

The Andover School of Ballet

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The *Andover School of Ballet* takes pride in the highly professional and expert dance education that we offer. We have designed our graded and leveled curriculum very carefully to assure that our students learn this very physical art in a safe and proper manner.

Our Early Childhood Curriculum for preschool through first grade students consists of PreBallet with Creative Movement classes (*also including Tap for age 4 and up*). This curriculum is based on the appropriate developmental skills for each specific age group. It is specially designed to provide the children with a strong foundation in dance and movement from which they can move on to our leveled classes in different types of dance.

For every student age 7 and up who is enrolled in our leveled dance classes, each level's curriculum must be mastered before advancement to the next level is achieved. Progression through the dance levels is a very individual process and every year our instructors make individual assessments of each student's progress. The dance levels are numbered and increasing numbers indicate increasing difficulty in technique. Once past Level 1 (the beginner level) of Ballet or Jazz & Tap, each dance level may require one or two years (*or even more in higher levels*) to master. As any student advances in technical mastery, taking classes more frequently will quicken their progress.

We recommend that Ballet students who wish to maximize their progress take Ballet classes at least twice per week. This concentrated training is necessary to prepare students for pointe work, and usually begins with students who are entering the Ballet 3 level. It is highly recommended that first year Ballet 3 students also take a Ballet 2 class to reinforce their basic technical skills, while second year Ballet 3 students usually take two Ballet 3 classes per week.

Ballet technique is a very complex form of movement. As a student progresses, the technique becomes more challenging and taking more than one class per week becomes very important. Because of the "turn-out" from the hips needed in ballet, constant repetition of correct technique is necessary for progress to be made and for the chance of injury to be lessened. Each new level of dance builds on the foundation of technique learned and mastered in the previous level.

*A student taking demi-pointe or pointe classes **MUST** attend two Ballet technique classes each week. All students must have permission from their teachers to begin and continue **demi-pointe** and **pointe** classes. Readiness for pointe work is determined on an individual basis according to strength and technical mastery.*

Students at higher ballet levels should consider taking a minimum of three Ballet classes per week. Higher-level Jazz & Tap students are required to attend weekly ballet or lyrical classes in addition to their leveled Jazz & Tap class. **Remember, the more you practice, the better you will dance!**