

# Welcome!

Thank you for choosing Debra Sparks Dance Works for your child's dance education. Ms. Debra's goal remains as it began in 1984: to teach young, talented children the wonderful art of ballet and dance, to encourage their growth in self-esteem with pride in their accomplishments, and—above all—to instill in them the “love of dance!”

Debra Sparks Dance Works is unlike any other dance studio in Bucks County. With a strong emphasis on form, style and grace, students develop an unsurpassed level of confidence that enriches their lives both on and off stage. Headed by former professional dancer, Ms. Debra Sparks, DSDW has raised the “barre” and become the new standard against which other dance schools try to compete. Classical and contemporary dance is taught, with a focus on ballet, the technical framework for most other styles of dance. While students hone their skills in tap, jazz, ballet, pointe, contemporary, hip-hop, musical theater, acrobatics and lyrical, it is the underlying premise of the dance studio that sets Debra Sparks Dance Works apart. Dancers join DSDW expecting to learn solid dance technique. They walk away with much more. From rehearsal to performance, whether it's an audition or competition, Debra Sparks' students learn the etiquette of dance while respecting themselves and others around them. DSDW can be separated from all other schools for proudly training students with professional careers with approximately 10 Broadway performers and 16 Ballet Company members. DSDW has also earned over twenty college dance scholarships for our students. We want to make your experience with our studio as rewarding as possible.

The policies and guidelines in this handbook are designed to help answer your questions concerning attire, class placement, behavior, recital, etc. We have tried to give you as much information as possible so you will know what is required of both you and your dancer. Please feel free to ask questions if there is something you do not understand. Please do not hesitate to contact our director, Miss Debra Sparks, if there is a problem. Nothing can be fixed unless we know there is a problem. You can contact our office at 215-579-5678 or via email at [debrasparksdanceworks5678@gmail.com](mailto:debrasparksdanceworks5678@gmail.com).

***We are so happy to welcome you to our dance family and cannot wait to begin dancing with you!***

**Warmly,  
Miss Debra, Miss Tamara and DSDW**

## STUDIO CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: [debrasparksdanceworks5678@gmail.com](mailto:debrasparksdanceworks5678@gmail.com)

Website: [www.debrasparksdanceworks.com](http://www.debrasparksdanceworks.com)

Phone: (215)-579-5678

*Email is our preferred method of contact for a quicker response. If you do call, please make sure to leave a voicemail if there is no answer, so that we can get back to you!*

### I. CLASS INFORMATION

#### A. ATTENDANCE

Students or parents are asked to email in all absences. **There are no makeup classes, credits, or refunds for missed classes.**

#### B. CLASS CANCELLATIONS

- Occasionally we must cancel classes due to unforeseen circumstances, illness, or emergencies. Every effort will be made to reschedule the canceled class within a reasonable amount of time. There are no refunds for dancers who are unable to attend rescheduled classes.
- DSDW is closed for snow/inclement weather when the Council Rock School District is closed. There are **no makeup classes or refunds** for inclement weather closings.

#### C. BIG BALLET

DSDW is the only dance studio in the area to perform a full-length ballet in addition to traditional dance numbers at our annual recital. Our recital consists of three acts: Act 1 (The Big Ballet), Act 2 (Recital Dances) and Act 3 (More Recital Dances). The Big Ballet changes each year but is usually a show that is appealing to families and children. Examples of past shows include Cinderella, The Little Mermaid, Beauty and the Beast, and the Wizard of Oz. Our youngest dancers typically do not perform in The Big Ballet, as it is more demanding in terms of rehearsal time on weekends in May and the week of the show in June. Big Ballet classes begin at Ballet/Jazz B and up, and all Ballet Workshops. If you are unsure if your dancer will be in The Big Ballet, please ask. Dancers learn their Big Ballet routine as part of their Ballet/Jazz class or Ballet Workshop and that is the recital dance for that class. Dancers in a Ballet/Jazz combo class will also learn and perform a jazz number.

#### D. CLASS ETIQUETTE & BEHAVIOR

All dancers must behave with a level of self-control and respect that is age appropriate. Students are expected to arrive on time, be properly attired, and be ready to learn. As Miss

Debra would say, “you must be confident and elegant, young ladies and respectful gentlemen.” There is no gum chewing at any time anywhere in the studio. Water is the only liquid permitted. This will be strictly enforced this year. If your dancer brings snacks or food into the dressing room area, it is her/his responsibility to clean it up.

## **E. CLASS OBSERVATIONS**

We want you to be involved in your child’s dance education as much as possible, and while our dancers love to perform for their parents, the children’s focus in dance class must be on learning. In order to accomplish this, we have a closed-door policy for all classes.

## **F. CLASS PLACEMENT**

We recommend classes by age and level on our schedule, please follow this when selecting classes. Dancers are placed in classes according to the discretion of the teaching staff and Ms. Debra. Placement is based on technique, strength, and age. Placement may be altered during the first few weeks of class to accommodate the dynamics of the newly formed classes.

## **G. CLASS TRANSFER/WITHDRAWAL**

If for some reason at any time during the dance season you would like to request that your dancer be transferred to another class or withdrawn from a class, you must notify the studio by emailing [debrasparksdanceworks5678@gmail.com](mailto:debrasparksdanceworks5678@gmail.com). It is absolutely necessary that this notification be given in writing, as class rosters must be kept accurate. In the case of a withdrawal, you will be responsible for any and all charges incurred on your account until the withdrawal email is received.

## **H. PRIVATE LESSONS**

- Private Lessons are available on a first come first serve basis. Private lessons fill quickly. In the event of same day cancellation with notification or no show, will incur a \$25 fee. Please email us at [debrasparksdanceworks5678@gmail.com](mailto:debrasparksdanceworks5678@gmail.com) for rates and scheduling.

# **II. TUITION POLICIES**

## **A. MONTHLY PAYMENTS**

Tuition is due the first week of every month and can either be paid with cash, check, or venmo(@debrasparks5678). Checks should be made out to Debra Sparks Dance Works. You will receive a statement in your email as to how much you owe for the month.

## **B. LATE FEES**

All payments received past the 10th of each month will incur a **\$20 late fee each week late**. This will be enforced.

## **C. PAYMENT OPTIONS**

DSDW accepts cash, venmo and check only. Checks can be made payable to Debra Sparks Dance Works. All returned checks will incur a \$35 return fee. Payment can be handed in at the front desk, or left in the lock box to the right of the window.

### **Payments can be made in the following ways:**

#### **1. Cash or Check made payable to Debra Sparks Dance Works - when dropping off your child to dance class**

*Lockboxes for payments (please do not leave on the desk): Black lockbox to the left of the front door when walking in (on same wall as door), 2 Gray lockboxes to the right of the desk window upstairs*

#### **2. Mail a check to Debra Sparks Dance Works - [51 Walnut Ave, Newtown, PA 18940](#) (many families use Bill Pay from their bank and do it this way)**

#### **3. Venmo us @debrasparks5678**

**Cash Discount: 5% off monthly tuition if paid in CASH before the 10th. Please put it in the lockbox and make sure your name is written on the envelope.**

*\*Please round up your payment to the nearest dollar amount. For example, if your monthly tuition is \$168, your discounted amount will be \$159.60. Therefore, your cash payment will be rounded to \$160. This only applies to **cash payments**.*

## **D. REGISTRATION**

Each family will be charged a **\$25 registration fee per family** each year upon registration. Also due at this time is the first month's tuition payments.

## **E. RECITAL FEE**

Each family is required to pay a Recital Fee of \$75.00. This will include professional

photography and videography, recital rehearsal time, \$5 merchandise voucher, and a dancer gift. **This fee is mandatory in order to participate in the recital.**

### **III. COSTUMES**

#### **A. PAYMENT**

Costume deposits are due in November. To ensure that costumes are ordered for your child, all costumes must be paid by the deadline. The initial deposit is \$50 per costume. The balance is due before the holiday break in December. **Costumes are \$85 each.** The cost of costumes includes costume fee, shipping, handling, tax and staff management compensation. Please pay all costume deposits and balances with a separate check (not with tuition).

#### **B. COSTUME SIZING**

Many parents struggle with what size to order. If unsure, we recommend sizing up. A costume can always be altered to be smaller, whereas a costume that is too small is very difficult, if not impossible, to fit.

#### **C. EXCHANGES/REFUNDS**

There are **no refunds** for any costume once they have been ordered regardless of the reason. Costumes arrive in the spring. They do not all arrive at the same time; however, all costumes arrive before our recital. In very special and specific circumstances with certain costumes and sizing circumstances, there is an exchange fee for shipping back to the company (whatever the shipping charge is).

#### **D. ADDITIONAL COSTUME INFORMATION**

Be sure to label all of your costume pieces, including accessories.

Occasionally parents are asked to provide an accessory to complete a costume (ex. gloves, socks, flowers for hair).

### **IV. DRESS CODE**

A. It is important that our dancers are dressed professionally and appropriately for classes. Dress code and hair requirements are strictly enforced.

a. Hair

- i. Hair must be pulled back in a tight, secure, high bun for all ballet classes. Hair must be pulled back and out of your face for all dance classes.

b. Shoes

- i. Ballet Shoes: Pink Canvas Split Sole, *Boys*: Black or White Canvas Split Sole
- ii. Tap: Black Oxford Type, Split Sole
- iii. Jazz: Tan Split Sole Jazz Shoes
- iv. Contemporary/Lyrical: Half Shoes or Bare Feet

- v. Hip Hop: Any sneaker
- vi. Pointe: Pointe Shoes
- c. Leotards
  - i. All Ballet Workshops A, B, C and Ballet/Jazz B, C, D, E, & F will be required to wear a studio uniform to class (one per class). Each level will have their own color. The **leotards are \$22** each and must be worn to class each week with pink tights and pink ballet shoes. This will be strictly enforced.
    1. Please submit payment to the studio upon registration with desired size and quantity.
    2. Size Chart is attached below.

**Parent and Me:** anything you are comfortable moving in that is form fitting

**Combo Classes and Toddler Classes (Princess Ballet, Two's in Tutus, Tutus and Tap Shoes, Sugar Plum Ballet, Ballet/Jazz, Ballet/Tap, Broadway Tap/Jazz, Disney Dance, Storybook Land of Dance, Dance With Your Doll, etc.):** Any color leotard, pink tights, pink canvas split-sole ballet shoes, black tap shoes if in tap combo class.

**Mini, Junior & Senior Team Workshops:** Black or Red leotard.

**Master Ballet:** Any color leotard. Pink seamed convertible tights, pink canvas split-sole ballet shoes and/or pointe shoes.

**Contemporary and Lyrical:** Leotard of your choice, tights in tan, pink, or black. Bare feet or turning half shoes.

**Jazz/Character Dance/Voice & Acting For Dancers/ Musical Theater/Diva Pop Stars:** Leotard of your choice, tights in tan, pink, or black. Jazz shoes: tan split - sole leather jazz shoe.

**Tap:** Leotard of your choice, tights in tan, pink, or black, tap shoes: black split-sole, Oxford type. If in a Tap Combo class please wear appropriate leotard with convertible pink seamed tights.

**Jump/Turn:** Leotard of your choice, tights in tan, pink, or black. Jazz, Lyrical, or Ballet Shoes.

**Pre pointe & Pointe Classes:** Any color leotard, pink seamed convertible tights, pink Pointe shoes. Pre pointe dancers should have their pink canvas split-sole ballet shoes with them.

**Hip Hop & Break Dance:** Appropriate casual attire (loose fitting pants/shorts, leggings, tee shirt/sweatshirt & sneakers, etc.) Hair up and out of your face.

**Acrobatics & Flips and Tricks:** no shoes, tighter form fitting athletic clothes rather than baggy clothes, leotards are great!

• **Adult Classes/Dance For Special Needs:** Appropriate casual attire. Yoga pants or leggings recommended. Studio socks/ballet shoes recommended but not required. Adult ballet needs ballet shoes and Adult Tap needs tap shoes - any that you are comfortable in, we can make recommendations if needed.

• **Boys:** Ballet classes: Ages 10 and under- Fitted t-shirt, gym/sweatpants or shorts, Black or White Canvas Split Sole Ballet Shoes.

Ages 11 and up- Fitted White t-shirt, black tights or leggings, dance belt, Black or White Canvas Split Sole Ballet Shoes

**V. RECITAL**

Please mark your calendars and save the dates for our annual dance recital: **Ballet Meets Broadway 2025**

**Dress Rehearsals:**

Week of June 10th.

*Please note: more details will be sent out with specific class times and line up schedule closer to the show, your class will be assigned a time slot for the rehearsal*

**Recitals:**

**Friday 6/14**

**Saturday 6/15**

***Please note:** Line ups will be announced as we get closer with your classes' exact show time. All classes are split between three shows. Our youngest (toddler) dancers will not perform in the Friday evening show. All students enrolled in Ballet/Jazz B -F and Ballet Workshop A- C are in all three shows as a part of the ballet production in Act 1.*

**Recital information will be sent out closer to the show date in a detailed packet.**

## **VI. OTHER STUDIO INFORMATION**

### **A. SOCIAL MEDIA**

DSDW has a FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM page. Please give us a follow @debrasparks5678 and check it regularly for updates and important information.

### **B. FRONT DESK**

We are fortunate to have a wonderful staff at the studio. They are always ready to help you with anything you might need. Please just ask! **If no one is at the desk, please email us and you will receive a response at our earliest convenience.**

### **C. EVENTS**

DSDW holds many fun events throughout the year! We host fundraisers, Halloween and Holiday parties, a Father Daughter Dance, an annual Broadway Trip and many master classes with the best in the industry! We encourage all DSDW students to take advantage of every opportunity they can to make the best experience for themselves at DSDW.

### **D. LOST AND FOUND**

We will hold all items for one month only. The first day of every month, all lost and found items unclaimed will be donated to charity.

## **E. PARKING**

- a.** There is absolutely no parking along the side of the road leading to Vince's Auto (except for lined parking spots). This is for the safety of our dancers.
- b.** Please note we do share a parking lot with an apartment building and an auto body shop. During the day the auto service shop has a lot of cars dropped off and we have had complaints in the past of cars parking in their way and not in actual parking spots. **If there are no parking spots left in our parking lot you may park on the grass at the top of our driveway by our sign in front of the apartment building (but not in the apartment building tenant spaces)** or if parking for a brief period of time you can use the parking lots behind Dunkin Donuts or behind Newtown Bagel as you can easily walk to our parking lot from there.
- c.** Please drive cautiously through the parking lot when dropping off and picking up your dancer. If absolutely necessary, parking is permitted for brief visits to the studio but never in the spots by the dumpster.

## **F. REFERRALS**

DSDW loves welcoming new dancers to our studio family! For every new dancer you refer to DSDW and who registers for at least one class, you will receive a \$25 tuition credit. The new dancer must register for and pay for at least one month's tuition. There is no limit for referral credits.

## **G. BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

DSDW offers dance birthday parties. Your child will enjoy dance instruction with her friends on her very special day. Choose a theme for the party such as Princess, Luau, Pop Stars, or any of her other favorites. Add-ons are also available like crafts and character meet and greet. Contact the office administrator, via email, for additional details or visit our website.

## **H. SNACKS & WATER**

Bottled water and snacks are available for purchase at the front desk/office window for \$1. No I.O.U.'s! There is a sign out sheet if your student purchases a snack or water and does not have cash. If they add their name to the sign out sheet the charge will appear on your tuition statement.

## **I. STUDIO APPAREL**

Visit our web store available through our website for t-shirts, shorts, sweats, and more!  
<https://dsdw2023.itemorder.com/shop/home/>



We also offer special sales for the holidays and at recital time. Be sure to check our website and emails for purchasing information on flash sale items!

## **J. SUMMER CAMP**

We offer many fun themed summer camps, and a Summer Intensive. Brochures and dates are distributed in early spring and can also be found on our website. Competition Team members are required to register for and participate in the Summer Intensive.

## **K. DANCE FLOOR**

Nobody is permitted on the dance floor in street shoes. This is for the protection of the dance floors.

## **L. LOYALTY**

DSDW respects school loyalty from all for that is what encourages and enables a real dance family and a true dance team. That is what we are! Please note that training at other local schools is not advised.

## **M. STUDENT ASSISTANTS**

Student Assistants are highly appreciated and of great value to our staff and studio. This opportunity is wonderful for all dancers twelve years and over who can commit to a weekly schedule. This allows for great learning and experience in preparation for future teaching. This is a non-compensated reward for those inspired to do more and to receive community service hours as a volunteer.

**The 8-Point Learning Program**

The 8-Point Learning Program will provide a perfect combination of learning and fun where both boys and girls are encouraged to celebrate their uniqueness and their endless possibilities of success in both academics and the arts while building self esteem and confidence. Preschool students will study the 8 Points: **Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Socialization, Fine/Gross Motor Development, Culture, and Creative Expression!** Email for more information! Space is very limited.

## Mission Statement

*The 8-Point Learning Program will provide a perfect combination of learning and fun where both boys and girls are encouraged to celebrate their uniqueness and their endless possibilities of success in both academics and the arts while building self esteem and confidence.*

## About Our Program

This program is under the direction of Debra Sparks Allison who holds a BA in Psychology, a Masters Degree in Education, is a former ballerina, a mother, and grandmother. She has run three dance studios over the course of 38 years, taught at the college level as an adjunct professor and owned and directed a non-profit, 501c3 Ballet Company; the Philadelphia Children's Ballet Academy and the Bucks County Dance Company (a scholarship program for pre-professional students).

Ms Debra explains, "I was motivated initially by my granddaughter, Devlin's, preschool program. Offering little, (or no) study in the arts and a limited emphasis on children of the world and cultured similarities and differences. With this in mind, I began thinking how I could provide these, as well as the commonly found curriculum in the traditional pre-school setting. Then the pandemic hit and many families are now looking for alternative options for their children's school in a safe and healthy environment. This is what our 8-step program will provide."

Students progress will be measured regularly, and report cards will be given out at the end of each session. All activities throughout the day will relate to the theme of the day. Students will provide their own peanut-free lunch. Refrigerator space is available. The 8-Point learning



Program will also offer seasonal celebrations and visiting professionals, when appropriate for health and safety.

## **CALENDAR for 2024/2025**

*For calendar updates please visit our website under Studio Info: Calendar of Events*

### **September**

9/2 Closed for Labor Day

9/4 Classes Begin

9/4 -9/11 New Student/Class Placement

### **October**

10/26 Monster Mash Halloween Party

10/24 - 30 Halloween Week at Studio

10/31 Studio Closed - Halloween

### **November**

Costume Deposits Due

11/28-12/1 Studio Closed – Thanksgiving

### **December**

Costume Balances Due

12/18 Last Day of Classes before break

12/19-1/2 Studio Closed for regular classes – Winter Break

12/19 & 12/20 Winter Intensive 4:00-8:00pm

### **January**

1/3 Classes Resume

### **February**

2/8 Father Daughter Dance

### **March**

TBA Competition

4/11-4/21 Studio closed for regular classes - Spring Break

### **April**

4/22 Classes Resume

TBA Competition

### **May**

5/11 Studio Closed – Mother's Day

5/23 -5/26 Studio Closed – Memorial Day Weekend

5/27- Classes Resume

### **June**

TBA Picture Day

Last Day of Classes - Saturday, June 8th

6/11, 6/12, and 6/13 Dress Rehearsals

6/14 and 6/15 Recitals (3 Shows)

## DSDW TUITION 2024-2025

Number of Classes	Cost
1 Class	\$68 (\$17/class)
2 Classes	\$128 (\$16/class)
3 Classes	\$180 (\$15/class)
4 Classes	\$223 (\$13.90/class)
5 Classes	\$270 (\$13.50/class)
6 Classes	\$312 (\$13.00/class)
7 Classes	\$336 (\$12/class)
UNLIMITED!! 8 or more classes (*excluding Jenn Rose and Ballet/Jazz classes)	\$350

### FIXED FEE CLASSES:

*Classes charged at an additional separate fee.*

#### **Ballet/Jazz - (1.25 hours)**

Ballet/Jazz B, C, D, E, & F: **\$80/month** (\$16/hour)

\*Second Ballet/Jazz Class: Additional **\$50/month**

#### **Drop In Classes**

*(not eligible for cash discount)*

\$18 per class

#### **Tuition Example:**

Lyrical 2 + Acro 2 + Hip Hop 2 + Ballet/Jazz D = 3 classes @\$180 + \$80 = \$360/month

#### **Discounts:**

Sibling Discount - 5% off sibling with least amount of classes

Cash Discount - 5% off rounded up to the nearest dollar



## Required Policies and Agreements

*Must be agreed to electronically upon registration.*

### Policy Terms and Conditions

\*I agree to all policies and procedures set forth by Debra Sparks Dance Works. These policies and procedures can be found in our student handbook, studio brochures, and on our website.

I have read the above and I agree.

Name of Student(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

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### Publicity Exclusion Form

*Must be signed and returned the first day of classes.*

As you know, the Debra Sparks Dance Works' public relations activities frequently involve photographing and videotaping of student activities for inclusion in newsletters, on the website and on social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, as well as other outlets. We recognize that some parents may not want their children's photo or video used for these purposes. If you do not wish to have your child's photograph or video published in this way, kindly complete the section below and return it to the office by 10/1/24. If you do not return the form by the deadline, the Debra Sparks Dance Works will use photos and videos of your child as set forth above, even after your child is no longer a student at the Debra Sparks Dance Works. To be clear, you will have consented to the use of your child's photo and video while she/he is a student and after she/he leaves the Debra Sparks Dance Works if you do not specifically request exclusion.

I do not want my child's photograph or video published: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent / Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

