



ballet memphis school

Parent & Student Handbook

2025-26

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OVERVIEW

HISTORY

In 1986, Ballet Memphis was founded by Dorothy Gunther Pugh with the mission to create a ballet company that is reflective of our community and the nation by creating, presenting and teaching ballet in a way that celebrates the human spirit. We have built a company that is beautifully diverse in mind, body and soul and seeks to use our art in service to others. We have built an acclaimed original repertoire that speaks of the cultural significance of the area, and have shared it with audiences around the globe and at home, including The Joyce Theater in New York City and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., among others. Now in its 39th season, the professional company is one of four programs of Ballet Memphis which also includes Pilates and Wellness, Community Impact, and Ballet Memphis School.

MISSION

Ballet Memphis aspires to reveal and celebrate the universality of the human experience through dance and movement.

BALLET MEMPHIS SCHOOL

Ballet Memphis School is a welcoming, vibrant community where students and families learn and grow around a shared love for dance. Our school provides the highest quality of ballet instruction that is rooted in rigor, discipline and, most of all, joy. We leverage our close connection with the professional company and Ballet Memphis' other programs to enrich our offerings and support an inclusive range of student aspirations.

LOCATION AND COMMUNICATION

ADDRESS

Ballet Memphis
2144 Madison Ave
Memphis TN
38104



EMAIL

Ballet Memphis School's primary method of communication is email. Please keep your email address on file up-to-date. Important schedule and school updates, along with student performance and rehearsal schedules, are sent via email. For inquiries regarding the school please contact the School Manager, Courtney Sage, at Csage@balletmemphis.org.

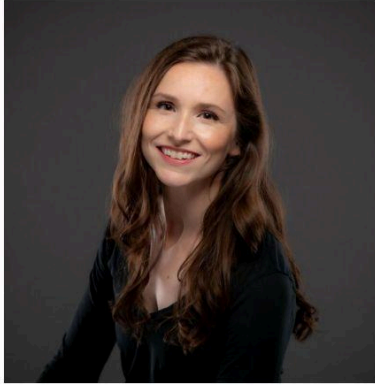
TELEPHONE

Front desk: (901)737-7322

WEBSITE

Please familiarize yourself with our website: BalletMemphis.org. You can find the latest calendar and scheduling information on our site as well as make payments or renew your student's registration.

BALLET MEMPHIS SCHOOL STAFF



Virginia Pilgrim Ramey
Ballet Memphis School &
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Courtney Sage
School and Company Manager
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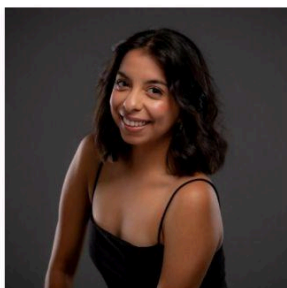
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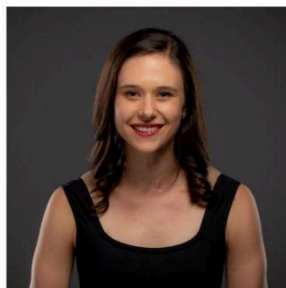
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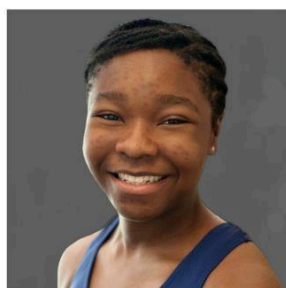
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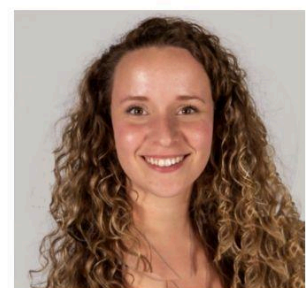
Emilia Sandoval
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Anwen Brown
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Kendall Fagan
Ballet Memphis School
Adjunct Faculty



Courtney Stewart
Ballet Memphis School
Adjunct Faculty

BALLET MEMPHIS SCHOOL POLICIES

REGISTRATION

All students participating in the Ballet Memphis School dance programs must be registered to attend class. It is important for parents to keep all contact information up-to-date. School staff must be able to contact parents with information about scheduling, updates on your child's progress, or in case of emergency. You can register your student through BalletMemphis.org/school, by contacting the [School Manager](#), or over the phone at (901)737-7322.

TUITION

Tuition may be paid all at once or scheduled in installments throughout the ballet school year. Payments may be arranged at BalletMemphis.org/school or in person at the Ballet Memphis School front desk. Any questions regarding tuition and payments should be directed to the [School Manager](#).

FINANCIAL AID

A limited number of partial scholarships are available to school-age students through age 18 whose circumstances warrant assistance. Financial assistance is awarded as applications are received for the period of one school year (August through May), and must be resubmitted annually. Contact the School Manager if interested in applying for financial assistance.

ATTENDANCE & MAKE-UPS

Regular attendance is expected as it is crucial to the technical progress of each student. If an absence cannot be avoided, the missed lesson may be made up in any class below the level of the student. Students may bank or make up classes in advance of an absence.

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP TIMES

Students are encouraged to arrive ~15 minutes before the scheduled start time of a class. This accommodates slight delays caused by traffic as well as allowing adequate time for students to change and warm-up. **Any student more than 15 minutes late will not be permitted to dance but will observe instead.** Parents are expected to pick up their children immediately following class. If a child must remain late, please notify the School Manager in advance. Students taking the final class of the evening must never be left late for any reason.

PARKING LOT AND VEHICLE SAFETY

The Ballet Memphis School parking lot is one-way only. Vehicles must enter on Cooper St. and exit on Madison Ave. Ballet Memphis School is not responsible for any lost or stolen belongings. We advise against leaving valuables unattended in vehicles while visiting our premises.

BUILDING SECURITY

Ballet Memphis School is committed to maintaining student safety. We employ a trained and certified security guard to patrol the building during regular classes. Please refrain from opening our doors to unfamiliar individuals during hours when the doors are locked. If someone you do not know is wanting entry please find a Ballet Memphis security guard or staff person to grant them access.

EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

We ask that students familiarize themselves with our emergency protocols:

- Fire: Teachers will guide evacuation through the nearest emergency exit. Classes will gather at the SE corner of the parking lot.
- Medical: Teachers will alert staff and call 911. Do not provide medical attention unless you are trained to do so.
- Severe Weather: Teachers will instruct students to avoid windows and seek shelter in dressing rooms or restrooms.
- Lockdown: Teachers will guide students to turn off lights, avoid windows and quietly seek shelter in dressing rooms. Students will not be dismissed until an all-clear has been confirmed.

Parents will receive email notifications if their student participates in any of Ballet Memphis School's emergency protocols.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Classes may be canceled in the event of inclement weather. Cancellation notifications will be sent via email and posted on the Ballet Memphis website and social media channels as soon as a decision is made. If severe weather develops later in the day, please wait until 2:00 p.m. before calling the studio for updates.

PRIVATE LESSONS

Private lessons may be scheduled based on faculty and studio availability. Due to limited studio availability, not all requests may be accommodated. Ballet Memphis' weekly class schedule and curriculum is designed to train students at a level that is appropriate for their age and ability. Private lessons are purely supplemental and in no way required. Private lessons are not make-up classes and are not a substitute for regular class attendance. Pricing is available upon request.



STUDENT INFORMATION

LEVEL PLACEMENT

A student's placement in one of our levels is based on technical proficiency, emotional maturity, classroom interaction, personal work ethic, and readiness for the challenges of that level. Each year, students at any level may be asked to continue in the same level the following year. Students mature at different rates and multi-year progressions allow Ballet Memphis School to be sensitive to each individual student's development.

CONDUCT STANDARDS

BUILDING ETIQUETTE

Students are expected to dispose of trash in provided bins, refrain from leaving food or drinks in dressing rooms and leave dance bags in the dressing rooms OR bring them into the studios for class. At the end of each class, everyone should take a moment to tidy up the studio space as they leave.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

We expect all individuals to respect their teachers, classmates, show up on time, follow the dress code, leave food and cell phones outside the classroom, and do their best work. If a student fails to conduct themselves according to this standard, the following procedures will take place:

1. The instructor will address the issue directly with the student.
2. If the inappropriate behavior continues, the student will be asked to sit at the front and observe until class is over. A parent/guardian will be notified of the issue.
3. If the student fails to improve their behavior, their status in the school may be subject to review by Ballet Memphis School leadership.

ATTIRE

UNIFORM

Boys

- Discover Dance - Ballet 4: white T-shirt, [black ballet shorts](#), white ankle socks, black ballet shoes.
- Ballet 5 - 6: white T-shirt, [black tights](#) (a waist elastic may be used to secure tights), [dance belt](#), black ballet shoes.
- Ballet 7: black or white T-shirt, [black tights](#), [dance belt](#), black ballet shoes.
- Ballet 8: any solid color T-shirt, [black tights](#), [dance belt](#), black ballet shoes.

Girls

- Discover Dance: [pink short sleeve leotard w/ attached skirt](#), white ankle socks OR [skin-tone tights](#), and matching [ballet shoes](#).
- Ballet 1: [white short-sleeved leotard](#), [skin-tone tights](#), and matching [ballet shoes](#)
- Ballet 2: [light blue short-sleeved leotard](#), [skin-tone tights](#), matching [ballet shoes](#) and a [bullet pointe skirt in light blue](#) (optional).
- Ballet 3: [lavender short-sleeved leotard](#), [skin-tone tights](#), matching [ballet shoes](#) and a [bullet pointe skirt in lilac](#) (optional).
- Ballet 4: [purple short-sleeved leotard](#), [skin-tone tights](#), matching [ballet shoes](#) and a [bullet pointe skirt in violet](#) (optional).
- Ballet 5: [hunter green short sleeved leotard](#), [skin-tone tights](#), matching [ballet shoes](#), and a [bullet pointe skirt in hunter](#) (optional).
- Ballet 6: [burgundy short-sleeved leotard](#), [skin-tone tights](#), matching [ballet shoes](#) and pointe shoes, and a [bullet pointe skirt in cranberry](#) (optional).
- Ballet 7: any solid-color leotard, [skin-tone tights](#), matching [ballet shoes](#) and pointe shoes, and a [bullet pointe skirt in black](#) (optional).
- Ballet 8: any solid-color leotard, [skin-tone tights](#), matching [ballet shoes](#) and pointe shoes, and a [bullet pointe skirt in any color](#) (optional).

HAIR AND JEWELRY GUIDELINES

For student safety, and to prevent distraction, no jewelry - other than stud earrings - is allowed in ballet class. In Ballet 1 - 8, Ballet Memphis School requires all students with long hair to have it neatly secured in a bun or similar style for all classes, rehearsals, and performances (unless otherwise specified). Dancers should use hair ties, bobby pins and hairnets to achieve secure buns. If a bun is not possible, hair should be otherwise secured off the neck and shoulders. Loose hair or long ponytails will not be acceptable in Ballet 1 - 8. Included are a few tutorials for achieving a ballet bun for a variety of hair types, textures, and styles.

[Curly/Natural Hair](#)

[Braids/Twists/Locs/
Extensions](#)

[Straight Hair](#)

EVALUATIONS

The evaluation process at Ballet Memphis School exists so students can track their own development and achieve their personal best. Evaluations are mailed to students in Ballet 1 - 8 at the end of the academic year. The evaluations are completed by your child's primary ballet instructor in consultation with the school directors and include your child's class placement for the following school year.

POINTE WORK

Pointe work is introduced in Ballet 5 to students who are *at least* 10 years old. Students in Ballet 5, who are 10 years or older, will go on pointe once the requisite level of technical proficiency has been attained. A student must consistently attend at least three technique classes per week to begin pointe work. If a student has a poor attendance record they may not be allowed on pointe.



YOUTH BALLET MEMPHIS

ABOUT YOUTH BALLET MEMPHIS

At Ballet Memphis, upper-level school students have the opportunity to audition for, and showcase their developing technique and artistry in, our non-professional Youth Ballet Memphis performances.

YBM members perform in Ballet Memphis' professional production of "The Nutcracker," the YBM Spring Show, and for the most advanced dancers, the YBM Fall Show.

YBM members rehearse between two and eight hours each week, in addition to their regular technique classes. Under the guidance of the school directors, faculty, and mentors from the professional company, members learn choreography and then strive to perfect their technique and unison corps work, and develop artistic expression in rehearsal. YBM productions utilize costumes, stage lighting, sets, props, and occasionally live music to emulate the theatrical experience of the professional company.

AUDITIONS

YBM membership is by audition only. Auditions are held at the end of each school year and are open to students in Ballet 5 - 8. A student's classwork, technical proficiency, maturity and attendance record will all be considered as well as their performance in the audition. Space is limited and admittance is not guaranteed; through the years many members of YBM have auditioned multiple times before receiving membership.