



# **The School of New England Ballet Theatre**

## **Student & Family Handbook**

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## **Welcome to The School of New England Ballet Theatre**

The School of New England Ballet Theatre believes ballet is for everyone. We welcome students into a nurturing and supportive environment where they are encouraged to maximize their potential and further develop themselves as dancers and individuals. We foster and challenge their artistic and technical pursuits and support every dancer on their journey. We hold ourselves to high standards with exceptional education programs curated to excite the joy of movement within everyone.

## **About Us**

New England Ballet Theatre (NEBT) is a registered 501(c)3 corporation with three major branches: The Company, The School, and Community Engagement. The Company is comprised of professional dancers who rehearse daily and are consistently producing new productions. They perform in their own performances as well as alongside The School in two classical ballets per year. The School offers training and group and private lessons to dancers ages 3-adult at beginner to advanced levels. Our Community Engagement department is responsible for developing and creating meaningful programs in the community, oftentimes in collaboration with other nonprofits. NEBT is proud to work with Arts for Learning CT, The Miracle League, the Boys & Girls Club, and more.

## **Our Mission**

The mission of New England Ballet Theatre is to provide high-quality performances, to inspire through exceptional educational programs, and to cultivate an appreciation for dance throughout the community.

## **Our Programs**

Our School currently offers 5 different programs and/or class options for dancers:

- **Introductory Program-** This program consists of two class options: Creative Movement and Early Ballet. Both classes meet once a week. Creative Movement is for children ages 3-5 and Early Ballet is for children ages 5-7.
- **Pre-Professional Program-** This program is for the most dedicated dancers, ages 8-18. There are currently four levels in the pre-professional program. As the levels progress so does the frequency and intensity of training.
- **Trainee Program-** This program meets once a week on Sundays from 10am-3pm. The Trainee schedule includes ballet class, pointe/pre-pointe class, and rehearsals for upcoming performances.
- **Open Classes-** Our open classes are for children looking to take technique classes. These classes are not performance based and may be taken on a drop-in basis. Ages

8+ and all levels are welcome. Dancers may take as many open classes as they'd like and build their own schedules.

- Adult Classes- Adult classes are open to all ages (18+) and levels.

## **SECTION ONE: COMMUNICATION**

### **The School Contact Information**

At The School of New England Ballet Theatre we believe communication is key in providing an exceptional experience for students and their families. For questions, concerns or general inquiries, the best way to get in touch with us is via the contact information below.

Email: [admin@neballettheatre.com](mailto:admin@neballettheatre.com)

Phone: 860-255-7767

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

School Hours: Mon-Wed 4:00-8:00pm, Thur 4:30-7:30pm, Fri 5:00-7:30pm, Sat 9:30am-2:00pm

### **Artistic & Executive Director**

Rachael Gnatowski

[rgnatowski@neballettheatre.com](mailto:rgnatowski@neballettheatre.com)

### **Development & Creative Projects Manager**

Fiona Burlin

[fburlin@neballettheatre.com](mailto:fburlin@neballettheatre.com)

### **Adaptive Dance Coordinator**

Tamar Cohen

[tcohen@neballettheatre.com](mailto:tcohen@neballettheatre.com)

### **Studio Manager**

Sydney D'Orso

[sdorso@neballettheatre.com](mailto:sdorso@neballettheatre.com)

### **Trainee Program Supervisor**

Meggie Peterson

[mpeterson@neballettheatre.com](mailto:mpeterson@neballettheatre.com)

### **Women's Committee Co-Chair**

Rachel Smith

[rsmith@neballettheatre.com](mailto:rsmith@neballettheatre.com)

### **Community Programs Manager**

Emily Wiseman

[ewiseman@neballettheatre.com](mailto:ewiseman@neballettheatre.com)

We also utilize Facebook, Instagram, and other electronic platforms as a way to stay in touch and communicate with our families. If you're on social media, please like and follow us on Facebook and Instagram under The School of New England Ballet Theatre, @schoolof\_ne.ballettheatre

Our Administrative team works our front desk during class times. All questions and concerns should be funneled through the front desk and one of our staff members will get back to you as soon as possible.

### **Student & Family Contact Information**

In order to provide the best service to our students and families, it is essential The School has current and updated contact information for all enrolled students. We communicate primarily by email, and it is imperative The School has an accurate and frequently checked email address on file. It is each family's responsibility to provide and update contact information as well as read all emails from The School. This is especially important in the event of an emergency.

Our staff is not permitted to give out their personal phone numbers to parents or students.

## **SECTION TWO: GENERAL POLICIES**

### **Registration & Online Account**

Each NEBT family is required to create an account through our Dance Studio Pro Portal that includes emergency contact information, class enrollment/schedules, tuition balances, statements, and access to make payments.

To register for classes and access the Portal, please use the following link/address:

<https://dancestudio-pro.com/online/newenglandballettheatre>

You can access your account through our website. Click "Parent Portal" button at the top of the home page.

### **Placement**

Students are placed in a level with dancers of similar technical and artistic capabilities. Please note that placement is at the sole discretion of the Artistic Director. Our goal is to ensure students are placed at a level which safely challenges them.

### **Attendance**

Students are required to attend all assigned classes and rehearsals, either as full participants or, in the case of minor illness or injury, as attentive observers inside the studio. Please either call or email us if your student will be absent. Missed classes are not eligible for refunds.

### **Injuries**

Students should inform a faculty member immediately about any injury. Injured students are encouraged to attend classes and learn through observation.

### **Inclement Weather**

NEBT does not follow Avon Public Schools for weather-related closings. On days when APS is closed but NEBT is open, artistic staff may adjust class schedules. Such adjustments will be communicated by email. Please check email and/or social media accounts for all weather related closings.

### **Student Cell Phone & Smart Device Use**

While students may use personal cell phones and smart devices during breaks, students must turn off and stow personal devices during class time. ALL recording devices are prohibited at ALL times in or around changing areas (e.g., dressing rooms). Use of electronic devices, such as, but not limited to cell phones, smart watches, gaming devices, music devices and cameras, are prohibited while in the studio during class time.

### **Personal Belongings**

Students should keep their belongings in the provided cubbies. Please bring only what is needed for class each day. Valuables should be left at home. The School of New England Ballet Theatre is not responsible for lost, misplaced, damaged or stolen items in any capacity. Students should mark all belongings with their name.

### **Parent Volunteers**

Parents are REQUIRED to volunteer once each semester to assist as needed during productions. Each family is required to have one volunteer per semester. Please see the *Parent Volunteer Group* document for more information.

Some duties assigned to volunteers may include but are not limited to: hanging posters, assisting with outreach opportunities, backstage crew, dressing room monitors, ushers, etc. Our performances take a village to produce. Your involvement and volunteer duties are crucial to the productions running smoothly and successfully.

## Summer Training

In order for dancers to maintain their muscle memory it is recommended that dancers in the Pre-Professional and Trainee Programs participate in a minimum of 2 weeks of intense summer training. These programs can be with NEBT or with other schools. If dancers choose to train at other schools over the summer, please let us know what programs they are participating in. If a student does not meet our 2 week minimum policy, this may affect their level placement for the upcoming school year. Not training over the summer can cause serious risk of injury to dancers when they return in the fall.

## SECTION THREE: DRESS CODE

Please see the separate document regarding dress code. Students should not leave the facility in dance attire. Students should either change into street clothes or bring a cover up to wear over dance attire when they leave for the day.

### Pre-Professional Program

Students in the Pre-Professional Program shall wear the *Faustine* style leotard on Saturdays. Throughout the week, dancers in Level 3-4 may wear other Wear-Moi leotard styles outlined in the dress code in their level specific color (level 4-black, level 3-navy, etc). The Wear-Moi *Daphne* skirt is permitted during rehearsals.

#### Pre-Professional and Trainee Mandatory Uniform Requirements

- Wear-Moi *Faustine* leotard with NEBT logo
- Wear Moi *Daphne* skirt
- NEBT Branded Jacket (to be worn to/from theater rehearsals/performances)
- NEBT Branded Pants (to be worn to/from theater rehearsals/performances)

All Mandatory Uniform Requirements are available for purchase through NEBT.

### Official Dancewear Retailer

Beam & Barre 241 E Putnam Ave Cos Cob, CT 06807 203-622-0591  
<https://www.beamandbarre.com/studio-requirements/school-of-new-england-ballet-theatre-nebt/>

NEBT Online Store with Discount Dance  
<https://www.discountdance.com/search/teacherid:141357?tp=141357>  
You may also find these links and online stores through our website.

## SECTION FOUR: PAYMENT POLICIES

At The School of New England Ballet Theatre, we aspire to apply the policies consistently and fairly but please know we also understand there can be extenuating circumstances. Contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

## **Payments**

All payments and fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. Students with outstanding account balances will not be able to participate in the program until their account is fully paid.

Tuition for the school year is divided into 9 monthly installments September-May. You may choose to pay quarterly. Please email us at [admin@neballettheatre.com](mailto:admin@neballettheatre.com) to set up a different payment schedule.

All payments will be made either through our parent portal on Dance Studio Pro or via cash/check brought to the office. Payment for each month is due by the 10th, as tuition is how we pay our rent and teachers. Auto-Pay will be run on the 1st of every month.

## **Open Tuition**

All students enrolled in the Pre-Professional & Trainee Programs may take advantage of Open Tuition. This means that dancers may take additional technique classes at no extra cost. Pre-Professional students may take additional pre-professional classes at a level lower than they are currently enrolled (i.e. level 4 students may take level 1-3 classes). Open-Tuition classes are outlined in each student's placement letter for the year.

Both Pre-Professional & Trainee Programs may take any Recreational Program Classes. Pre-Professional and Trainee students may schedule Drop-In Open Classes through Dance Studio Pro at no additional charge.

## **SECTION FIVE: PERFORMANCES**

Participation in performances is highly encouraged, but not mandatory. **All dancers interested in participating must audition for the production.** Participation in any given production must be confirmed by two months in advance of the performance date(s). We cannot accept late sign-ups.

All NEBT students receive a 50% discount on tickets to performances that NEBT produces (that they are not performing in). We highly encourage our dancers to attend performances that they are not in to support one another.

## **Holiday Ballet**

Dancers ages 8-18 are invited to participate in our holiday ballet. We will host an open audition for all students ages 8-18. **Pre-Professional and Trainee dancers must attend this audition to participate.** Casting and rehearsal schedule will be announced following our open audition.

To learn more about this ballet, you can read the synopsis on our website under Season & Tickets.

### **Rising Voices: A Celebration of Student Choreography**

This production features pieces choreographed by our students! Students interested in choreographing must submit a proposal; a proposal form will be sent out to all families in the fall. Students in the Trainee Program and Levels 3 & 4 in the Pre-Professional Program are invited to submit proposals. Level 2 in the Pre-Professional Program will also be participating in this performance. They will have 1-2 pieces set on them by a faculty member.

While we encourage our students to costume their work from pieces that we have in the costume shop or pieces that can be found at home. Occasionally students do ask their cast to purchase accessories. Anytime a student would like to have their cast purchase accessories, an email will be sent out to families. All communication regarding additional costume pieces will be through the front desk.

### **Spring Ballet**

Dancers ages 3-18 are invited to participate in our spring ballet. We will host an open audition for all students ages 8-18. **Pre-Professional and Trainee dancers must attend this audition to participate.** Casting and rehearsal schedule will be announced following our open audition in the new year.

For community dancers, there will be a \$100 costuming fee to participate in this production. This fee will go towards ordering 1 costume per student that they will get to keep following the final performance. Students who have multiple roles will have their other costumes provided by NEBT. This fee is due by the end of February.

To learn more about this ballet, you can read the synopsis on our website under Season & Tickets.

### **Costuming**

We are very lucky and grateful to have our own costume shop. This means that we are constantly creating new costumes to be used for our productions. Our Costume Director is Fiona Burlin, and in addition to creating costumes, she is also responsible for all alterations and laundering. We are always accepting donations such as previously owned costumes, fabric, thread, appliqués, etc.



While we aim to provide the majority of the costuming used in our performances, undergarments are the dancers responsibility. All dancers should have tights, shoes, a flesh toned leotard, and bloomers. Tights and shoes should match in color, and should have no holes. We encourage every dancer to have a backup pair of tights in their bag during performances! Flesh toned leotards will be worn under all costumes unless otherwise specified. Bloomers may be additionally used for roles (particularly tutus). Colors will be specified, but the most common colors are white, pink, and black.

For Pre-Professional and Trainee dancers, there will be an additional \$175 costuming fee each year. This fee covers one costume for the spring ballet, as well as alterations and laundering for the holiday ballet and student choreography production. This can be made as one payment at the beginning of the year, or broken down into a \$50 charge due on September 20th and a \$125 charge due on February 7th.

NEBT Stage Makeup Tutorial:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I\\_LT-KgkKpQ&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_LT-KgkKpQ&feature=youtu.be)

General Hair Tutorial:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUC3WzQrT6s>

## **QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS**

Our hope is to provide both you and your student with a safe and rewarding experience. Any questions or concerns you may have are welcome. Please submit them at [admin@neballettheatre.com](mailto:admin@neballettheatre.com) so we have the opportunity to address them.



## **The School of New England Ballet Theatre**

### **Student & Family Code of Conduct**

- Attendance and punctuality are mandatory. Students arriving late should request permission to join class. Students arriving more than 15 minutes late will have missed important warm-up exercises and therefore be required to observe class. Habitual tardiness and absences will jeopardize the student's future placement. Missed classes should be made up as soon as possible in a class of the same or lower level.
- Students must turn off and stow cellphones and smart devices during class times. ALL recording devices are prohibited at ALL times in or around changing areas (e.g., dressing rooms). Use of electronic devices, such as, but not limited to cell phones, smart watches, gaming devices, music devices and cameras, are prohibited while in the studio during class time.
- Students must follow the dress code (including requirements that hair be pulled back) for all classes and rehearsals.
- Talking during class is disruptive to the entire class' concentration and must be kept to a minimum; however, instructors encourage questions appropriate to class instruction.
- Gum chewing, eating, and drinking are not permitted in the studios. Closed water bottles are permitted.
- Street shoes are not permitted in the studios unless specified as allowed for special events. Dance shoes may not be worn outdoors.
- Noise level in the waiting rooms, and hallway is to be kept to an "indoor" level so as not to disrupt classes or other businesses. Running or playing are not permitted in the hallways. Parents are required to monitor their children at all times in the common spaces.
- Students must be supervised by parent/guardian to and from the waiting room. This ensures the safety of the student and allows parent/guardian to check bulletin boards for important information. Written parental permission is required for alternative plan.
- Parents must pick up students promptly at the end of class unless other arrangements have previously been made with NEBT staff. Habitual tardiness in picking up students may result in assessment of additional fees.
- Unscheduled parent/teacher conferences are not permitted as they infringe on class time. Parents that wish to meet with an instructor should schedule a conference through the office. Parents must not interrupt class or enter the studio without instructor

permission. To prevent disruption and to maintain the educational environment, parents may not attempt to observe class unless during an announced observation week. Standing in front of the studio doorways is a hazard and is not permitted.

- Parents may take photos of their student during observation week, but may not post photos showing other students' faces on social media without explicit permission of those other students' parents.
- Ballet and other forms of dance are physical in nature and participant and parent assume all risks and liabilities associated therewith. Parents authorize NEBT to administer first aid if necessary, and parents will be informed as promptly as possible by NEBT if injury or illness occurs.
- Instructors and staff members show respect for students and parents, and students and parents are expected to show respect to the instructors and staff, and to each other. NEBT staff may remove any person from the premises at any time for conduct which staff may deem a safety risk to others.
- For safety of students and protection of our dance space, students and parents must follow any general facility regulations, posted or otherwise communicated.

Any student/family failing to comply with the code of conduct after 2 formal warnings risks being dismissed from NEBT.

*New England Ballet Theatre is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization. Donations are gratefully accepted and are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.*