

Chester Valley Dance Academy

**** Policy for Pointe Dancers ****

The teachers closely observe the students during their classes each week. From September through December of each year, the teachers choose those students who are ready to take a pointe class.

Preparation for pointe work must be taken seriously. To develop adequate strength and technique to begin pointe, students must commit themselves and concentrate during the barre portion and center part of class. It is essential that the leg muscles be strong enough to support the entire body during strenuous ballet movements. Much of the lift in pointe work depends on the calf muscles down through to the Achilles tendon. It is necessary for these muscles to be properly developed to avoid injury. Two classes per week are required for students on pointe in order to maintain the strength and technique required to prevent injury and perform properly.

The most important factors that the teachers consider when evaluating a student for pointe classes are:

1. Attitude in ballet class - Is the student serious and receptive while taking class?
2. Length and Intensity of study - How long has a student been taking ballet and how many classes per week? Students need to take at least 2 ballet classes a week to be eligible for pointe.
3. Age/Bone development - We do not put an age limit on when a student starts pointe. Each child develops at a different rate, some more quickly than others.
4. Strength of the torso - The strength of the stomach muscles and the straightness of the back are very important to pointe dancers.
5. Basic stance on demi-pointe - The knees and ankles should be strong and straight when in releve'.
6. Leg Strength / Body Weight - The students' ankles and legs must be able to adequately support the rest of the body during demanding dance maneuvers.

Anyone taking a pointe class must understand and agree to the following guidelines:

1. Students will be required to take at least 2 ballet classes a week.
2. Students must understand the importance of always having a good pair of pointe shoes. (Bad fitting or worn-out shoes can result in long-term injuries and deformations of the feet).
3. Pointe shoes are an extra expense and should be discussed with your parents.
4. The teachers have the right to take a student off pointe at any time if they feel that any of the above requirements are not met.
5. 2 Ballet classes a week are required during the summer classes as well as the fall to continue with pointe. If you do not take ballet during the summer you will be taken off pointe in September until the teacher feels you have developed your strength again.

These policies have been initiated with the best interest of the student in mind. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 610-594-2771.

Sincerely,
Cathy Moran