

Belmont School of Ballet
2022 - 2023 Student Handbook



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About the Belmont School of Ballet

The Belmont School of Ballet began in 2006 as an extension of the Charlotte School of Ballet which was founded in 1968 by Gay Porter. The Belmont School of Ballet offers the highest levels of instruction in classical ballet, tap, and jazz. Teachers are qualified and experienced in teaching both children and adults. Classes are offered for students aged 3 to adults. The ballet curriculum is based on both the syllabus of the Royal Academy of Dance, London, England and the Cecchetti Council of America. Classes are also offered in pointe, variations, tap, jazz, modern, and Pilates. Performing is an important aspect of dancers' training. We seek opportunities to perform throughout the community as well as full-length story ballets. Ballet instruction offers students skills that can be used throughout their lives. Poise, grace, discipline, and self-confidence are invaluable assets.

Directors of the Belmont School of Ballet

Bridget Porter Young – Assistant Artistic Director

As a child, Bridget was selected to dance with New York City Ballet and Baryshnikov for the Washington Season. During this time, she was invited to perform at the White House for President Carter. She has danced with Louisville Ballet, North Carolina Dance Theatre, and Ocala Ballet. She toured the United States performing industrial shows and spent many summers performing in summer stock, including roles such as Jeannie in *Brigadoon* and Dream Laurie in Oklahoma. She also appeared in *All My Children* and *Guiding Light* while living in New York. Bridget has choreographed many short works, ballets, and musicals, including *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Barnum*, and *Big River*. She also choreographed and directed *The Nutcracker* for Pueblo Ballet. Bridget is an A. B. T. Certified Teacher who has successfully completed the A. B.T. Teacher Training Intensive in Pre-Primary through Level 3. She also holds the Teaching Certificate of the Royal Academy of Dance, London, England, and is a Cecchetti Council of America, Licentiate. She is the Artistic Director of the Charlotte Youth Ballet, and the Chair of the Cecchetti Council of America, Southeast Committee.

Gay Porter – Artistic Director

Gay was trained in London, England, at the Arts Educational School. Her classmates included Ben Stevenson, former Artistic Director of the Houston Ballet, and David Howard, known as “Teacher of the Stars” in New York and London. After an extensive career in England, Spain, France, and Germany, Gay came to the United States, where she danced in California before coming to North Carolina. As a choreographer, Gay has worked with the Charlotte Symphony, the Charlotte Opera, the Singing Christmas Tree, Central Piedmont Opera and Theatre, the Actors Theatre, and the Charlotte Youth Ballet. Gay is a full teaching member of the Royal Academy of Dance, London, England, and holds the Advanced Teachers Certificate of the Cecchetti Council of America. North Carolina School of the Arts honored Gay as: “Teacher of the Year” in 1994. Gay is the founder and Artistic Director of the Charlotte Youth Ballet. It is the premier performing company for young dancers in the area. Gay has directed and choreographed full-length productions of *Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella*, *Nutcracker*, and *Coppelia* for the company. She has also created original ballets such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Snow White Thumbelina*, and Pinocchio, which she has also set on companies throughout the United States.

Training Methods

The **Royal Academy of Dance** is a training method beginning with children at age 3 and takes students through a graded syllabus to the professional level. The Children's Syllabus includes classical work, free movement, and character dance. The Vocational Syllabus is for students who desire a career in ballet. It takes much dedication on the part of the dancer to achieve the required level of training to progress at this level. The Children's and Vocational syllabi are examined in eighty countries worldwide. It is an extremely high level of training.

The **Cecchetti Council of America** training method begins with five-year-old students and progresses to the Diploma Level. The Cecchetti syllabus is based on the teachings of Enrico Cecchetti, who taught in London, Russia, and throughout Europe. As students progress, they may also take examinations in this syllabus.

Examinations produce wonderful results. Students who work for exams excel in their training and strive to reach their personal best. Having a goal encourages students to focus and build strength quicker and requires correctly demonstrated technique. Exams prevent dancers from only learning to

do “tricks” and make for a more versatile dancers. Additionally, examinations are an unbiased evaluation of a student's progress. Please schedule a conference with your teacher if you would like to know more about examinations

Solo Performance Awards. The Royal Academy of Dance has introduced new solo performance awards. Students who have passed Grades I – IV are eligible to take the Solo Performance Award for the grade level in which they have passed. The Solo Performance Award is a performance of three solos. Two solos were taken from the syllabus, the third of which is the student and teacher's choice. Please schedule an appointment with your instructor to discuss participation in the solo performance awards if you are interested.

Class Placement

Each level is developmentally appropriate and builds upon what has been taught before, much the same as an academic grade level. Our class offerings have been designed to provide a complete program from pre-ballet through the advanced levels. Classes are divided by level based on teacher recommendations. In keeping with the tradition of classical ballet, each class level will be assigned a specific color and style of leotard. It is important that children master each level before they proceed to the next so that they fully understand the movement and the quality that it utilizes.

The advancement of a dancer happens through the correct repetition of steps and the development of physical strength until both mental and physical comprehension is achieved. Every student is different and reaches this comprehension at different times. It is essential that students can successfully demonstrate and fully understand the movement before moving on to the next, more challenging level.

Our instructors are trained to evaluate the students and understand each child's physical development. Instructors will advise the parents of a different placement if adjustments need to be made.

Class Descriptions

Pre-Ballet and Tap is for 3- and 4-year-old children; this class introduces children to the joy of movement and creative expression through music and the use of imagination. Students will learn basic ballet positions and steps in addition to developing coordination, listening skills, and rhythm.

Pre- Primary Ballet and Tap is for students 5 years of age. This class introduces the Royal Academy of Dance's Pre-Primary in Dance syllabus in addition to basic tap skills. Goals include developing coordination, listening skills, and motor skills required for dance. Students will participate in exercises to increase flexibility and strength.

Primary Ballet is for students ages 6 – 8. This class follows the syllabus of the Royal Academy of Dance Primary curriculum as well as the Cecchetti Primary work. Students work to maintain correct posture, placement, and body alignment throughout movements. Additionally, dancers learn to tell a story through movement and the use of expression. Students may take exams at this level.

R.A.D. Grades 1 - 8 Ballet is for students aged 7 and above.

These classes follow the Royal Academy of Dance Syllabi, which includes classical, character, and free movement work. Dancers develop technical strength, placement, proper posture, and artistic expression. Students who wish to take the RAD Exams must attend classes at least twice a week at the examined level. There may be extra rehearsals with the pianist. Examination fees will be required for those students taking exams. These classes also cater to students who wish to progress through the Syllabus but not enter the exams. Examinations must be taken in sequence.

R.A.D. Vocational and Cecchetti Professional Exams

These examinations are for serious ballet students. Students must take at least six hours of ballet and pointe classes per week to be successful in these levels of examination. It is not possible to offer every level each year. If the level your student works toward is not currently offered, please speak with the office to arrange for coaching.

Cecchetti Classes Developed by Maestro Enrico Cecchetti, the Cecchetti method of ballet breaks the technique of ballet down to a science. Precise exercises are practiced in a set order in each class, each building on the next. This method builds solid foundations in technique while instilling a lovely

quality of movement at the same time. When ready, students are entered for examinations and must pass each level before moving on to the next level of study. Students are eligible to begin Cecchetti Grade 1 at age 8 and work through to Grade 7.

Intermediate and Advanced Classes Dancers who have technically attained the level required are permitted to enroll in these classes. These levels are designed to provide an increase in a dancer's challenges and represent the progression in a dancer's achievements and commitment to dance. All levels emphasize correct postural alignment, principles of turn out, balance, control, and barre and center exercises that become more complex and challenging at each level. The principles taught in each level build upon one another to create a solid foundation for technical strength and proficiency. Dancers in the levels are required to take at least three-technique and two pointe classes per week.

Pointe Classes Students begin pointe only with permission from instructors. Pointe is for serious ballet students. To dance on pointe, proficient students are required to take a minimum of three technique classes a week in addition to pointe classes. Maintaining as well as improving technique is essential to progress with pointe work. The Belmont School of Ballet only allows students to begin pointe in the summer. **All pointe students must study at BSB minimum of four weeks during the summer.**

It is very important to be cautious and conservative about the age at which a female student begins training on pointe. Usually, between the age of 11 to 13, a student that has been training for at least four years is physically strong enough and technically advanced enough to begin pointe work. It can be detrimental to start training on pointe too early in a dancer's career. At too early a stage, a dancer may not fully understand abdominal strength and may practice bad habits that can lead to injury or chronic conditions. There is no need to start pointe training too early. An accomplished dancer will easily be able to go on pointe with little effort and progress at a rapid pace. Many students who begin training too early become discouraged by the difficulty of proper execution, which they did not expect. It is much wiser to wait until the proper time when a dancer is physically ready to take on the work level and can achieve the results for which she hopes. Please see the pointe policies sheet for more information.

Jazz All Jazz classes combine traditional classical and Broadway jazz with the ever-changing styles of today. These classes are full of energy and fun and, at the same time, challenging. Always age appropriate in style, music, and, if applicable, costumes.

Modern Students are introduced to basic contemporary techniques, including contractions, oppositional energy, and improvisation. Students will explore dynamics in time and space and build an understanding of rhythm, gestures, shapes, suspension, release, fall and recovery, the use of momentum, and connecting breath with movement. Dancers will explore new ways of moving in combinations, floor work, partnering, and various methods of improvisation.

Tap All tap classes focus on the development of a sharpened sense of rhythm, coordination, and clarity of sounds incorporating warm-up, rhythm sequences, across the floor, combinations, and routines.

Silver Swans

“Silver Swans® classes have been specifically designed for the over-55s, but whatever your age, if you are looking for a new way to keep fit and active our ballet classes will put a spring in your step. Whether you've never danced before or want to get back into the swing of dancing your heart out, our classes have something for everyone. The RAD developed this program based on research into dance practice for older learners – classes are only taught by Silver Swans licensees” (www.radusa.org).

Private Lessons can be arranged as requested. All private lessons must be set up through the business office. There is a \$30.00 per hour studio fee as well as the instructor fee. We kindly ask for 24-hour advance notice of any cancellations

Policies and Procedures

Registration

The registration fee of \$55.00 and **the first and last month's tuition** is due upon registration of each student. Enrollment in the Belmont School of Ballet is for the 2021- 2022 school year. Students will be charged for the classes they have been registered for, and whether classes have been attended. A **Registration Change form** must be submitted to the business office 30 days before a schedule change or withdrawal. **We will not accept verbal or electronic requests for a change in schedule or withdrawal.**

Class Attendance

Attending class is the responsibility of each student. It is important to attend all classes to progress with training. Classes missed due to sickness, school holidays, and other obligations may be made up in another class. Classes missed due to ballet examinations, rehearsals, performances, or other unavoidable events will be rescheduled. Please inform us if you will be missing a lesson. Students are expected to arrive at the school in time for the start of their class. In the interest of injury prevention, the school reserves the right to have students who are tardy observe the class. Credit or refunds will not be given for classes not attended.

Make-Up Classes

We encourage students to make up missed lessons so that they will not get behind. We ask that you call the office if you plan to attend a make-up class. **Please makeup classes within 30 days of the missed lesson.**

Online Classes Due to Health Concern Closure

Should it become necessary to close the studio due to a state-wide health concern (such as Covid-19), classes will switch to online classes, such as Zoom. The annual tuition includes in-studio and online classes, should they become necessary. **A registration change form is required to drop online classes.** It may be submitted electronically if the studio is not open. The 30-day drop policy will be waived for the first 14 days from the first online class. After the 14-day grace period, all registration change forms will include the 30-day drop policy. The 14-day grace period applies only to new online classes created in the case of a state-mandated/health-concern studio closure.

Inclement Weather

In the case of inclement weather, messages will be posted on social media and on the studio phone stating if we will be holding classes. Additionally, an email will be sent unless there is a loss of power, and it is not possible to do so. We do not necessarily follow the school system. Classes missed due to weather will not be rescheduled, but you are welcome to make them up in another class.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Teachers are always happy to speak with you! However, we ask that families call or email the office to schedule a convenient time for a conference. We kindly ask that you not stop teachers between classes to talk, as this delays the start of the next class. Important news will be emailed monthly to inform you of upcoming events. Additionally, important dates will be posted on the website. Please make sure we have a current email for you. If you are not receiving emails, please contact the business office. Notices will be posted on the bulletin board beside the office. Please check frequently.

Videos

No dance or portion of choreography/class may be posted in its entirety on any social media outlet or website without permission from the school director.

Facilities

All students and their families are asked to please respect the facilities.

No food or drink is allowed in the studio. Adequate supervision should be provided for siblings. Please check that you have all your belongings before you leave. Clothes left for more than a few weeks will be taken to a donation center. There is a toy box in the lobby with various items for children to play with. Please return the items to the toy box when your child is finished. Please throw away your trash. Large items and soiled diapers should be taken to the outside trash bins behind the building. Please do not allow children to swing on the curtains of the dressing area!

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram

If you are on Facebook or Instagram, follow #BelmontBallet.com. Stay up to date with studio events and help us share what we are doing at the studio!

Class Attire

Please respect the traditions and art of dance and follow the dress codes. ***Students are required to be properly dressed for all classes.*** Street clothes should be worn over ballet attire when coming to and from class. Dance shoes should never be worn outside as this brings dirt onto the dance floor as well as wears out shoes quicker.

All female ballet students are required to wear the uniform leotard for the class level, ballet pink tights, and pink leather ballet shoes.

Hair should be neatly tied back into a bun. Short hair can be pulled back off the face with a headband.

Please provide your child with the necessary items to put her hair up.

Teachers will happily assist. The Boutique has emergency bun kits available for \$1.00.

No skirts except by permission of the teacher; dancers are expected to ask the teacher if it is

acceptable to wear a skirt. Dancers should not just wear a skirt into class unless in pre

- ballet to primary, in which a skirt is part of the uniform.

The Royal Academy of Dance syllabus includes character work which requires a black character skirt and character shoes for students in grade I and above.

Tap students wear black tap shoes, uniform ballet leotard, studio-approved black jazz pants, and Black BSB t-shirt.

Jazz students wear black jazz shoes, studio approved black jazz pants, uniform ballet leotard Black BSB t-shirts.

Modern students wear the approved uniform leggings, ballet class uniform leotard and Black BSB t-shirt.

Boys wear navy or black shorts, a white t-shirt and socks, and black shoes.

Students not properly dressed for class may be asked to sit and watch. Excessive disrespect for uniform policy may result in a request for a Parent Teacher Conference **Please respect the traditions and art of dance and follow the dress codes.**

Official uniform leotards, tights and shoes can be purchased in ***The Ballet Boutique.***

Code of conduct

Students at the Belmont School of Ballet are expected to show exemplary behavior by:

- Being respectful of all students and teachers. Physical or verbal abuse, including “name calling” or “bullying,” is not tolerated.
- * Avoiding excessive talking during class, playing around, or not participating in the class. Disrupting the class is distracting and makes it difficult for our teachers and students to continue the class.
- * Showing respect for the studio property and the property of other students.
- * Making sure all classmates feel included. We ask that if a student wishes to hand out party invitations or holiday gifts/cards, please be sure to include every dancer in the class. If you need to limit the invitations, gifts, or cards to just a select few, the studio requests that you give them outside of the studio.

If a student does not abide by these rules, the teachers reserve the right to dismiss the student from the class until they can use appropriate behavior. The studio will not refund tuition for classes missed due to inappropriate behavior

Recital

The Recital is the end of the year performance highlighting all our students. Participation is encouraged. We assume you will be participating in the recital unless written notice is given to

the office prior to October 1, 2021. Otherwise, the family accounts will be charged with the appropriate fees. These fees will be due during the current billing cycle.

Costume and Recital Fees

A costume deposit of \$75.00 per costume is required. The remaining costume balances are billed in March and will be due by a date to be determined based on the delivery of the costumes.

Recital Performance fees are due October 15 as follows:

\$95.00 per student

\$170.00 per family

Performance fees and costume deposits are non-refundable.

Costumes will not be distributed until all fees for the year are paid in full. Costumes cannot be returned.

Class Changes

30 days written notice must be given to the business office if a dancer decides to withdraw. *Class Change* forms can be found on the website or in the office. Tuition will accrue whether a dancer has attended until the *Class Change* form is received. Verbal or Electronic notifications will not be accepted.

Tuition

fees are per student based on an annual fee calculated on the number of classes registered. Families are responsible for the entire year. Tuition is based on an annual fee and there are three payment options:

- One payment to be paid in full by August 22nd. Yearly payments reflect a discount if paid by the due date.
- Two payments to be paid by August 22nd and January 20th. Semester payments reflect a discount if paid by the due date.
- Ten equal payments with **Payments 1 and 10 due** at registration or by August 22nd. The remaining eight payments are due by the 20th of each month as follows: **Payment 2 is due 9/20, Payment 3 is due 10/20, Payment 4 is due 11/20, Payment 5 due 12/20, Payment 6 due 1/20, Payment 7 due 2/20, Payment 8 due 3/20, Payment 9 due 4/20.**

PLEASE NOTE: This 10-payment option is not based on monthly tuition; it is a payment plan based on the annual tuition cost.

A \$25 late fee will be applied to the account if payment is not received by the due date. Please get in touch with the business office if a situation arises. **Tuition is not prorated and is non-refundable.**

Fee Schedule:

# Of Classes	ONE Payment	TWO Payments	TEN Payments
1 class	\$712.50	\$363.75	\$75.00
2 classes	\$1330.00	\$679.00	\$140.00
3 classes	\$1923.75	\$982.00	\$202.50
4 classes	\$2422.50	\$1236.75	\$255.00
5 classes	\$2850.00	\$1455.00	\$300.00
6 classes	\$3211.00	\$1639.00	\$338.00
Unlimited	\$3990.00	\$2037.00	\$420.00

Annual Registration Fee \$60.00 per student

Individual Class \$20.00

Private Lessons: Studio fee \$30.00 per hour plus instructor fee.

Questions concerning payments should be directed to businessoffice@Belmontballet.com.

Calendar and Important Dates 2022 - 2023 Season

June 2022	Open Registration
August 22, 2022	Classes begin
August 27, 2022	Cecchetti and RAD Exam Presentation 4:00 p.m. (at CSB)
September 5, 2022	Labor Day, no classes
September 10, 2022	Charlotte Youth Ballet Nutcracker Auditions
September 15, 2022	UNCSA Festival fee due
September 17, 2022	Festival in the Park (Freedom Park)
October 3 – 8 2022	Bring a friend to class week (registration required)
October 15, 2022	Costume deposit and recital fee due
October 25 – 31, 2022	Wear your Halloween costumes to class
Late October/Early November	Cecchetti Liaison
November 2022	CYB Wizard of Oz auditions
November 7 - 12, 2022	Parent Observation Week
November 10, 2022	Deadline for R.A.D. Examination paperwork to be turned into the office.
November 13, 2022	Southern Christmas Show Nutcracker excerpts performance 2:00 p.m.
November 23 - 26, 2022	Thanksgiving Break No Classes
November 28 – December 4, 2022	Nutcracker Tech Week - <i>please watch for class changes due to technical rehearsals</i>
December 2 – 4, 2022	CYB Nutcracker Performances
December 11, 2022	Nutcracker excerpts Carmel Country Club
December 20, 2022 - January 2, 2023	Christmas / Holiday Break
January 3, 2023	Classes resume
February 24 - 26, 2023	2023 UNCSA Festival of Dance
Early March 2023	Royal Academy of Dance examinations
March 10 – 12, 2023	CYB Spring Show Wizard of Oz
April 7 - 14, 2023	Spring Break No Classes
May 15 - 20, 2023	Spring Recital Tech Week
May 18 -19, 2023	Dress rehearsal onstage (attendance mandatory)
May 20, 2023	Recital performances

Subject to change

*** Please read emails, check the website, and the office bulletin board for other important dates and announcements.**

