

OPENING NEWSLETTER 2022-2023

WELCOME!

CLASSES BEGIN ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH 2022!

We are so excited for our 20th Anniversary Season! We are extremely proud to have created a studio that has strong sense of community, connection and caring, and we know that this year will continue to be filled with happy days of learning and dancing together!

As always, Grace Academy is looking forward to continuing to develop a strong technical foundation in each of our dancers, while instilling a natural love of movement and creativity. At Grace Academy, we are proud to offer the finest in dance and theatrical training, where students are given the opportunity to learn in an environment of artistic and technical excellence. As one of Oakville's only non-competitive studios, we are proud to offer an environment that is caring, and where dancers learn to be encouraging, supportive and respectful of each other. Age appropriate syllabus work, music and costuming is chosen with great care so that parents can always be assured of the very best for their child!

We are proud to be members of the **International Dance Entrepreneurs Association!**

"I.D.E.A. schools adhere to a Code of Ethics for fairness, respect and integrity in business and the classroom. You will find a well-qualified and compassionate faculty and staff committed to providing your child with the highest quality dance education possible while helping them grow in the passion for dance and life."

COVID 19- POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

At the time of writing, there are no government restrictions in place for dance studios and the pandemic. We will, of course, continue to update you if anything should change, as we continue to be members of DANCE SAFE ONTARIO. Please review the policies and procedures page on our website, to see what procedures could be implemented if/when required.

As was the case over the last 2 years, we plan to be flexible and adaptable to change, as we move forward and the Covid-19 pandemic and health protocols

continue to evolve. We will communicate regularly with all of our families so that everyone is up to date if anything should change.

Here is a quick look at what to expect this fall:

All classes will be running in person

Masks are no longer mandatory, but can absolutely be worn by those who prefer

HEPA air purifiers will be running in both studios and waiting room

Dancers and faculty will sanitize their hands upon entry and exit of the studio

Regular cleaning and disinfecting will occur

We will continue to make use of our front and back door drop off/pick up (with details to follow) and waiting areas will be open to students only - watch for more information as we get closer to September

Dancers are asked to self screen for symptoms of illness prior to coming to class (no active screening forms will need to be completed at this time). We will follow the same policies for isolation/masking after illness as the Halton District School Board. An update will follow closer to the start of the year.

If necessary, a hybrid system of virtual/in person learning may be set up, or a move to completely virtual classes may occur. Please refer to your registration waiver - no refunds or discounts will be given. Any such changes will be communicated clearly when/if it becomes necessary to implement them.

REGISTRATION

Registration now takes place in our Family Portal. You can create an account (new dancers) or sign in on the homepage of our website (graceacademy.ca). Once classes are chosen, you will receive an email acknowledging that your portal has been set up and a 2nd email acknowledging your class selections. At that time, we will review your class selections (to ensure you have chosen the correct levels) and then confirm your fees owing. To secure your place, a \$100 non-refundable deposit should be paid immediately, with the balance of 1st Term Fees due on August 28th. This deposit is made up of a \$25 registration fee and \$75 deposit towards 1st term fees. Please refer to the attached Fee Structure for all fee policies.

FEES ARE PAYABLE BY E-TRANSFER, CASH OR CHEQUE MADE OUT TO GRACE ACADEMY OF DANCE AND PERFORMING ARTS (Families paying by cheque MUST provide the studio with post dated cheques for each term)

If you are paying by cheques, these can be mailed to:
785 Pacific Road, Unit 1
Oakville, On
L6L 6M3
(or dropped off through the slot on our front door)

This 'Family Portal' will be your place to look for monthly newsletters, class music, zoom links and fees owing as we continue through the year. Access will be through the studio website, please be sure to record your password.

TIMETABLE

The proposed timetable for the 2022/2023 season can be found on our website under 'Schedules'. This timetable is subject to change based on registration numbers and any changes in COVID-19 protocols. Where there is insufficient registration for any class, this may be cancelled and an alternative given.

Students will be watched carefully to ensure that they have been placed in the correct level. Teachers will discuss this with the parents, should a problem arise. Every effort is made to do only what will be of benefit to each individual child. Parents should remember that because dance is a physical activity all students will develop and progress at different rates.

If you are uncomfortable returning to in person learning for any reason, dancers may also choose to learn exclusively at home on Zoom. If this is your preference, please indicate this on the 'special needs' section of your registration or email Miss Knapp.

A virtual option will also be available for dancers or family members who may be ill, to help keep our studio safe and healthy. Details will follow.

AGE REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENTS:

Discover with me - 18 months by September 1st 2022

Ballet – 3 years by September 1st 2022

Tap– 7 years by September 1st 2022 OR 3 years of dance at Grace Academy – at Miss Knapp's discretion

Musical Theatre – 7 years by September 1st 2022

All students must be taking one form of dance. Dancers will be divided based on age and dance level

Modern jazz – 6 years by January 31ST 2023 OR 1 Year of Pre-Primary Ballet at Grace Academy (primary and grade 1 modern jazz will also have a taste of hip hop appropriate to this age level)

Junior Hip Hop - 8 and 9 years old OR enrolled in Grade 2 Modern

- ALL STUDENTS wishing to enrol in Grade 4 Hip Hop or higher MUST also be attending the corresponding modern class.
- Intermediate foundation ballet 1st year students must attend 2 classes of ballet per week in order to be considered for pointe work.
- -Intermediate foundation ballet 2nd year students and above MUST be attending 2 regular ballet classes per week to work on pointe.
- -We highly recommend that students in grade 1 ballet 2nd year and above attend 2 classes per week in order to progress through the level in 1 year and achieve a good standard (please discuss this with Miss Knapp if you have questions).
- -Musical theatre students must be taking at least one form of dance
- -Those interested in The Spirit Moves Christian Dance Company or Pure Grace Performing Company should speak to Miss Knapp
- -Leaps and Turns dancers should be enrolled in either ADV 1 1ST YEAR MODERN OR ABOVE

THE SPIRIT MOVES CHRISTIAN DANCE COMPANY

The Spirit Moves Christian Dance Company was founded by Miss Knapp in the year 2000.

Using contemporary Christian worship music, dancers learn a large repertoire of choreography throughout the year. In our 2022/2023, practices will continue to be held every other Friday.

In past seasons, we have taken part in a variety of worship services in the community and held a fundraising spring concert to raise money for local charities. Happily, we have just begun performing live again this spring, and look forward to a more normal performance season in 2022/2023.

Families who participate in this program will be updated on any potential performances as they come up, and all performance participation will be optional.

This is a fabulous opportunity for your dancer to learn about giving back to others and to share their talents in a way that brings joy to those around them. If you are interested in learning more, please speak to Miss Knapp.

PURE GRACE -PERFORMING COMPANY

Pure Grace is a non-competitive performance based company. It is a wonderful way for dancers to enhance their performance skills, while increasing their technique and knowledge of a variety of dance styles.

Pure Grace is offered to the serious dancer, who is committed to challenging themselves with new work, enhancing their technique, and performing at a high standard. While this is a non-auditioned group, dancers ideally attend a minimum of 2 ballet classes and 1 modern class per week in order to participate. The group is open to dancers enrolled in grade 3 ballet and above, and will be sub-divided according to dance grade level. Rehearsals take place on Thursday evenings, with some additional practices scheduled on weekends, when/if needed for a performance.

In past years, our dancers have participated in events such as Run for the Cure, Oak Park Neighbourhood Fall Fair, Oakville Children's Festival, Fundraising Gala for Kerr Street Mission, Film.Ca Cinemas, Palermo Village Retirement Community and Disney World!

We look forward to finding new performance opportunities for our dancers this coming season as the community continues to open up! Participating families will be updated on our performance schedule.

We are so proud of what our dancers have accomplished by being a part of this program and see an enormous change in them both technically and in performance standard.

Note - for many of our performances, costumes are used from previous seasons or borrowed by the dancers, however, an additional cost for costuming may be required throughout the year. As always, we aim to keep costs to a minimum.

Space will be limited. If your dancer is interested, please speak to Miss Knapp to receive further details!

DISCOVER DANCE!

As you know, we take great pride in offering programs for our littlest dancers that allow them to explore their creativity and imagination, develop an appreciation of music, and enhance their motor skills and body and spatial awareness. Over the 2 past year, Miss Knapp has been furthering her training in early childhood dance, and is thrilled to be an official DiscoverDance studio!

"The DiscoverDance approach to early childhood dance education is the perfect blend of discovery and development that leads to a lifelong appreciation for the ART of dance. We are dedicated to teaching the developing child FIRST, the dancer second. Through this lens, we meet every child's individual needs at their developmental stage."

DISCOVER WITH ME - A program for the little dancer and a grown up! Geared to age 2, but appropriate for dancers ages 18 months to 3 years who may need the extra security of having an adult with them. We will dance, sing, and play in both one-on-one activities and group activities. Through circle songs, open exploration, and gross motor development exercises, children will blossom with each passing class as they grow with their caregiver during this precious time together!

If you know a little one, please let them know about this wonderful program!

ADULT CLASSES!

Have you always wanted to try a dance class? Did you dance as a child and miss the joy that it brings? Are you looking for a fun way to exercise? JOIN ONE OF OUR ADULT CLASSES!!

We offer classes at the following times:

MONDAY 8:00PM TAP (for those with past tap experience)

WEDNESDAY 8:15PM JAZZ /HIP HOP (beginners are welcome but also for those with past experience)

THURSDAY 9:15AM BALLET (appropriate for all levels of experience!)

THURSDAY 10:15AM TAP (for beginners or those with less experience)

FRIDAY 9:15AM STRETCH AND TONE WITH JAZZ (for all levels)

Ask us for more information

FACULTY

Heidi Knapp is a Fellow and past examiner with the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing. She holds qualifications that specialize in Classical Ballet, Modern Theatre Dance and Tap, as well as intermediate training in National Dance. In addition, to this, she holds a B.A. in Drama with a specialization in Stage Management and has completed the Foundations Course with DiscoverDance for Early Childhood Dance Educators.

Heidi is a firm believer that dance should be experienced by everyone. Her teaching experience of more than 30 years covers work in dance, drama and musical theatre with dancers aged 3 to 85!

Heidi is the Director of the Spirit Moves Christian Dance Company, for which she was nominated for the Oakville Community Spirit Awards in 2005. She also teaches dance to seniors and is the choreographer for The Oakville Happy Tappers.

In November of 2017, Heidi received the Canada 150 Sesquicentennial Citizenship Award for engaging and inspiring youth in the community. Grace Academy was also recently nominated as small business of the year in the Oakville Awards for Business Excellence.

Heidi takes pride in offering dance to all ages and fostering creativity, a strong work ethic, integrity and a sense of community in all of her students.

Sarah Vanduyvenvoorde

Grace Academy is very fortunate to have Sarah VanDuyvenvoorde on staff. She has been teaching modern, jazz, hip hop, tap and ballet for 29 years and is an Associate of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing. Sarah also holds advanced certificates in ballet, modern, tap and national dance. For those of you new to the school – our dancers call Sarah "Mrs. Van Dunk" – a combination of her maiden and married name- and much easier to pronounce! Sarah brings creativity, energy and a genuine love of children to all of her classes! She is dedicated to excellence, and has been an important member of our faculty since we opened!

Ali Daly

A graduate of Grace Academy, Ali Daly returned to join our faculty in 2017. Ali is a Ryerson University graduate with a B.A in Creative Industries. She specializes in hip hop dance and has trained with various projects in Toronto including: O.I.P Dance Company, Professional division at BOSS Dance Company and is codirector of The Clique Dance Crew. Ali also co-produces a dance workshop and event series called The Industry Toronto. Ali has performed in Toronto showcases including: Fever After Dark, The Industry Season 2, Choreoball, The Dance

Teacher Expo, Bazaar, The Beatdown, G.O.A.T Dance Competition and many more.

In 2018, Ali worked at da Costa talent management to continue to expand her knowledge of the performing arts industry. In 2019 she joined the team of the popular "Mini Pop Kids" as a content producer and tour assistant. She currently works at the creative studio "Somewherelse" as a digital content creator while continuing to be an advocate for the Toronto dance community.

Paige Sayles

Paige Sayles is a Toronto based dance artist originally from Calgary, AB. Since graduating from York University's BFA Dance program in 2017, she has danced across the country, being credited as "some of the inspiring talent flourishing in the Canadian dance community," (David Silverberg, Now Magazine). Paige has also used her creativity to collaborate with top choreographers in creating original works and independent dance projects, most recently choreographing a piece for a music video for the 2022 Canada Games. She is currently pursuing a career as a dance artist, scholar, teacher and choreographer.

Natasha Wandel

Vocals - Musical Theatre/Supply Teacher for all dance styles
Natasha is a familiar face at Grace Academy, having danced at the studio since
its opening in 2003, reaching advanced levels in all styles of dance, and
graduating in 2018. Natasha recently graduated from McMaster University, where
she studied classical voice and music cognition. Upon graduation, she received
the Dean's Medal for Excellence in the Humanities, awarded to the top 3
academic students in Humanities programs. She began private vocal lessons
with Natalie Spurrell at the age of 10 and currently holds her grade 9 certificate
with the Royal Conservatory of Music. She was also a part of the award winning
Spurrell Studio Choir until 2018. Natasha is experienced in teaching RCM theory,
piano and voice. She is has been a Teaching Assistant for various courses at
McMaster University, as well as being responsible for leading sectionals within
the McMaster University Choir. This fall, she begins her Masters in Applied Music
and Health at the University of Toronto.

Natalie Spurrell

Resident Guest Teacher, Vocals – Musical Theatre

Natalie Spurrell is a frequent guest teacher and advisor for musical theatre class. She holds a Bachelor of Music and a Bachelor of Music Education, majoring in voice, and also recently completed her Masters in Music Education with Boston University. She is the owner and director of Spurrell Singing Studio in Oakville. She has directed many musicals and award winning choirs – most recently, the Spurrell Studio Choir was chosen to attend International Choral Kathaumixw in Powell River, British Columbia and received The Elmer Iseler Award for the best performance of an original Canadian choral composition. They have also achieved 1st place at Nationals with the FCMF (Federation of Canadian Music Festivals) and a gold standing at MusicFest Canada.

TERM DATES/HOLIDAYS

AUTUMN TERM: Saturday, September 10th – Monday, November 28th WINTER TERM: Tuesday, November 29th- Sunday, March 5th 2023 SPRING TERM: Monday, March 6th – Saturday, June 3rd 2023

No classes will be held during the following holidays:

Saturday, October 8th, Sunday, October 9th and Monday October 10th (Thanksgiving)

Monday, October 31st (Halloween)

Tuesday, December 20th - Friday, January 8th inclusive (Christmas Break)

Saturday, February 18th, Sunday, February 19th and Monday February 20th (Family Day Weekend)

Saturday, March 11th - Sunday, March 19th inclusive (March break)

Friday, April 7th - Good Friday

CLASSES **WILL** RUN ON THE SATURDAY and MONDAY OF EASTER WEEKEND, AS WELL AS ON MAY LONG WEEKEND (May 20th - 22nd) AS USUAL.

In studio community building events and theme months will continue as in past years. Please watch for updates in your monthly newsletters!

**ALL HOLIDAY DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE **

UNIFORMS

Each style/level of dance has a uniform that is required for class. This allows the dancers and teachers to focus on the body alignment and technique needed to learn, eliminates distractions, and creates a special sense of occasion. Please refer to the attached list for the correct uniform. We ask that you check this list carefully. All uniforms, including shoes can be purchased from INSTEP ACTIVEWEAR in Oakville (905) 844-4415/www.instepactivewear.com . Please contact the Academy if you have any questions. NOT ALL ITEMS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE- PLEASE CALL OR VISIT THE STORE.

Students should attend class in the appropriate uniform with their hair neatly off the face. **Buns** are required from grade 1 ballet onwards; pony tails are

appropriate for other subjects. No jewellery is to be worn to class. Older dancers should choose appropriate undergarments to wear under their bodysuits. Proper grooming is an important part of each dancer's training and shows respect for the art of dance. PLEASE ENSURE THAT UNIFORM IS CLEAN AND IN GOOD REPAIR (NO RIPPED TIGHTS!)

HIP HOP DANCERS - Please make special note of the attached uniform list! In past years, we found that throughout the year, dancers gradually started coming in outfits that were not appropriate for class. While this uniform is more casual, it is important to take note of the requirements!

Dancers who have ballet and modern or tap classes that run back to back should wear convertible ballet tights and ballet bodysuits for their modern/tap class (in place of black tights). DANCERS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CHANGE FULL UNIFORMS BETWEEN CLASSES, BUT CAN CHANGE SHOES/REMOVE SKIRTS AS NEEDED

GRACE ACADEMY DANCEWEAR!

Grace Academy jackets, tops and sweatpants will once again be available for purchase this year! Look for more information to follow by email and on social media - we will be ordering in mid September (usual delivery time is 6-8 weeks)

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

We are always grateful for the help of our older students in the little ones' classes each year!

If your dancer is age 12 or older and would like to assist in some way, please have them email Miss Knapp with their availability.

Thank you in advance!

RUN FOR THE CURE -SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2nd

We are so happy to once again take part in the CIBC RUN FOR THE CURE, to raise funds to help fight breast cancer.

We would like to invite you to join us and to be a part of our team - **WALK WITH GRACE!** All family members are welcome to join us and we are hoping for a large group of family and friends to walk/run together!! You may choose to do 1K

or 5K – a lot of our group choose to walk, rather than run, and enjoy the company of our Grace Academy family:) -but you may choose to run too!

Our performing company, Pure Grace, will also be dancing as part of the opening ceremonies!

If you would like to join our team, please go to www.runforthecure.com. You can find our location (Burlington/Hamilton/Oakville) and then click JOIN A TEAM - we are WALK WITH GRACE.

If you cannot join us, but would like to make a donation, this can be done online or directly through Miss Knapp!

Thank you for considering this opportunity to give back to our community!

ABSENCES

Parents are asked to inform the studio if their dancer is absent for any reason. This is particularly important if their dancer falls ill for any reason.

Please remember that regular attendance is extremely beneficial to all dancers, allowing them to feel comfortable and perform at their highest level. Regular attendance when classes run virtually is equally important to in studio training. Virtual options will be in place to assist dancers who may not be able to attend due to illness in the family etc.

YEAR END PERFORMANCE - May 28th to June 3rd 2023

Our year end performance is always the most exciting time of year for the dancers. Grace Academy prides itself on presenting a high quality, professional performance each year and feels that this is an extremely important part of our dancers' training! Dance is a performance art and our year end production gives our students the opportunity to perform on a professional stage in a positive and educational atmosphere. Being a part of our production instills self confidence, responsibility, self discipline, co-operation and team work in all of our students. Dancers will also learn about theatre etiquette and various aspects of what goes on 'behind the scenes' to create a production. And – it is a lot of fun and creates memories that will last a lifetime!

This past season we were thrilled to return to the stage with our dancers, and we can't wait for our 20th Anniversary Celebration Performance in 2023!!

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR MAY 28th to JUNE 3RD 2023

Details and more information will follow once our year begins.

**Are you still reading this letter? We know it is long!! If you have read this far, keep reading and then send us an email to let us know you have read all the information - your name will be entered into a draw to winner an INDIGO gift card!!! You must email us by August 6th! **

GRADUATES 2022

We are extremely proud of our 2022 graduates! Over the past 2 years of the Covid pandemic, they have persevered through restrictions and missed opportunities, worked hard, and and developed such strength and resilience. This group is intelligent, genuine and most of all, a lot of fun. We wish them amazing days ahead!

Alyssa Daya

Claire Weeks

Sam Denovan

Mia Cameron

Ashleigh Skelton

Kaleagh Campbell

Jocelyn Anderson

Nyda Faraj

Brooklynn Bennitt

Zoe Williams

LEAH BATTISTA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

In November of 2017, we were extremely sad to have one of our Grace Alumni pass away suddenly after suffering a pulmonary embolism. In her honour, we established The Leah Battista Memorial Scholarship. This yearly award is presented to the dancer who most embodies Leah's passion, energy, joy of dance and hard work, and is to be used towards the cost of their dance training. This year's recipient was **Sienna Avery.** Sienna has continued to show up with

joy and enthusiasm to each and every class over the past 2 years. Whether on zoom or in person, we can always count on her to give everything she has. She is friendly to everyone, positive in all she does, and has a contagious smile.

Through this award, and through a random acts of kindness initiative that takes place on her birthday each year (#bekind4leah), we hope to keep Leah's memory and her legacy of kindness and giving alive at Grace Academy.

OAKVILLE BEAVER READER'S CHOICE AWARDS

We are so happy to announce that we have been nominated in the Oakville Beaver Reader's Choice Awards for this year!

To show your support, you can vote for us at:

https://www.insidehalton.com/readerschoice-oakville/categories/people-professionals

Look under the category 'Health/Wellness/Fitness/Beauty' to vote for us as Best Dance Studio

Look under the category 'People/Professionals' to vote for us as Best Dance Instructor (Heidi Knapp is listed, but a vote here is a vote for our TEAM! We work together to make Grace Academy what it is!)

It will ask you to set up/sign in with an email address - one vote per email address.

Voting closes on August 15th.

Thank you for your support!

NUTS

Grace Academy strives to be a nut free environment. Please note that we do have dancers with severe nut allergies When sending snacks with dancers who have 2 classes in a row please do not send nut products.

RESPONSIBILITY

Grace Academy is proud to have had students who have shown kindness and respect for others at all times and is confident that this will continue in the coming year!

Please take time to review our Covid-19 policies and procedures with your dancer, should the need arise for these to be put into action.

We are so grateful to all of our families for your continued support.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS WAIVER

From time to time, we publish photographs of our dancers (on our website and in our advertising, on our Facebook/Instagram page or on our bulletin board). Upon registering, you will have completed a waiver to allow us to use photos of your dancer. Names will never be used without additional permission. If you prefer not to have photos published, once you have set up your parent portal, please select the 'opt out' option.

COMMUNICATION

Please do not hesitate to contact the Academy at any time with any questions or concerns that you may have. Good communication between Grace Academy and all of our dancing families is extremely important to us. Newsletters will be posted on the new Parent Portal on a regular basis to keep everyone up to date – please take the time to read these carefully. Newsletters will also be posted regularly on our website www.graceacademy.ca on the Latest News page. We will NOT hand out paper copies this year.

If you would like additional family members (senior students/parent/ grandparent) to receive our email communications, please add them to your family portal.

Click Account - Account Settings - Family Contacts
Add all details

Please remember to have a look at (and like!) our Facebook and Instagram pages. You will be able to find our page under Grace Academy of Dance and Performing Arts (facebook) and @graceacademyofdance (instagram). Watch here for interesting dancing facts –beautiful pictures – inspirational quotes and more! We will share Grace Academy news and important reminders throughout the year and, it will be your first place to look in case of a "snow day"!

We do ask that you please continue to use our email graceacademy@sympatico.ca and phone number, 905 338-0210 to communicate with us for all questions and information that you need us to be aware of. PLEASE DO NOT text or message teachers on social media for studio communication.

During class time Miss Knapp carries her cell phone with her so that she may contact parents if a child is ill. If you need to reach your dancer (or their teacher) in an emergency you may call this number (905) 301- 9409. Please do not use it to contact the school on a regular basis as it will interrupt class time. Messages can be left at the Academy's regular number (905) 338 – 0210.

WE WELCOME YOU TO A WONDERFUL YEAR AHEAD!