance training.

Welcome to Charlotte Ballet Academy – we are honored to be part of your life in dance!

Sincerely,

Ayisha McMillan Cravotta, Academy Director

II. ACADEMY POLICIES

To achieve the maximum results of training and proper progression through the syllabus, students are required to attend all classes and rehearsals to which they are assigned.

Parents may submit class absences through the parent portal under "My Students" and "Class Attendance". This will update the teacher portal in real time. Should parents need support, they may contact frontdesk@charlotteballet.org or dial 704-372-3900.

A. ENROLLMENT

The 2023/2024 School Year consists of 36 weeks of training which culminate in a year-end performance. New students are accepted during the school year as space is available. Waiting lists are maintained when classes have reached their capacity. Prior to the beginning of the school year, placement classes are required for students to enter Ballet 1 and above. Placement classes are required for all students to enter the Academy after October 1, 2023.

B. TUITION & PAYMENTS

Registration Fees and Tuition Deposits must be paid prior to the first day of class. Students will not be allowed to participate in classes if tuition has not been paid. This policy applies to every level in the Academy. Students will not be allowed to perform in the annual Spring Student Performances if tuition balances are not paid in full by May 30, 2024.

Yearly tuition costs are divided over ten monthly installments. Please be aware, while installments are drafted each month, the tuition due is not paid in exchange for one month of services. The first installment (deposit) is due upon registration and cards are charged automatically on the first of each month: September 1, 2023 - April 1, 2024. Declined payments are subject to a \$20 late fee if not paid by the fifth of the month.

All tuition and registration fees paid to the Academy are non-refundable. There are no tuition credits. No portion of tuition will be refunded in the event of absence, injury, relocation, decision to withdraw (refer to pg. 9 for complete withdrawal policy), or dismissal from the Academy. There are no tuition refunds in the event the Academy must pivot to an all-virtual platform.

C. ATTENDANCE

To achieve the maximum results of training and proper progression through the syllabus, students are asked to attend all classes and rehearsals to which they are assigned. To minimize absences, parents are urged to take classes and rehearsals into consideration when scheduling their children for appointments and planning family vacations. Please be sure to report all absences in the parent portal. If you do not have immediate access to the portal, you may email frontdesk@charlotteballet.org.

Excessive absences will result in a student being asked to leave the program in order to allow a child on the waiting list to attend. Consistent absences will also be factored into casting decisions for professional productions such as Nutcracker. Additionally, dancers who have multiple absences from Student Ensemble classes may have limited participation in choreographed pieces due to the nature of the class.

Make up classes are not offered at this time.

D. TARDINESS

Students are expected to arrive at the Academy on time for the start of their classes and rehearsals. In the interest of injury prevention, students who arrive ten or more minutes late for class will be asked to observe class that day. Please show respect to your teachers and fellow students by arriving on time for your classes and rehearsals.

E. OBSERVING CLASS

Students who cannot participate in class will be asked to stay home, while those who can participate partially (for example, barre but no jumps) will be permitted to observe remaining portion of class.

Students are required to write down class combinations and corrections that are given by the instructor. After they have completed their forms they are to return it to their instructor for review.

F. INJURY

When your child sees a doctor for any injury or pain that may affect their participation in class please email the Front Desk at frontdesk@charlotteballet.org. Students are asked to provide Charlotte Ballet Academy with a Doctor's note indicating when they are cleared to safely return to dance.

G. CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

In order to achieve the skill level required of the physical body in dance, students should understand the necessary level of focus and concentration that will be required of them prior to attending class. Students will be encouraged to learn dance technique primarily through observation and execution of steps rather than through discussion. Talking during class and rehearsals is discouraged with the occasional question welcomed and indicated by the students' raising of their hand. This allows the maximum amount of progress to be made during class time since dance technique is based on continual repetition of movement to train and strengthen the muscles of the body. Students who are disruptive to the class will be asked to observe class so that others may continue their work.

H. ACADEMY COMMUNICATION

The school sends monthly Academy Newsletters and other communication by email. Please add Academy Front Desk frontdesk@charlotteballet.org to your approved sender list in order to receive important messages and alerts. Front desk staff are available at 704-372-3900 during normal business hours, Monday - Friday 9 AM - 6 PM and Saturday 9 AM - 2 PM.

III. DRESS CODE

All students should wear street clothing over their ballet attire when coming to and from class. Ballet slippers should never be worn outdoors. Dress code requirements are mandatory for all students in all levels of the Academy.

All students must have their hair neatly secured in a bun or combed back out of the face and secure for all ballet classes. Jewelry is not allowed in any class. This includes smart watches, bracelets, rings and necklaces. Dancers may wear small (non-hanging) earrings in order to prevent injury. Clear, neutral or light pastel colors may be worn on fingernails.

Tights may not be rolled up and must be worn inside ballet shoes. Pink or flesh tone tights may not be worn outside of the leotard.

The official 2023/2024 Academy Dress Code can be found under Quick Links in your parent portal.

By partnering with the Eurotard and Wear Moi brands, the dress code offers high quality, reasonably priced dancewear for our Academy students. A summary of dress code items can be found on the [Parent Portal](#), under "Quick Links", and you will find more details about your child's ballet division on the reverse side of this sheet.

Families may choose to purchase dress code items at our local retail partners (M.A.Zing Dancewear, Morris Costumes, Grace and Pointe, or Lebos), or order through the Wear Moi website. Shipping of Wear Moi leotards may take longer than expected, so please purchase them early!

A. PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Performance packets will be provided prior to both Nutcracker and the end of year Primary & Festival performances, as well as Student Ensembles, to outline specific performance/role requirements.

However, students should be prepared with both one nude/skin-toned camisole leotard and one black camisole leotard for all performances. It will also be expected for students to provide their own make-up.

IV. EVALUATION, EXAMINATION, & LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

A. EVALUATION & EXAMINATION

Students enrolled in Ballet 1 - 5 will receive a written evaluation at the end of the 2023/2024 school year. Exams are held March 11 - 19, 2022. Recommendations for summer study and fall class placement are listed on the evaluation forms. Once complete, the forms will be listed under "My Students" and "Registration and Evaluations" on the parent portal.

B. LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

It is Charlotte Ballet Curriculum standard for young dance students to remain in the same class level for two to three years before continuing to the next level. Unlike academic studies where a student progresses a grade level each year, in dance training it is normal to spend several years in one level in order to properly assimilate all the necessary material.

The training of a dancer is based on the constant repetition of particular steps and movements until the student has a full comprehension of the dance vocabulary and shows competency of execution.

Sometimes, especially in younger children, total comprehension can only be accomplished when the physical body has grown strong enough to handle the more complicated moves required in dance. In these instances, we prefer to wait until a child's physical development matches the requirements of the next level's syllabus.



It is important to maintain consistent attendance in dance classes during the school year. This ensures the progress of each student in their given class level. Once a student has reached the Primary Division (Ballet 1 – Ballet 2A) in the Academy, twice a week attendance is required in order to cover the more advanced syllabus and to prepare them for the levels ahead. Similar to any sport requiring difficult motor skills and dexterity of movement, disciplined and regular practice will lead to quicker advancement.

It is also advisory to be cautious and conservative about the age at which a student begins training on pointe. Usually, by age 11 or 12 the student is strong enough physically and advanced enough technically to begin pointe work. It can be dangerous to start a student on pointe too early in the process of her training. The student must have a thorough understanding of proper body alignment as well as ankle, foot, leg and abdominal strength to prevent injury or the development of chronic conditions such as tendonitis. A student who begins pointe work too early may also develop bad habits in an effort to stand on pointe when they are not strong enough to do it properly. There is no urgency to starting pointe work at an early age, as the accomplished and well-trained dancer easily goes up on pointe with little effort and is able to progress at a rapid pace. Many students who start pointe work too early are then discouraged by the difficulty of proper execution, which they did not anticipate. It is much wiser to wait until the appropriate time when the student is physically ready and can achieve the anticipated results. We hope this information will enable parents and students to better understand the actual timeline of development in a dancer's training and that there is nothing unusual about the gradual advancement from level to level.

V. REHEARSALS & PERFORMANCES

A. SPRING PERFORMANCES

The Academy showcases three performances at the end of each school year. Preparatory students perform at the Center for Dance uptown in May 2024, while Primary and Festival performances take place at Knight Theater in June 2024. Performance fees are charged along with registration fees upon enrollment and cover the cost of performance costumes.

More information regarding ticketing, video recordings, and other keepsakes will be announced in Spring 2024.

B. REHEARSALS

It is extremely important for students to attend all rehearsals as they are scheduled. Absences from rehearsals affect all dancers and choreographers involved. In particular, Nutcracker rehearsals require perfect attendance and a student's opportunity to perform may be revoked if rehearsals are missed.

VI. SUMMER STUDY

Charlotte Ballet Academy highly recommends that students study during the summer months to maintain their level of achievement. The Academy encourages students in the Intermediate and Advanced divisions to continue their training in a Summer Intensive program.

The Academy offers its own nationally recognized Summer Intensive program here at the Center for Dance, but also encourages advanced students to study at other programs throughout the country in order to gain new insight and allow the opportunity to be seen by other dance professionals. The Academy maintains a list of recommended programs available to students, and encourages parents and students to schedule conferences with Academy faculty for counsel.

Dates for summer programming can be found in your 2023/2024 Calendar.



VII. SCHEDULE

Student schedules can be accessed via the Parent Portal. Once logged in, visit "My Students" and

"Class Schedule" for the most up to date information regarding weekly schedules and school breaks.

Parents should also refer to the 2023/2024 Academy Calendar for an overview of the year.

VIII. REFUND & WITHDRAWAL POLICY

We understand that life and plans change. While the enrollment for classes at Charlotte Ballet Academy is for the full Academic Year, enrolled students may withdraw from individual classes or from the Academy entirely before the end of the year.

In the event you choose to withdraw your student from the Academy, we require 30 calendar days' notice. Any payments scheduled in the 30 day notice window will be deducted and are not eligible for refunds.

Charlotte Ballet Academy reserves the right to withdrawal students who have not attended any of their scheduled classes for 30 calendar days. Withdrawals due to lapsed attendance are not eligible for any refunds. I further understand that should a scheduled payment occur within the 30 calendar day lapsed attendance, that I am responsible for all full payment due.

A. REFUND POLICY

All tuition, fees, purchases, and optional purchases are non-refundable once paid to Charlotte Ballet Academy for any reason, including but not limited to injury, illness, change of plans, or withdrawal.

All paid fees are non-transferable. There are no refunds in the event the Academy must pivot to an all-virtual platform.

B. TERMS & CONDITIONS OF WITHDRAWALS

I understand that the Charlotte Ballet Academy policy states that "All tuition and registration fees paid to the Academy are non-refundable. There are no tuition credits. No portion of tuition will be refunded in the event of absence, injury, relocation, decision to withdraw, or dismissal from the Academy."

Note that monthly payments are automatically deducted from the payment method on file on the first of every month. If a student withdraws from a class after the first he/she will still be charged for the full monthly installment and the automatic payments will end at the beginning of the following month. Tuition will not be prorated or refunded for students withdrawing.

In the event I choose to withdraw my student from the Academy, I understand it is my responsibility to give 30 calendar days' notice. I further understand that should a scheduled payment occur within my 30 calendar day notice window, that I am responsible for full payment due.

I understand that once a family decides to withdraw from a class or the Academy and wishes to enroll in the future the student will be treated as a new client and placement in any future classes will be determined by a placement class and space availability.

C. PROCESSING WITHDRAWALS

The Academy processes withdrawals as quickly as possible but requests at least 2 business days as staff availability varies during the year. To begin the withdrawal process contact frontdesk@charlotteballet.org.



IX. STUDENT HEALTH

Ballet is an athletic pursuit and the body needs the best support possible. Here are a few ideas to help

you have the most beneficial training experience.

Fueling your body and adequate rest. Ensure you have eaten a snack prior to class. Foods such as fruits, vegetables, yogurt and nuts are a great way to fuel your body. Sleep is very important and allows muscles to relax and rest overnight.

Arriving early and preparing for class. You will get the maximum benefit from ballet class if you arrive early (15 minutes before) and are mentally and physically prepared for class.

X. NON-DISCRIMINATION/NON-HARASSMENT

Charlotte Ballet's Academy is dedicated to the treatment of all persons with respect and dignity and to providing an environment that is free from any form of discrimination or harassment. The Academy prohibits and will not tolerate harassment of any kind to or by any persons, including teachers, staff, students, parents and any other person affiliated with or doing business with Charlotte Ballet's Academy. This prohibition includes harassment for any unlawful discriminatory reason, such as race, gender, national origin, disability, age or religion.

This policy also prohibits actions that, while they may not be severe or serious as to constitute harassment in a legal sense, are nevertheless commonly understood to be abusive and disrespectful of others.

Accordingly, slurs, jokes, or remarks that are derogatory of a person or group's race, ethnic background, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, economic status, or age are considered inappropriate for the Academy's environment. Each person is responsible for exercising their own good judgment to avoid engaging in conduct that may violate this policy. A person who believes himself or herself to be a victim of discrimination or harassment should report the incident to the Academy Director. The matter will be addressed on a confidential basis with disclosure only to the extent necessary for fair problem resolution and only to those who have an immediate need to know.

A. BULLYING

Charlotte Ballet Academy does not tolerate bullying in any form – verbal, written, or online. Students are asked to report bullying to their teacher or Academy staff member as soon as possible.

B. ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES OR SMOKING

Charlotte Ballet prohibits the use of alcohol, tobacco and/or illegal drugs by any person, no matter the age, residing in, visiting, or otherwise present during the 2023/2024 School Year at any time. All program participants are expected to be sober/under no influence of any substance during any and all program activities while at the Center for Dance, Belk Theater, Knight Theater, or any program activity not at the Center for Dance. It is a violation of North Carolina State law for any individual under the age of 18 to purchase tobacco products. There is no smoking or vaping allowed in the Charlotte Ballet Center for Dance.

Violation of these policies may result in immediate dismissal from the program without a tuition refund. Parents will be notified immediately if a dancer is found or is suspected to be in violation of the above policies.

C. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Students are expected to act in a respectful manner while at the Academy or any related Academy activity. Students responsible for disorderly conduct, violating any school policy, insubordination, disruption of class, or violating any of the classroom teacher's rules, will be subject to the following consequences:

1st offense: The student will receive a written warning and will have a meeting with the Academy Director.

2nd offense: The student will be removed from one ballet class; parents will not receive a refund for this class.



3rd offense: The student will be expelled from the program; parents will not receive a refund for the school year.

Depending on the severity of the offense, Academy leadership reserves the right to dismiss a student from the program at any time during the school year.

XI. SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDES

A. EMBODYING CHARLOTTE BALLET'S MISSION

A brand isn't a logo or a product. A brand is the way we speak, the way we act and the experiences we provide. We are Charlotte Ballet's brand ambassadors and the embodiment of Charlotte Ballet's mission: "To provide artistically excellent programming to diverse audiences in our home city of Charlotte, the Southeast region and to the varied communities we serves while on tour across the nation." Keep this in mind when posting on social media, specifically about Charlotte Ballet.

B. DECORUM

Representing Charlotte Ballet – A good policy to follow is, whether your account is public or private, assume that everything you post may be seen by the general public. When you post about Charlotte Ballet or represent yourself as part of Charlotte Ballet, we ask that you present the company in a positive light.

In this day and age, your social media not only represents you and Charlotte Ballet, but it also represents the quality of your technique to the world. When photos or video involve dancers, be sure you and any other dancers involved are using the same technique you'd display in your most important audition.

At times, we will ask students to post on behalf of Charlotte Ballet Academy in the form of a social media takeover. This will be coordinated in advance and specific guidelines will be provided. Posts and comments should reflect your personality and always be professional and positive. Any posts that violate Charlotte Ballet's social media decorum may result in removal of the inappropriate content by the Marketing team.

Responding to comments on social media – if you see posts or comments on Charlotte Ballet's profiles that are rude or negative, do not engage with them. The Marketing team monitors our social media presence and will create an action plan for negative comments dependent on content. On your own, personal social media, you may respond to comments and questions in the best method for you while maintaining a positive atmosphere. If comments become negative or rude you may delete them if you wish and are able, but do not engage.

C. PHOTO USAGE

Photos shared within the Academy Facebook group may be used by Charlotte Ballet in promotion of Charlotte Ballet Academy. Photo credit will be given to the person who shares that image (see Academy Facebook Group Guide for more information). Photos posted outside of the Facebook Group with a Charlotte Ballet/Performance location, hashtag or tag may also be shared by Charlotte Ballet with appropriate credit.

At times, Charlotte Ballet's Marketing Team may repost student's photos/videos on Charlotte Ballet Academy's Instagram and Facebook pages. In the case that Charlotte Ballet or Charlotte Ballet Academy are not already tagged, the Marketing Department will seek permission from the student before using their content and be sure to include photo credits.

D. EVOLVING PLATFORM

Social media is ever-changing. Platforms transform, get updated, come and go. Policies may need to be updated based on what works best in this ever-evolving atmosphere. Feel free to make suggestions for change and improvement.



E. ACADEMY FACEBOOK GROUP

The Academy Facebook Group is a separate platform from our general Academy Facebook and Instagram pages. Only Academy parents who have a student currently enrolled will be permitted to join the group. To join the Charlotte Ballet Academy Facebook group, type "Charlotte Ballet Academy" into your Facebook search bar and hit "enter." On the top bar of the next page, select "groups" to see only groups with this name. Once you see the correct group, select "join." Please allow two business days for a moderator to approve your request.

The purpose of the Charlotte Ballet Academy Facebook Group is for parents to stay connected. The page is private and meant only for parents of current Academy students and Charlotte Ballet administrators/moderators. Parents are encouraged to connect with one another to enrich their Charlotte Ballet Academy experience. The page also serves as an information hub for the Academy where parents can find information and updates.

Charlotte Ballet staff members will serve as moderators of the Academy group. Moderation will take place Monday- Friday from 9 AM-5 PM. Please allow one business day for response. For immediate needs please call the Academy at 704.372.3900 or follow the procedure for your specific need.

What content is best to post? – The Academy Facebook group is designed to be a place for parents to connect with each other about Charlotte Ballet Academy. The group is a great place to share photos with other parents or arrange a carpool.

What content is not allowed? Any content NOT related to Charlotte Ballet Academy is not permitted within the group. The group does not circumvent other channels for information. For example, absences will still be reported through the absence web form. Any absences submitted on the Facebook page WILL NOT be considered valid. Please refrain from discussing personal matters or posting negative, hateful speech. A moderator will immediately delete any content that is inappropriate.

Parents are welcome to leave the group at any time. Participation is not required, but is a voluntary additional way to stay up-to-date with Academy happenings and connect with other parents. If a parent no longer has a student enrolled in the Academy, a Charlotte Ballet moderator will remove them from the group. Anyone repeatedly posting inappropriate material will also be removed.



PARENT/STUDENT SIGNATURE

Dear Students and Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

This handbook was developed as a guide for students and parents and to answer commonly asked questions that come up during the course of the program. Our goal is to create a positive educational atmosphere of learning where rules are enforced firmly, fairly, and consistently to all students.

We ask that you familiarize yourself with this handbook by reading it and sign this page as evidence that you are aware of our policies and procedures. This form is part of the student registration process at Charlotte Ballet Academy and must be returned as a condition of enrollment.

Signing below is evidence that parents and students have read and understand the contents of this handbook.

Signature Parent/Guardian:

**not required if student is 18 years of age or older*

Signature of Student:

Print Name of Student:

