



Newsletter February 2008

Dear Parents and Pupils,

An excellent start to 2008 with yet again, 100% pass rate in our examinations. Well done everyone! Your hard work certainly paid off.

Keep Dancing!

- Samantha

Exams

I don't usually write a newsletter at half term, but as I have booked the exam session, I thought it better to let you all know well in advance what is required, as some of you have not participated in a formal dance exam before. These are quite different to the Performance Awards in December!

The next exam session will take place 5th and 6th July. Saturday 5th July is for pupils in the Somerset area (Yeovil, Somerton etc) and will be held at Long Sutton Village Hall. It will run from 10am until 4pm. Sunday 6th July is for pupils in the Dorset area (Gillingham, Sturminster Newton etc) and will be held at the Methodist Church in Gillingham. It will run from 1pm until 4pm. A timetable will be issued at a later date.

In addition, we have Exam rehearsals on the 2 weekends prior to the exam. This is because we have a pianist for the exam, and pupils are not used to dancing to 'live' music. Also, the exam venues are often quite unfamiliar to pupils and we have found it is better to allow children to 'get their bearings' so to speak. However, due to the availability of the pianist, we will have one rehearsal where we must all attend Long Sutton.

What to Wear?

Formal Ballet and Tap exams are very strict when it comes to appearance and behaviour. I have produced a separate list detailing the requirements. Please read this carefully and contact me as soon as possible if you have any questions.

Changes to Term Dates

This affects Gillingham and Sturminster Newton pupils ONLY. This half term will be shorter than I stated on your last bill as the Dorchester school holiday dates are different from this in Somerset. Therefore, your final lessons for the Spring Term will be Monday 17th, Tuesday 18th and Thursday 20th March. Your Summer Term will begin week commencing Monday 7th April. This will give you a 13 week Summer Term instead of 11 weeks and your invoices for the Summer will be adjusted accordingly. Our Summer term ends Friday 11th July.

School Clothing

We now have our school T.Shirts, Hoodies etc available. If you would like to purchase any of the following, please speak ask your teacher for an order form.

T.Shirts

Black or Pink £7.50

Hoodies

Black £15.00

Tote Bags £5.00

Cotton

Baseball caps £5.00

Black

Special Offer: Anyone spending more than £20 will also receive a free tote bag. Offer available on orders placed before 31st March 2008.

Exam Workshop

We are very fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in a workshop with Julie Adams. She is a registered teacher with the Royal Academy of Dance, the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dance, the National Association of Teachers of Dance, the British Ballet Organisation and the International Dance Teachers Association. She is a qualified examiner fluent in English, German and Italian and has worked professionally in the UK and abroad as dancer, choreographer and teacher.

She will be visiting us to help pupils with their examination technique in a special series of workshops designed to get the most out of pupils without them realising how hard they are working! Although attendance is not compulsory, I do urge that you try your best to attend this invaluable day. The workshop will take place on Sunday 18th May in Yeovil. A letter will be issued after Easter with full details.

Website

Our new website is nearing completion and I must say it looks great! As well as detailing our classes, term dates and news, we have a secure student login where students can access copies of the syllabus and chat to each other in the forum. In addition, we will set up an area within the forum where parents can buy and sell unwanted uniform/shoes/costumes etc. You can see the progress by accessing www.samanthabellschoolofdance.co.uk. Let me know what you think!

Appearance

I was delighted a few weeks ago when I went to see the Gillingham ballet classes. What beautifully groomed students! EVERYONE had their hair away from their face, and most people had their hair in a bun (those whose hair is long enough!). Everybody looked neat and tidy and ready for their ballet lesson. Well done girls – you looked fabulous! I hope some other students will take notice and make more of an effort for their dance lessons!

Pilates

We have decided to offer Pilates lessons for free to every ballet student over the age of 12. This is because we feel Pilates does so much to assist ballet training in strengthening core muscles and stability. Nearly all professional dancers take Pilates – it really is THAT good! Our Pilates class is held Saturdays 10am at the Yeovil Gymnastics Centre, Oxford Road, Pen Mill Industrial Estate, Yeovil.

Different Classes and Formats

I have been asked a number of times about offering classes all on one day, in one place, with less holidays. So I am now considering offering a variety of classes to be held in Yeovil on Saturdays.

These classes would include ballet, tap, modern/jazz, musical theatre, singing, acting, street dance, limbering, latin and ballroom and salsa.

In addition, we will also offer the opportunity to dance in competitions and will therefore run private lessons on Saturdays also.

Instead of running termly, they would run on a monthly basis and therefore there would not be huge holidays in the middle of the year which will help students better remember their grades and routines etc.

Fees would be due on a monthly basis and discounts would still be offered for multiple class attendance and for siblings.

The venue will have separate changing rooms, tea/coffee, a waiting area for parents and students and WC facilities. It is also anticipated that the venue will have a dance floor, full mirrors and barres. As children would be arriving for several different classes, it would not always be necessary for parents to wait for the duration, provided their children are old enough to be left unsupervised.

These classes would be available INSTEAD OF your regular weekly class, BUT the regular weekly classes will still run for those who do not wish to attend on a Saturday.

Please let me know as soon as possible if this is something you would be interested in. Feel free to call me for an informal chat on 01935 422178 or email me on sam@samanthabell.co.uk.

And on that note, let me say once again well done to everyone who took part in the exam sessions, and well done to all of you for working so hard in your lessons!

Best wishes,

~ Samantha