

MMDA School Policies

Attire – The Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy has a required dress code for all students which enables the teacher to best see each student's body and correct their placement. Each level has a required uniform. Please see the individual class listings for specific colors and styles. Leotards and tights should be worn without underpants for everyone over the age of five. Jewelry, skirts (attached or unattached unless specified for the combo classes) are not permitted in class. Hair for level 2 and above must be worn in a BUN as pirouettes are taught at this level and hair in their face will hinder their ability to turn. Hair for everyone else should be worn up and out of the face in a pony tail or clip. Students in the 3/4 and 5/6 Combo classes are to arrive with their tap shoes on and the dancers are to bring their ballet shoes in a small bag. All other students ages 6 and older are asked not to wear their dance shoes outside. Dancers are to arrive with their street shoes on and are to bring their dance shoes in a small bag. All bags will be taken into the studio with the dancers. The dressing room will not be used as it is too small to social distance.

COVID Safety Precautions – We are taking every precaution to assure the safety of our dancers as they continue to grow and develop their dancing technique. Class sizes are limited for social distancing with squares located on the floor for each dancer. Temperatures will be checked and hands will be sanitized upon entry. Hands will also be sanitized when the dancers exit the studio. High touch surfaces will be wiped down each hour. Masks are optional for dancers in the 3/4, 5/6, 6/7 Combo Classes, Hip Hop 1 and Level 1B Ballet/Jazz however dancers in these levels will be required to wear a mask when entering and exiting the building and if they use the restrooms. Dancers registered in Level 1A(age 8) and older are required to wear masks in class until further notice.

Class Placement and Student Evaluation-Students are initially placed in the combination classes by age. Class placement for older students after Level 1 will be made by the MMDA staff based on age and ability. Your child may not be promoted to the next level every year. Our primary concern is that a student be placed in a level that is appropriate to his or her skill level and physical strength. If a child is promoted too soon, then he or she will miss some very valuable training. These children also struggle in the next level, which is unnecessary and could result in injury. A student who carefully develops his or her technique early in the curriculum will find advancement in later years to be smoother and more rewarding.

Attendance – All students are expected to attend classes regularly and to be on time. Any student more than 10 minutes late to class will not be allowed to dance but will observe instead. Parents are asked to notify the school if a student is going to be absent for any reason more than two consecutive lessons. If an absence cannot be avoided, the missed lesson may be made up in another class as arranged by the instructor. Students in the Intermediate and Advanced levels must notify the school if they will be absent. Parents are expected to pick up their child immediately following their class. If a child must remain late, please notify the office in advance. Parents of students taking the final class of the evening must never be late for any reason.

Snow/Hurricane-MMDA follows the Madison and Rankin County schools Snow and Hurricane policy. If Madison schools close for bad weather-the Madison location will be closed. If Rankin schools close for bad weather-the Reservoir location will be closed. In the instance of weather conditions deteriorating after school hours, please call the office or check the website and our Facebook page to inquire about class cancellations

Withdrawal and Refunds – Refunds **will not** be given for tuition, registration fees, costume payments, or recital fees. Students are only allowed to drop a class at the end of a trimester. If a student, for any reason, has to withdraw from the school after class has begun, the parent must submit a written letter by mail or by calling the Madison studio at 601-853-4508. Non-attendance is not considered withdrawal from a class. If a student decides to drop in the middle of a trimester they will be required to pay through the end of the trimester due to that student taking up a spot in the class that another student could have occupied the entire year.

1st Semester: September 3-November 30(Madison), August 17-November 30(Reservoir)

2nd Trimester: December 1-February 28

3rd Trimester: March 1-May 31

Parents Observation – Parents are allowed to watch class the week of Dec. 13-17. This date is **tentative** per CDC guidelines for gatherings at that time. During Parents Observation Week we would like to present the class for your viewing as it is held usually without interruptions. This week is intended for parents, relatives, and **OLDER** siblings. Out of consideration of the teachers, we ask that you refrain from bringing younger siblings because it is very difficult for them to remain quiet and seated for an entire class period. If we are not able to have parents observation we will video the class and send out the link to view.

Respect – All siblings of dancers must be supervised in the lobby of the studios. Children are not allowed to play and run inside the building. If there is not a class in a studio while your child is waiting for class they are not permitted to go inside that studio. **NO FOOD OR DRINK**(except water) is allowed inside the building. Students may eat and drink outside the building. This is to prevent insect problems and to prevent spills and our property being ruined.

Pick Up/Drop Off – To keep our students/staff safe requires us to have the smallest amount of people inside our building. This will mean that no parents will be allowed in the waiting room at this time.

Madison-Parents are line up at the end of the street to pass through the portico for drop off/pick up. Please put a sign in your window with your child's name. This will speed up the process. Do not arrive more than 10 minutes before your child's class time or you will get mixed into the line for the previous class. Certain classes (older dancers) will exit through back door into the parking lot. These classes will be notified separately with instructions.

Reservoir-We plan to create a drive through lane for pick up and drop off in front of the studio. Please put a sign in your car window with your child's name. Do not arrive more than 10 minutes before your child's class or you will get mixed into the line for the previous class. More specific instructions will be sent out closer to the start date of class.

Tuition/Fees – Nine months of tuition is due on the first of each month for the Madison location. Nine and a half months of tuition is due on the first of each month for the Reservoir location. Reservoir location-August tuition is prorated for two weeks. **A returned check fee/insufficient bank draft fee is \$30.** Choices for payment plans are monthly by bank draft, semester by check or bank draft or annual by check or bank draft. Checking accounts will be debited on the first of each month for tuition/recital/costume fees due that month for those who choose monthly bank draft. If you choose semester by check your 9 or 9 ½ months of tuition, costume and recital fees will be split into two payments due on August 17(Reservoir students)/September 3(Madison students) and January 4. If you choose the yearly plan your 9 or 9 ½ months of tuition, costume and recitals fees are due on the first day of class. Please do not choose to pay by semester or for the entire year if you think there is a possibility that you may drop within the semester as we do not refund tuition. Please note that accounts that are on the semester payment option that are

delinquent will be charged a \$20 late fee per 30 days that the semester payment is past due from the due dates listed above.

Recital Costumes are \$70 each. A recital costume deposit of \$70 is due December 1st and balances are due February 1. Costume fees are non-refundable. A recital fee of \$65 per family is due on March 1. There will be an additional \$25 recital fee due for each additional family member registered in dance. Recital fees are non-refundable. This recital fee helps to assist in the tremendous financial undertaking that MMDA assumes when undertaking a production of this magnitude.

Learning Process/Class Procedure – At MMDA students will follow a structural sequence of training that is designed to increase skill, endurance, and discipline in keeping with their age, maturity, and physical development. A set syllabus of training that encompasses many styles of ballet training is used by all teachers at MMDA. Corrections are inherent in dance instruction; therefore, the students will be verbally and physically guided by the teachers to ensure proper body placement and execution of movement.

If a student's goal is to dance on pointe, she will need to take ballet technique classes more than once a week beginning at age 8 or 9 to gain the strength in the ankles and feet in order to be ready by the age of 11 or 12. Many factors are evaluated when placing a child on pointe. The MMDA faculty will notify each student when they are ready for pointe work.

Summer Study – Maintaining momentum through the summer is essential for progress. For every class missed, it takes two classes to return to the same level of accomplishment. MMDA offers Summer Programs with guest teachers from around the world for all levels. Attending Summer Intensives are encouraged after the completion of Level 1 as students can make tremendous progress during the summer months without the added pressure academic studies.

Volunteer Opportunities – Parent Volunteers are a vital resource for the school as well as the performing company. The MMB Parents Guild is a group of parent and community volunteers who are ballet enthusiasts. Volunteers are involved with activities surrounding the school's end of the year recital in May as well as the company productions including many activities surrounding *The Nutcracker*. Please email us info@msmetroballer if you are interested in volunteering.

Manners for Dance Students

Students show respect for others by:

- *Keeping their hands to themselves during class, waiting quietly for others to have a turn and for instructions from the teacher.*
- *If you are late to class, wait for the music to finish and ask your teacher respectfully to enter class.*
- *Respecting items that belong to others.*

Students show respect for their teacher and art form they are learning by:

- *Being on time for class and dressed properly.*
- *Listening when the teacher is speaking.*
- *Never hanging on the barres*
- *Always ask before leaving the room for any reason.*
- *Always finishing every exercise, never walking off noisily or showing anger or aggravation.*
- *Leaving water bottles outside of class and no gum or candy in the studio.*

Dancers show respect to the studio by:

- *Never running in the classroom or hallways.*
- *Putting trash in its proper place.*
- *Always keeping belongings inside their dance bags so items are not lost or left at the studio.*

Parents show respect for the dance class, teacher, and studio by:

- *Making every effort to get children to class on time and picking them up promptly after class.*
- *Making sure the children have the opportunity to use the restroom before class.*
- *Clearly marking dance shoes and all items with your child's name.*

Expected Ballet Class Etiquette

- *After every class it is proper etiquette to thank your teacher with a bow and also personally walking up to your teacher to say "thank you." This will make both the teacher and student end class on a positive note.*

Many Ways that Parents can be involved in the education of their child enrolled at MMDA

1. *Buy tickets to MMB Company performances-The Nutcracker at Christmas and our Spring Gala. This broadens your child's understanding of the arts as a whole. These are also wonderful gifts for birthdays, holidays, etc....*
2. *Encourage your child to read age appropriate biographies of dancers and study the history of dance.*
3. *Expose your child to musical training through the study of music in school, singing in a chorus, playing a musical instrument, and listening to all musical styles.*
4. *Allow your child to attend master classes offered periodically at the studio.*
5. *Become award of good eating habits and nutrition.*
6. *Observe the practice of good body conditioning and flexibility to avoid dance injuries. Encourage stretching at home and exercises that benefit aerobic conditioning, i.e. swimming, biking, jumping rope, pilates.*
7. *Allow your child to follow their hearts, talents, and interests.*
8. *Remember that MMDA want to train and develop your child to the highest caliber while nurturing the individual to become a creative artist and individual*

The Benefits of ballet training extend far beyond the mastery of steps and positions. Classical ballet training also helps develop:

- *Beautifully-sculpted, strong articulate and flexible bodies*
 - *The joy of expressing oneself through movement*
 - *Commitment*
 - *Determination*
 - *An appreciation for the arts-as a performer and as an audience member*
 - *Patience*
 - *Attention to Detail*
 - *Self-Discipline*
 - *The ability to set & achieve goals in the quest for excellence*
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Instructions for Making a Ballet Bun

Brush hair smoothly to remove all tangles. Hair can be slightly dampened.

Spray hair lightly with hairspray. Smooth hair with hands and secure wisps, layers or short ends into a pony tail and secure with a cloth-covered elastic band. It is best to use a soft bristle brush.

Secure sides and back hair with clips and barrettes.

Divide ponytail into two sections and twist or braid. If the hair is thin dividing the ponytail may not be necessary.

Wrap sections of twisted or braided hair clockwise around the elastic

Band and secure with hair or bobby pins as you wrap.

Place the hair net over the bun; twist the net over the bun at least two times. Tuck ends of hairnet into the bottom of the bun and secure with hair or bobby pins.

Spray hair and bun with hairspray to set. Smooth with hands or comb.

Philosophy

The process of learning to dance is one of both intellectual understanding and physical accomplishment. Movement is learned through repetition until the body builds what we call "Muscle Memory." The muscle memory is what allows us to perform familiar but somewhat complex tasks like brushing our teeth without the brain sending a separate and specific instruction for each movement: "extend arm-open fingers-close fingers around toothbrush-pull hands to mouth-move hand to the right-move hand to the left, etc." Our lives are filled with many such sets of movements and actions for which we have developed muscle memory.

In the first years of ballet study, when every step and position is new, we begin by building on the natural movements and rhythms of childhood play such as bending, stretching, walking, jumping, swaying, and spinning. Under the guidance of our instructors, students then learn new positions and movements-repeating and refining them until each becomes part of the body's muscle memory. Because the positions and movements of classical ballet are so complex and precise, this process takes years of study.

Progress at MMDA is not defined by the accomplishment of one class or even one year of study. Our goal is to enable each student to reach his/her highest potential and we envision each student as having a unique chronology of progress that begins with the first class and continues until he/she stops dancing, at whatever age and level that might be.

Learning happens at different rates: there will be times when quick progress is made and plateaus when the mind and body assimilate recent learning and prepare for future growth. Instruction is individualized to best encourage and facilitate each student's development; and advancement through our levels is based, not on length of study, but on technical accomplishment, artistic development, emotional maturity, classroom interaction, personal work ethic and readiness for the challenges of the next level.

Being a dancer is not only a physical activity-it is a state of mind; and the longer one studies, the more each of the attributes is developed. The gifts of ballet training forever enrich who we are and remain with us throughout our lives.

Dear Dancers and Parents,

We are so excited to begin our 2020-21 dance season! We find ourselves in a “New Environment at the dance studio.” Safety is of the utmost importance to us at MMDA and we are taking every precaution to assure the safety of our dancers and staff. MMDA will continue to monitor and implement the local, state, and federal recommendations as they are announced and make changes as necessary. We will take each week, or day to day, into consideration as it approaches and keep you updated on what is happening. We will communicate through email and facebook. Please be sure to like our Facebook page-Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet. We have implemented the following safety protocol that we will strictly follow at both location of MMDA.

NEW RULES ENTRY & EXIT:

1. Madison-Parents are to line up at the end of the street to pass through the portico one at a time to drop off your child. Reservoir-we have made a drop off/pick up line with cones in front of the studio. ONLY dancers will be allowed to enter the buildings. The lobby is closed for the time being. A helper will help your dancer get out of the car and take them to their classroom. We ask that everyone else remain in your car for drop off and pick up unless you have to get your dancer out of a car seat. We are required to eliminate social togetherness as much as possible.
2. All dancers will have their temperature taken with a touchless laser thermometer as he or she enter the building. Anyone registering a temp of 99.5° will not be allowed in.
3. Once your student is dropped off and has had his/her temp, students will receive hand sanitizer and all dance bags will be sprayed/sanitized before entering the building. The dancer will be ushered immediately to his/her classroom. In the classroom students will have access to hand sanitizer. After exiting the building bags may be sprayed/sanitized leaving the building and the student will have access to hand sanitizer before going to the car.
4. Classrooms will be marked into 6’ grids conforming to the social distancing. Everyone must remain 6’ apart. Instructors are adjusting their classes accordingly.
5. Face masks will be required for students registered in level 1A and higher (including hip hop 2) unless a written request is provided indicating that a dancer is not required to wear a mask. Students in these classes are required to wear a mask at all times when inside the building. Face masks are not required of students in 3/4, 4-6, 5/6, 6/7 Combo, Hip Hop 1 and Level 1B Classes. Dancers in this level however are required to wear a mask when entering the building. Once their temp has been checked and they are cleared to go in the studio they can take off their mask. They also will be asked to put it on if they use the restroom.
6. Face coverings are required for anyone entering the building.
7. Pick-up – since the lobby is closed and we cannot congregate there, we ask that you line up to pick up your child through the portico in Madison or in front of the Reservoir studio to pick up just as you did for drop off. You must have a sign in your window with your dancer’s name when picking up. This will speed up the process tremendously. Each child will be dismissed

individually and brought to your car. The line may be long so please be patient; this procedure is for the health and safety of you, your children and the MMDA Staff.

8. Students not picked up at end of class will be seated in the lobby practicing social distancing and monitored. They will be asked to wear a mask while waiting, so please be sure your child has a mask with them in the event that you are running late.

9. If business matters need to be attended to at the MMDA office, you will be allowed in the building but you must have your temperature checked and you must wear a face covering.

10. Classrooms will each have hand sanitizer available. Students will be asked to use it frequently. Our sanitizer does contain at least 70% alcohol.

11. Instructors will be cleaning and sanitizing after each class. We have made every effort to deep clean the classrooms, bathrooms and office during the summer and will continue daily cleaning.

12. Building water fountains and vending machines are CLOSED. Please make sure your child brings their own non-spillable WATER container that has their name on it if they need water during their time at the dance studio.

13. Bathroom breaks will be monitored. Hand washing is a must. Touchless soap dispensers are in every bathroom.

14. **SOCIAL DISTANCING:** No close contact: we have adjusted many things in our studios to avoid contact. Students will not be permitted to hold hands, high five, or touch each other in any way. We will also ensure that they are not in close proximity to each other. Please remind your student to not touch their face when a mask is off. Please explain the rules and remind your child to keep to themselves; they all love to hug each other.

15. Dancers WILL NOT be allowed in any areas of the building other than the studio without supervision. How Can You Help?

16. Do not bring your child to class if he or she is coughing, sneezing, has a fever, stomach ache, body aches, sore throat, chest congestion, diarrhea, vomiting, or any other illness.

17. Do not bring your child to class if a family member is ill with any of the above symptoms.

18. If your dancer has been exposed to COVID-19 please keep them home for 14 days. During this time your dancer can take the class virtually. You just must notify us at least one day ahead of time so we can set up a virtual class for your dancer.

19. Do not allow your dancer to bring large dance bags. Bring what you must...just not the kitchen sink.

20. Always have a face mask (please have name on it)

21. Don't bring toys from home.

22. Don't break any formal quarantine/government restrictions.

23. Encourage your child to cough and sneeze into his or her arm not in his or her hand. Students must not touch other children or their teacher.

24. Alert us if your child does have COVID-19 or has been exposed and has been to the studio within the last 14 days so we can contact their peers.

25. Virtual Option: We do offer a virtual option if you are not comfortable with your dancer coming to the studio. If you choose this option you must notify us before classes begin.

26. Each family is encouraged to make their own decision about coming to the studio. Please do what you feel comfortable with and what makes the most sense to you and your family. Your health and safety are most important to us!! On behalf of the entire faculty and staff, we are so looking forward to healthier times when we can hug all the little ones again. They are such a bright spot in our day! The well-being of our students and MMDA families is top priority! Please know that we are here to address any concerns or issues and are happy to hear from you on how we can keep our community healthy.