

Understanding Dance Class Placement



Dance class placement can be different compared to other extracurricular activities, or to the way students progress through grades at school. We hope the information here will help clarify how level placement works, and what you can expect as your child grows with us over the years.

With our youngest dancers, level placement is primarily determined by their age and peer group. This allows us to introduce the fundamentals of dance at the correct developmental stage and ensure that we are teaching movement that is age-appropriate. With these young classes, we also place more emphasis on gross motor skill development versus technique so that a solid movement foundation is built first.

Dance class placements beyond the beginning levels are made with several factors in mind. Some of the biggest factors include physical safety, body awareness, developmental appropriateness, and skill mastery. This is also where we begin to focus more attention on growing your child's technique, because their bodies are more equipped for those demands. At SBPAC, we take these things seriously so that we can develop emotionally mature, physically healthy dancers.

At a certain point in a dancer's education—past the introductory years—factors like friend groups are only considered secondarily. As they advance, each dancer's progress is going to be very individual. Even if they've been exposed to the same teacher and the same curriculum, two friends might actually progress through our levels at different rates. This is completely normal and can be a benefit to a dancer's progress: Being in a different class than your friends means there is more opportunity to focus on dance without becoming distracted.

Although class levels might vary from studio to studio, it's typical that they are set up in such a way that a student would be in the same level for more than one year. This is pretty different than what your child is used to at school! But dance studios usually do not have thirteen grades like school. And it is expected that students will require more than one year to truly master specific skills and be prepared for what's next.

We encourage you to think of our class levels as the ladder your child can climb to achieve their strongest skills and their best self, with each rung of the ladder allowing them more opportunities to develop and grow. We are here to instruct them on the journey upward and ensure they never miss a step along the way!