

Festival Information for Parents

Festival Season is now upon us! Can you believe it?

I know that all of us are so excited for our dancers to perform and show what we have worked so hard for. I love being at festival and seeing other costumes, hairstyles and dances and feeling that buzz in the air. I am looking forward to it more now than ever before, and I know you can relate!

This year, we are asking dancers to leave their phones with their parents so we can be focused on team building and performance. Neither VSB, nor the festival organizers or venues are responsible for lost or stolen items – please leave valuables with parents.

Please make sure you have double checked and triple checked your times. Remember, these are the times that your dancer needs to check in with their teacher in the rehearsal hall. They need to have used the washroom, been fed, hair done, makeup done and costumes on before entering the rehearsal hall. Parents can then go and find a good seat in the theater or check out any merchants that may be in the lobby.

In addition to dance times, you will find maps, parking, admission and other information on our website at www.vegrevilleschoolofballet.com/festivals, as this information is made available.

I am so thankful to be able to do the work I do. I am thankful for the wonderful dancers and their families who support VSB. I am thrilled to hear, every year, how well our dancers and families behave in the dressing rooms, lobby and other areas of the theatre while at festivals. I love to hear of our dancers being kind and helpful to others, and of our families contributing to a respectful and supportive audience for dancers of all studios. We know first-hand how much effort and time goes into each dance. We know that the dancers are nervous and are hoping that their efforts will be appreciated. We know that all parents watching are proud of their children, but nervous for them too. We know how hurtful it can be to hear anything other than positive comments, and we know how far a kind word can go. Thank you for continuing to give VSB and our community a wonderful reputation.

I would like to remind you all of theatre etiquette and rules:

- 1) Absolutely no taking photos or video in the theatre. This is quite serious and could result in the disqualification of our dancers.
- 2) Only enter and exit between dances.
- 3) Refrain from speaking loudly during performances.
- 4) Keep devices out of sight.

Thank you in advance for following these rules so the festival experience can be positive for everyone.

Miss Laura

We have a large group of first-time festival parents this year, not to mention that even the most experienced dance parents are feeling rusty! Your dancer's first festival can be overwhelming if you are unprepared! Here are some things to keep in mind as you prepare for your first dance festival:

1) What should I pack?

Dancers should not travel in their costume in case something, like a spill, might happen and the costume is ruined. Instead, bring your costume, tights, shoes and make-up kit with you. The dressing rooms at the theatre can be very busy! Lot of parents like to start the hair and make-up at home and use the dressing room for touch-ups after dressing.

2) Are there any further costs?

All festivals charge an Admission fee for all audience members. Many festivals sell merchandise and snacks as well.

3) What should I expect when I arrive?

Festivals are busy places!! You will want to give yourself plenty of time to find parking and locate the dressing room. Some festivals assign dressing rooms for studios and others are a free-for-all. If there is no clear signage, you can be sure it's the latter. Find a spot and get your dancer ready for the stage. Be courteous and keep your space tidy. Take the time to enjoy this experience with your dancer. I have found that the calmer the parent can stay during this stage, the better prepped and more confident the dancer is for performing

Please note: Men are not allowed in the girls dressing rooms, please plan ahead if Dad is getting your dancer ready.

4) Where do we go once my dancer is dressed and ready?

Dancers are to check into the rehearsal hall at the times listed on the respective schedules on our website. Please make sure they have used the washroom and have had water and a snack if needed. Dancers are not to eat in their costume – no food or drink is permitted in the rehearsal hall.

The rehearsal hall is a busy and full space - if you are ready much earlier than your check-in time, your dancer can wear a cover up and go watch in the audience or check out the merchandise in the lobby. Please note – dancers are not allowed in the audience with their costume on without a cover-up (some people use zip-up sweaters/jackets or bathrobes for this).

We are asking dancers to leave their phones with their parents so we can be focused on team building and performance. Neither VSB, nor the festival organizers or venues are responsible for lost or stolen items – please leave valuables with parents.

5) What do I do after I've dropped off my dancer to the rehearsal hall?

Parents are not permitted in the rehearsal hall. Once you have dropped off your dancer, you can find a seat in the theatre and start cheering for all the dancers on stage. Please turn off the sound on your phone.

Note: photos and videos in the theatre are strictly prohibited. Dancers and full studios can be disqualified if anyone is caught recording or photographing. This is for the safety of all the dancers at the festival.

6) How long after I drop off my dancer until I get to see them on stage?

Typically, dancers will perform an hour after their drop off time. Having said that, they could be anywhere between 15 minutes to an hour and 45 minutes after drop off if the festival is running early or late.

7) Do we get to leave after they perform?

After performing, dancers will wait backstage with their teacher till the end of their category for adjudication. Adjudication takes place on stage and you get to watch! This is when the adjudicator is going to hand out medals and awards. When adjudication is finished you can pick up your dancer from the rehearsal hall. You can expect to be at the theatre for at least two hours.

Note: Under no circumstances should any parent approach the adjudicator.

8) What is a Showcase/Dance Off??

Many of the festivals that we attend hold a Showcase or Dance Off. At some locations this happens daily and at others its only at the end of the last day. At some festivals, this is for the dances with the top marks in their category and at others it is adjudicator's choice. In both cases, we will be posting information as soon as we receive it via social media – so make sure you are following us on Facebook/Twitter/Instagram. This is an incredibly fun and exciting opportunity for our dancers and a big honour.

9) What if I get to the theatre and realize I forgot the make-up case at home?

We keep a well-stocked performance kit at festival with all hair/make-up/first-aid/breath-mint/sewing/you-name-it needs. If you need anything at all, please just ask one of our teachers or Intermediate/Advanced dancers to help you.

We are so excited for you to be part of our festival season and have you cheering on our VSB dancers. And we hope you will love the experiences and make many wonderful memories with us and your family.