

Who we are

We are a performance based arts company that offers the opportunity to learn the latest trends in dance –ballet, Hip Hop, Fusion, lyrical, Jazz, folk & Modern Contemporary in addition to other disciplines like gymnastics, martial arts, football and visual arts in preparation for competitions, events and our very own Annual season showcase.

- The joy of dance for many is performing. We are proud to provide 1st world training for performance & competition whether students perform or not. They always have something to work towards.
- We love awarding greatness. Students look forward to our recitals & awards as well as our internal competitions.

Contact Us

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Account Information:

Name on Account: First Dance

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First Dance Studios
Naz Children Centre
Rosehall, Montego Bay

First Dance Performance Handbook



FIRSTDANCE
STUDIOS

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Overview / Culture

The Mission of First Dance Studios is to prepare students spiritually, technically, academically, and artistically to move into the world of dance and affiliated careers in adherence with the mission of the company.

The **First Dance Company** is for students that are more serious about dancing. The First Dance Company provides our dancers with the opportunity to experience advanced dance classes, dance performances and competitions throughout the year and culmination of works at our annual showcase in December on the professional stage. It is expected that dancers invited into this program commit to participate in a minimum of 2 classes per week and spend time practicing their dance moves at home.

PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS

Recreational classes are grouped by age or school grade. Register your dancer for recreational courses according to the appropriate age group. All First Dance Company students will be carefully placed in the classes that are fitting to their skills. The age of one student may differ from the other students. The administration will make a concerted effort to keep the age ranges as close together as possible. However, the main emphasis will be placed on a student's technical achievement. He or she will be placed in the level that encourages the most progress.

PRIVATE LESSONS

Private lessons are offered on a case-by-case basis and based on the availability of instructors to dancers who wish to work on specific skills, one-on-one with an instructor. Packaged pricing is available for private and semiprivate lessons upon request and with sufficient notice.

ADVANCEMENT

Advancement will be determined through teacher evaluation. The changing of levels is always decided with the student's best interest in mind. If a student is promoted too soon, then he or she will miss some very valuable training. First Dance Company dancers will be placed with care and consideration. It is not uncommon for a student to stay at the same level for at least two years.

EVALUATIONS

First Dance Company aspirants and existing company members will be evaluated by the instructors at the end of June in a solo challenge and examination style demonstration / mini recital. This will ascertain progress and determine their placements and ability to perform in the end of year showcase. Students not making the cut in June will have a second opportunity to be evaluated at the end of September at which point the instructors will make the final selections. Students not selected in September may be re-evaluated for the following year's placement. Progress is closely monitored for each individual throughout the year and First Dance Studios reserves the right to withdraw placement in the company based on regression or lack of growth in execution of technique and choreography, behavior, or other infractions against the code of ethics. A dancer may appeal to regain their placement through audition but this is at the discretion of the instructor and the final decision approved by a Director.

OBSERVATION OF CLASSES

Parents or other spectators are asked to wait outside of the studio during class to avoid any distractions to the students and instructors. However, there will be appointed observation weeks throughout the year so that you may see your child's progress. Please check the dance calendar for dates of the observation weeks.

DANCE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

All First Dance Studios policies are enforced for the safety of our dancers and to maintain the decorum of the facilities. Please ensure that you and/or your child understand(s) and adhere(s) to all of our policies.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

For safety and security, all minors must be picked up by a parent or authorized guardian. No child will be allowed to leave the studio without a parent or guardian. It is therefore imperative to be cognizant of class times and ensure you arrive up to 15 minutes early for your start time and within 15 minutes of class end time to minimize disruption of other classes. Parents who are consistently late and/or students who are repeatedly loitering will be given a warning and will be subsequently penalized if the action persists.

FOOD & BEVERAGES

Food may only be eaten outside of the dance floor. All food must be thrown away in the garbage cans or recycling bins provided. No gum will be allowed in class.

CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

If a class is canceled for any reason, emails and/or text messages will be sent to all affected students.

PROPERTY

First Dance Studios is not responsible for the loss or damage of personal property. **NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES** (e.g. tablets or cell phones) **WILL BE PERMITTED IN CLASS**. Lost items will be held in the First Dance lost & found temporarily. All students are expected to retrieve their items within a reasonable time frame after which uncollected items may be discarded.

PERFORMANCE / RECITAL

First Dance Company members will be expected to attend all company events, performances, competitions and recitals except in the case of an emergency, illness or critical obligation which must be communicated to the instructor in writing.

As a representative of the First Dance, each student must be encouraged to achieve the highest standards of etiquette and professionalism. **Those students who represent First Dance Studios (by performing at shows etc.) will not be permitted to represent any other institution without prior consent.**

DISCIPLINE

we strive to offer the highest level of dance education in a positive, respectful, and nurturing environment. In order to develop and maintain this environment, we ask all of our students and their parents to abide by the following guidelines:

Students are expected to behave in an orderly, civilized and well-mannered way and to show respect to their Instructors and everyone they come in contact with. Students should also show respect to other students in their class. Failure to comply with the rules and regulations may result in withdrawal from classes.

- Honesty and Integrity is expected.
- First Dance reserves the right to ask any student or parent to leave the school for inappropriate behavior.
- Parents to demonstrate respect for faculty and staff at all times. If disrespect is shown to a staff member, the family may be asked to leave.
- Parents to please respect and follow the advice and direction provided by teachers and be supportive of their children's efforts. It is more important to focus on children's efforts rather than winning or losing.
- Parents should please teach their children respect for other students, teachers and adjudicators and lead by example.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

First Dance Studios follow strict policies for academic achievement for company members. All dancers must be earning a passing grade for all courses each term. If a student is placed on academic probation they are still allowed to rehearse, however they will not be allowed to compete/perform during probation.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

- o There will be no gum or candy allowed in class.
- o There will be no talking in class.
- o Food is not allowed on the dancefloor.
- o There will be NO cell phones or other electronics in class. Use of electronics e.g laptops & tablets is strictly prohibited at any time. Cell phones use is restricted to the waiting area before or after class (NOT during breaks).
- o There is zero tolerance for inappropriate behavior in or outside classroom.

GENERAL DRESS CODE & APPEARANCE

- o All First Dance students must have their hair properly secured away from the face in a ponytail or bun.
- o For the student's safety there will be **no** jewelry worn in class, including watches, necklaces, and dangling earrings.
- o No visible undergarments under dance wear.
- o Students must wear the appropriate attire for your class.
 - o No Jeans or restrictive garments
 - o Garments must be properly maintained (laundered and kept in good repair – no holes)
 - o No socks to be worn on the dancefloor unless they are approved by the instructor
 - o Appropriate footwear (jazz shoes, character shoes, ballet slippers, etc.) should be worn
 - o All students must carry a facecloth or towel to classes
 - o All students must carry sufficient water for class & rehearsals

FIRST DANCE COMPANY DRESS CODE

All Dance Company students must own the required items on the **checklist** and wear appropriate gears to class as indicated by the instructor.

CHECKLIST for female performers:

- Black leotard with short sleeve
- Black leotard sleeveless
- Black tights long (ankle length)
- Black tights short (mid-thigh)
- Black sports bra
- Black seamless panties (full coverage and/or thong)
- White leotard sleeveless
- White tights long (ankle length)
- 1 pair of personal jazz shoes/ ballet slippers (for classes)

CHECKLIST for male performers

- Black loose fitting pants ankle length (flexible material)
- White loose fitting pants ankle length (flexible material)
- Black t-shirt (short sleeve)
- White t-shirt (short sleeve)
- Black undershirt (sleeveless)
- 1 pair of personal ballet slippers/jazz shoes (for classes)

***See costume order sheet if you would like us to purchase any of these items for you that cannot be sourced locally.

COSTUME POLICY:

The costume collection is cost-intensive and consists mainly of original pieces, created for specific characters and/or works still in the repertoire or waiting to be revived. Therefore, it is imperative that students take good care of them, not only when in rehearsal or performance settings, but in transport and storage as well. When wearing any costume or costume part:

DO NOT eat or drink (water is allowed).

DO NOT spray on cologne. DO NOT go to the restroom. Take off the costume in the dressing room first, go to the restroom, then put the costume back on in the dressing room.

DO NOT allow the costume to sit on the floor, or to be thrown on the ground.

DO NOT take the costume with you or launder it.

Failure to do so may result in the student being fined or charged for the refurbishing or total replacement of the costume or costume piece.

The student is responsible for gathering up props and costumes immediately after use and for returning them into the care of the costume department in the best state possible. Failure to do so will result in a \$3000 fine.

Only a limited number of costumes are available for special projects and loans to students. Costumes are not to leave the costume room with any student without a Costume Rental Contract.

FINANCIAL POLICY

Each student registered would have received a membership Card. In the event your card has been lost/stolen a \$500 replacement fee will be applied.

Tuition should be paid on date specified on registration forms. Any payment over fourteen (14) days will attract a late fee of \$2000.

Late pick-up is an inconvenience not only to our instructors but also to security and other personnel on duty. Each family will be allowed a fifteen (15) minute grace period after which the fee will be \$1000 per hour or part thereof.

Costumes Fees are due in October of each year and range from \$10,000 - \$15,000 per student. All Company students are required to pay monthly dues of \$1000- \$1500 in order to help eliminate a lump sum payment that may seem overwhelming. All monthly dues/fees will be non-refundable if student drops out or is asked to leave the group. Competition entry fees may be required and vary depending on the size of the group and which competition. Not all external performances will require the purchase of additional costumes. In order to keep costs down, First Dance will try to use the same costumes that students will wear for their recital dance or previous year's costumes. Costume choices for each group will be based on the instructor/ choreographer's vision of the dance. **All costumes are the property of First Dance Studios.**

Drop-outs: A \$10,000 fee applies to any student who drops out of the Company/Competition team during the dance performance season, for instructor to re-choreograph and rearrange the competition routines.

It is mandatory that all company members have:

First Dance T-shirts, leotards, competition shoulder bags for competitions/conventions/performances. Branded Leotards cost approx. \$2200, dance pants \$3000. Competition and garments bags are approx. \$4500 each. Dancers must wear their gears upon arrival and when leaving all competitions, conventions and performances.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

First Dance Company Students must attend 80% of the classes. All students of First Dance Company will attend each dress rehearsal, recital, showcase, picture day and competition as required for their level. Only in extreme circumstances will exceptions be made.

Each absence over 3 results in probation from the dance company group. Students anticipating missing a class or rehearsal due to illness or another legitimate reason are expected to notify the instructor in charge in advance.

Tardiness: Entering the classroom after the first exercise has been completed may mean the student will have to observe the class since an important part of class preparation has been missed. **Sitting out/class observation:** If you are feeling unwell, but are not contagious, or if you have a minor injury, the instructor may permit you to sit out and observe class.

Illness: Prolonged illness or injury will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Major illness or injury that prevents a student from active participation in classes or rehearsals should be reported to the instructor before class begins.

Students permitted to observe class must provide the instructor with a note, if you adhere to these guidelines, you will NOT incur an absence. If you sit out of class for more than Two full weeks, we will discuss your prolonged illness or injury to assess the situation on a case-by-case basis.

General Health: A well-balanced and healthy diet is essential for every dancer. Dancers should be aware that they make extraordinary demands on their bodies, and should treat them accordingly with sound health and nutrition habits.

PARENTS RESPONSIBILITIES

- Please get your children to class on time every week since regular attendance is necessary for good training
- Please be prompt in picking up your child after class.
- Please label shoes and gear with student's full name. Please do not allow your child to wear dance shoes outside. A dance/gym bag is required for all gear.
- Please make sure that your child is properly outfitted for class each week per our studio dress code.
- Please call in all absences and make arrangements for a makeup class for illness where necessary
- Please encourage practice at home.
- Please remember that you are responsible for supervising siblings; keep them safe and under control in the waiting area.
- Please remember that while class is in session, no observation is allowed.
- Both Students and parents should be respectful in the waiting area, using their "inside voices" and keeping voices down.
- Please remind students to clean up after themselves and respect studio property.
- Please keep students' jewelry and valuables at home.
- Please check your child's dance bag for notices and check your email for updates.
- Please check the lost and found box frequently.
- Please pay accounts on time. Late fees are issued on overdue accounts.
- Please remember that we value your patronage and support and want to thank you for choosing us for your child's dance education. Please review our studio policies with your children to help them understand why it is important for everyone to follow the studio rules.

Finally, ... remind them to have FUN! You'll all gain a lifetime of great memories!

Annual Dance Awards

Performer of the year

2013- Abbygayle Rasinski

2015 Abbygayle Rasinski

Junior Performer of the year

2015 Giann Dujon

Most Improved

2014 Julieta Bueno

2015 Serena Campbell

Most Improved Junior

2015 Zara Gordon

Solo Challenge Competition

2016 Junior winner: Sarah Spencer

2016 Intermediate winner: Abbygayle Rasinski

2015 Intermediate winner: Abbygayle Rasinski

2016 Senior Winner: Serena Campbell

2015 Senior Winner: Melinda

JCDC- Dance Competition

2015 – 1 Gold, 2 Silver and 1 Bronze

2016- Winner of Popular Dance Trophy + 3 Golds, 1 Silver
and 1 Bronze



The Jamaica Cultural Development Commission stages the annual Festival of the Performing Arts Competition to unearth, develop, and showcase the creative talents of Jamaicans from all walks of life. This cultural opportunity has benefitted many Jamaicans through training, exposure and recognition. The benefits derived enable participants to make worthwhile contributions to the creative and cultural industries, and building Brand Jamaica. The subject areas covered in the Festival of the Performing Arts programme are: Dance (including Deaf Dance), Drama, Traditional Folk Form, Music and Speech. Come be a part of a tradition of excellence! show the world your creative talents and be recognized!

WCOPA – World Championships of the Performing Arts (U.S.A)

2016- Jada Gourzong & Abbygayle Rasinski (Total 9 medals)



Singers, musicians, dancers, actors and models are ready to compete before 75 judges from the entertainment industry at the Annual World Championships of Performing Arts®, in Long Beach, California. This international meet is often cited as the official “Talent Olympics” for aspiring performers. “Contestants from over 50 countries are expected to participate, “vying for ‘the gold’ PLUS a total of \$400,000 in scholarships: \$30,000 from the Millennium Dance Complex, \$150,000 from the New York Film Academy, and \$200,000 from the New York Conservatory for Film and Television!” Before the opening ceremonies and competition begins, contestants look forward to the much-anticipated WORLDSTARS Boot Camp, an unmatched full-day of the most comprehensive performing arts seminars and workshops given by top industry experts.