



## Upper School - Start of Term newsletter - 30<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Dear Parent or Carer,

I hope you've had a great summer holiday and you and your children are ready for the new academic year. Today is the last day of our summer school for Reception to Year 2 children and it has been a wonderful week of dancing, singing, crafting and making friends and lovely memories.

During the summer break, the teachers and I have been busy planning for the autumn term. I realise everyone is very busy as the new academic year approaches, but I hope you can make time to read through, so that you are aware of events and information for this term and the year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome all of the new students that we have joining us this term. I hope you enjoy your first term with us and hope you have many happy years dancing at SLDS.

### Overview of dates this term

#### THIS SUNDAY (1<sup>st</sup> September) 10am-12pm - second hand uniform sale (run by parent volunteers)

- The sale will take place in studio 3 - use the new front door code to get in through the front door. The back gate and back door codes remain the same. Please refer to 30<sup>th</sup> August newsletter for codes.
- Please refer to the email that was sent yesterday for more information. Please note that sale will take place this Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September, not Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September.

#### Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September - term starts

- Please check your invoice from [upperschool@southlondondanceschool.co.uk](mailto:upperschool@southlondondanceschool.co.uk) for the class days and times for your child.
- New front door code will be in use (please refer to newsletter that was sent to you on 30<sup>th</sup> August). **Given the shocking event in Southport over the summer, we ask that everyone is extremely vigilant about not letting in anyone who they do not know and also ensuring the back door is shut behind them.** Thank you.
- We are very pleased to welcome back Miss Tilly - she will be teaching Stretch & Technique on a Monday. We also welcome our new Saturday assistant, Miss Jaz, who is an ex-SLDS student.
- We welcome back Ciera as our examinations administrator, and thank Miss Kayley for all her hard work last year whilst Ciera was on maternity leave.
- Our Upper School theme for the term will be about motivation to do independent practice.

**Week commencing Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September - bun demonstration week**

During this week, at the start of Pre-Primary to Grade 1 ballet classes, we will be providing several demonstrations of how to do a classical ballet bun for parents / carers of children. More information will be sent to you nearer the time.

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October to Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> November - Half term**

Classes will not take place over half term, however, as the break is 2 weeks, we will be offering body conditioning classes on:

**Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> October:**

**5.00-6.15pm** - Grade 1 to 3 modern / Primary to Grade 2 ballet

**6.30-8.00pm** - Grade 4 plus modern / Grade 3 plus ballet

After a thorough warm up, children will work to improve their flexibility, strength and power through fun and challenging exercises, then we will develop dance technique through choreographic sequences.

Each class is £18. Reply to this email to book a place for your child.

**Week commencing Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November - Healthy Eating week**

Last year, we focused on what makes a balanced diet and so this year, we will be teaching the children about suitable food choices to give them energy for dancing. All chats will be age appropriate and discussions will NOT include maintaining a healthy weight or weight loss, unless introduced by a student. However, if you do not wish your child to be involved in this part of their all-round dance education the please inform us **before the half term break**. For any students with a supervised break which takes place in the studio on **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November**, we would like them to bring with them a healthy snack which they can show to the rest of their group.

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December - Feedback day** - times and more information will be sent nearer the time

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December** - parents of children who are taking a Primary examination in March are requested to watch their child's class to help them to practice at home over the Christmas break.

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December** - wear tinsel your hair for Christmas week!

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December** - last day of term

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December** - times TBC - Children's Christmas parties!

## Looking ahead to spring and summer terms 2025

I know many families will already be thinking about their next holiday (!) so please ensure you take note of relevant dates, so that your child doesn't miss out on any opportunities.

Term dates are on our website - <https://southlondondancestudios.co.uk/general-information/term-dates/>

Examinations are pencilled for **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025**. Your child would need to be available for all of the examination dates, also practice dates will take place on Sunday's (except both ends of half term) starting from **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2025**.

Our summer show is confirmed for **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2024** at Catford Broadway Theatre. This will be a full-scale show and all Upper School children will be invited to perform. A show information letter will be sent to you ahead of the October half term break, in the meantime, please save the following dates:

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June** (note - this is Father's Day), **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June** and Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June,

## Breaks between classes

If your child has a break between their classes which is supervised by a teaching assistant then this will have been detailed on your invoice. Please ensure you read the information that has been sent to you previously about suitable, light, nut free snacks and also send your child with a bottle of water.

Any other breaks will not be supervised, so if your child does not have a consent slip to leave the building without an adult then you will need to collect and look after them in their break.

If your child is in School Year 5 or above and / or Grade 1 ballet / Grade 2 modern plus and you feel they are mature enough for you to give consent for them to leave the dance studio unaccompanied then please reply to this email **before 9am this Monday**. Any forms received after this deadline will not be activated until the start of the spring term in **January 2025**.

We will be allowing senior students to use the boys changing room as a homework room at the following times:

**Monday - from 5.00-5.45pm and 8.00pm onwards**

**Tuesday - from 4.15-5.15pm and 7.00pm onwards**

**Wednesday - from 4.45-5.30pm and 7.45pm onwards**

**Friday - from 5.30-6.00pm and 7.30pm onwards**

Students should work independently and quietly. Please set up the foldable table to use as a shared desk and use the chairs already in the changing room. We do not allow eating in either of the changing rooms.

**Use of phones in the changing rooms** - in the interests of child protection, please ask your children to refrain from taking photographs and filming in the changing rooms.

## Preparation for class

If your child comes to the studios by themselves, please remind them *to wait outside the correct studio (as stated on your invoice) AT LEAST a few minutes before their lesson time*, and they should use this time to start their warm up in the corridor.

Please remind your child that they must have their hair in the correct style, be wearing correct uniform, have their dance shoes done up and not be wearing any jewellery.

Please also ensure your child has with them all of the items they need for their class and any other classes which they have back-to-back, since they will not be allowed to go upstairs between consecutive lessons. All students attending Stretch & Technique classes will need to bring a yoga mat with them each week.

Students should also continue to bring all valuables with them into the dance studio with them and a bottle of water if their session is more than 60 minutes in duration.

- **Saturday children whose session starts at 11.30am (GREY set)** should be ready before their class in their dance wear with bare feet, with all other items needed for the session in a small bag, including ballet skirt for girls. Please ensure your child brings ballet socks with them, or wears CONVERTIBLE ballet tights from the start of the session.
- **Saturday children whose session starts at 1.20pm (GREEN set)** should be ready before their class in their dance wear with tap shoes on, with all other items needed for the session in a small bag, including ballet skirt for girls. Please ensure your child wears ballet socks or CONVERTIBLE ballet tights.
- **Saturday children whose session starts at 2.05pm (TURQUOISE set)** should be ready before their class in their ballet wear and shoes, carrying a small bag with their tap shoes, snack and water. Please ensure your child wears ballet socks or CONVERTIBLE ballet tights.
- **Monday children in Primary modern (III) / Pre-Primary tap (III) (4.30-5.30pm session in studio 2)** ready before their class in their dance wear with bare feet and carrying their tap shoes and socks (or wearing CONVERTIBLE ballet tights). Please do not bring a bag.

## Eating at the studios

Please ensure your child is aware that food may NOT be consumed in the changing rooms, so they may only eat in the waiting room. **Children under the age of 12 should not use the microwave.**

For H&S reasons, it is very important that our allergens policy is adhered to by everyone in the building.

<https://southlondondancestudios.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/South-London-Dance-School-nut-products-policy-1.pdf>

Please encourage your child to continue to be mindful of the nutritional content of the snacks they choose as it can have a significant impact upon their performance in the dance studio.

## Uniform, grooming and items to bring to class

Please refer to our uniform list for what your child needs to wear and read below for some reminders about key items:

<https://southlondondancestudios.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/SLDS-UPPER-SCHOOL-UNIFORM-LIST-13082024.pdf>

All dance specific items can be purchased from Duo Dance in Herne Hill.

**Please ensure you name all uniform items and shoes, especially shoes and any uniform items which are removed in class.**

### **Shoes:**

- Tap and National shoes are vital for start of term otherwise children cannot dance in those lessons for H&S reasons.
- It is compulsory for ALL students in Grade 2 modern plus to wear So Danca canvas split-sole jazz shoe in nude, with the option to dye to skin tone (worn without socks).
- Students are NOT permitted to wear outdoor trainers for commercial / street dance classes. Ideally, we would prefer students to have a new pair of trainers or pumps which are reserved only for commercial / street classes.
- Girls in Grade 1 ballet plus must have thick matte ballet ribbons on their ballet shoes. Teachers will help students with tying their ballet shoe ribbons in the first few weeks of the autumn term. Please refer to this link for advice about sewing on ballet shoe ribbons - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5\\_O3BuS0YZE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_O3BuS0YZE) Before sewing, you need to burn the cut ends of the ribbons or double them over - if you sew over a raw edge, the stitches will work their way loose. Ribbons must be sewn on really securely as they take a lot of strain when dancing. If you are not sure then DON'T cut the ribbons any shorter than into 4 equal pieces to sew them onto the shoes.

### **Uniform:**

- Students wearing black leotards wear a black cotton lycra crossover ballet cardigan if they are cold in the studios, no other jumpers will be allowed except SLDS sweater for the warm up only.
- Girls in Grade 2 modern need a pink biketard.
- Girls in Grade 1 ballet need a lavender belt that has been cut and resewn to fit tightly on the waist.
- Children in Primary and Grade 1 National need a National skirt - please refer to 6<sup>th</sup> August email.
- If you wish to order a sweater, please use the link below and place your order by **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September**.  
<https://southlondondancestudios.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/SLDS-SWEATER-ORDER-FORM-09082023.pdf>
- Lavender ballet skirts for Pre-Primary & Primary ballet  
Please ensure you have sewn 2 tucks into your child's Matilda Roch Valley ballet skirt to ensure it fits tightly on the waist, not hips - instructions on how to do this can be found below:  
<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/4/folders/18dyWg749hrdz8qUxXR13NKz05aoOqpJ4>

## Hair:

- Please ensure hair is in a classical ballet bun for girls in Pre-Primary (I) ballet plus. Our ballet teachers will be doing 'bun demonstrations' in the first 10 minutes of classes from **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September** for children in Pre-Primary ballet, Primary ballet and Grade 1 ballet.
- For children in Primary and Grade 1 modern and all tap grades, hair must be neatly tied back.
- For girls in Grade 2 modern plus or Gym / Acro skills classes; please ensure long hair is tied back in a style suitable for modern dance so that it doesn't hinder your child's progress and is safe. Hairstyle needs to be suitable for turning, lying down on the back of the head and be suitable for movements which involve relaxation of the head and upper body. A pony tail, bunchies or a classical bun are NOT suitable. French plaits tucked under, a side bun, or 2 small buns on sides of head are all acceptable.
- Please ensure your child does NOT have a long fringe or any hanging sections of hair over their face as it makes it impossible to use correct eye focus.

## E-bikes & scooters

Bicycles, e-bikes and e-scooters may be stored in the side area of the building and can be locked to the bicycle hoops. However, e-bikes and e-scooters must NOT be stored near to the accessible toilet at the far end of the side area. Lithium batteries on e-bikes and e-scooters must be genuine makes, regularly serviced and kept in good condition. Under no circumstances may any bicycles, e-bikes, scooters or e-scooters be stored inside the building, also they must NOT be stored in staff car park near to the back door to the studios as this is an emergency exit route.

## Absences and punctuality

If your child is being considered for an examination in March 2025, then please ensure their attendance is good from the start of this term as otherwise their readiness for the examination could be impacted. Please contact [sldsexaminations@gmail.com](mailto:sldsexaminations@gmail.com) if you know your child is going to have to miss an examination lesson. If your child is injured, or not well enough to dance but well enough to sit and watch, then please bring them to their classes so that they do not get behind their group.

If your child attends a class which runs on both weekdays and Saturday's and has to miss a class for any reason, then contact [sldsexaminations@gmail.com](mailto:sldsexaminations@gmail.com) as soon as you can because it may be possible to make arrangements for your child to attend a catch-up lesson of the content that they will / have missed.

Our lateness policy will be effective from **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September**:

<https://southlondondancestudios.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/South-London-Dance-School-Lateness-Policy-31082021.pdf>

Students who are working towards an examination in March 2025, should always ask to be allowed into their class whatever time they arrive at the studios, so that they can watch and take notes if they are not able to dance.

Thank you for your cooperation.

## Injuries, allergies, illnesses, other medical conditions & SEND

- In order to ensure the safety of our students, it is of the utmost importance that parents / carers inform us of any allergies or illnesses their child may have, so that we have this on record in case of any medical emergency.
- If your child suffers from any medical condition or has been / is in the process of being assessed for SEND and you have not already informed us, then please contact me **by 9am on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September** so this can be noted on your child's record and so that our teachers can provide the best possible support for your child.
- If your child carries with them an epi-pen, or any other medication which we might need to administer, then please contact me **by 9am on Monday**. Likewise, if your child no longer needs their medication, then please let us know immediately.
- If your child has suffered an injury over the summer break, or has a pre-existing injury, then we **MUST** be notified **by 9am on Monday** so that teachers can be informed and a suitable rehabilitation plan can be implemented to include decisions about participation in classes. Returning to dance training following an injury usually necessitates specialist intervention so please make sure you keep us updated with any medical / physiotherapist appointments so that we can update the teachers. **Please note that it is the full responsibility of the child's parent / carer to decide when their child is ready to return to dance classes and only when they are fully fit to dance following sustaining an injury.** Whilst injured your child should attend and watch all of their classes to limit the amount they will fall behind their group.

## Additional optional classes for autumn term

Get in touch if you are interested in your child joining any of the below classes - they would be welcome to come to watch the class next week.

### Contemporary

<https://southlondondancestudios.co.uk/contemporary-dancing-classes/>

Friday's

4.45-5.30 Junior Contemporary (Grade 1 ballet plus)

6.15-7.15 Senior Contemporary

### Musical Theatre

<https://southlondondancestudios.co.uk/musical-theatre-classes/>

Sunday's

3.30-4.30 Musical Theatre (I) (for children in Years 1-3)

4.30-5.45 Musical Theatre (II) (for children in Years 5-6)

5.45-7.15 Musical Theatre (III) (for children in Year 7 plus)

Class dates in autumn term - Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September, 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 29<sup>th</sup> September, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 10<sup>th</sup> November, 17<sup>th</sup> November, 24<sup>th</sup> November, 1<sup>st</sup> December and 8<sup>th</sup> December

## Junior Street Dancing

<https://southlondondancestudios.co.uk/junior-funky-moves-2/>

Friday's

5.30-6.15 Junior Street (for children in Years 2-4)

## Auditioning / taking classes with another dance organisation

Please note the following from our school terms and conditions:

**Students at SLDS may not audition for nor attend another dance school (including CAT schemes and Associate classes) unless prior written permission has been granted by the Principal.**

The reason we have this rule in place is so that children have consistency in their dance training. Also, so that potential timing clashes between classes can be discussed and understood in advance of acceptance onto any training scheme. If you wish to discuss this matter further, or in future you find that you would like your child to attend additional dance training outside SLDS, then please email me before applying to audition.

## Children's dance parties

We can offer dance parties on Sunday's during term time and any day (subject to availability of teachers) during school holiday periods. One of our experienced and / or qualified dance teachers will lead a fun dance party for your child and his / her friends. The children learn a dance routine of any dance genre to their chosen piece of music which they can perform to parents at the end. If you'd like more information then contact [infosouthlondondanceschool@gmail.com](mailto:infosouthlondondanceschool@gmail.com)

To stay up to date with events happening at our school, follow us on social media:

Facebook - [@southlondondanceschool](#)

Instagram - [@south\\_london\\_dance\\_school](#)

Best wishes for a fantastic autumn term - we can't wait to see all of our students again!

Miss Zoe

Principal

South London Dance School