

THE STUDIO

at Shakespeare by the Sea



2026/2027 Handbook

STUDIO LINE: 902-449-9878

WELCOME TO THE STUDIO!

We are so excited to embark on another fabulous year-long training journey with you. This handbook details all of our various policies to ensure that you know exactly what to expect, and how we plan to keep you safe and informed between now and Spring of 2027! Please read through this handbook, and let us know if there's anything more we can do to support you this year.

DROP-OFF

All classes this year will be taking place at **St. Matthew's United Church, 1479 Barrington Street**. You'll be able to enter right through the sanctuary doors from Barrington Street. There is limited street parking on Barrington heading south, and on the surrounding streets within a short walk...we've had luck on Hollis St., Bishop St., and Granville St.

LATE ARRIVALS

The Studio at SBTs has a dedicated phone line, which can be reached at **902-449-9878**. Please send the Studio Line a text message if you're going to be late. We lock the front door to keep the building safe during classes and lessons (especially now that we are in a busy pedestrian area!), and while we usually do have desk staff, they frequently assist in the classroom once the class is underway. Once class has started, if we haven't heard from you, we may lock the door. If you arrive and the door is locked, please call the Studio Line.

DURING CLASS

We thank you in advance for exercising caution when it comes to keeping our community healthy. Please stay home if you are sick.

Here's what you should **bring with you** whenever you come to class:

1. Wear clothing you can move comfortably in, and bring a warm layer like a sweater or hoodie.
2. **Indoor shoes in the winter months or when it rains. This is a safety concern. If you arrive without indoor shoes, you'll be required to change into Studio-provided slippers, as we can't have wet shoes in the rehearsal space.**
3. A hair elastic or headband (for students with long hair)
4. Binder or duotang with your name on it (for scripts, sheet music, etc.)
5. Pencil
6. Water bottle labelled with your name

PICK-UP

Students should be picked up promptly after their class. Our Company Program registration form has a self-dismissal option. If you selected this option, your child will be

allowed to leave on their own. If not, staff will stay with them until they have been picked up. Staff may need to leave promptly after class, so please ensure your child is picked up no later than 10 minutes after the class has finished. Please text the Studio Line if you get stuck and are having trouble getting to the Studio within the specified timeframe.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Studio is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, inclusive, and respectful environment for all students, staff, teaching artists, volunteers, and guests. Everyone has the right to be treated with kindness, dignity, and respect.

Students are expected to:

- Treat others with kindness and respect, and respect their physical and emotional boundaries, privacy, and personal property.
- Refrain from bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, threats, physical aggression, or any behaviour intended to harm, demean, or exclude another person.
- Use appropriate and respectful language and behaviour, both in person and in communications with other members of The Studio community.
- Follow reasonable instructions from Studio staff, particularly those relating to safety and the wellbeing of others.
- Not photograph, record, or share images or personal information about another student without appropriate consent.
- Not possess, use, distribute, or be under the influence of alcohol, cannabis, illegal drugs, or other intoxicating substances while participating in a Studio program or activity.
- Not possess weapons or other items that could pose a danger to themselves or others.

Students are encouraged to speak with a staff member if they experience or witness behaviour during a Studio activity that compromises their safety. Staff will respond to concerns as appropriate; information shared may need to be disclosed where someone's safety or wellbeing is at risk.

The Studio recognizes that young people are still learning and, where appropriate, may address minor concerns through conversation or other reasonable interventions. Serious or repeated violations may result in suspension or removal from a program. Behaviour that presents an immediate risk may result in immediate removal and notification of a parent or guardian.

This Code of Conduct applies to behaviour occurring during Studio programs and activities while participants are under the supervision of Studio staff. The Studio does not monitor students' behaviour or relationships outside of these activities.

By participating in The Studio's programs, students and their parents/guardians agree to uphold this Code of Conduct.

COMMUNICATION

The Studio at SBTs has a dedicated phone line, which can be reached at **902-449-9878**. It is an on-site mobile phone which can receive text messages. When you text us for the first time, please include your name as well as your child's so we can accurately save you as a contact.

When there's important information to communicate for the first time, you'll still receive an email, but we're switching minor reminders to text. **Please let us know if you do not wish to receive text messages.**

Teachers have a company email address that is monitored during their working hours.

Jade Douris-O'Hara (Studio Director): jade@shakespearebythesea.ca
Drew Douris-O'Hara (Instructor): drew@shakespearebythesea.ca

There is a Google Calendar for each of our classes. You can find yours at <https://www.shakespearebythesea.ca/studiocalendar>

FOOD

Company classes typically take between 10 and 20 minutes of break, depending on the length and nature of the rehearsal. We recommend bringing a snack to rehearsal so you have the fuel you need to do your best work! Any food that enters our facility must be nut-free.

PAYMENT

As many of you know, we have just this year switched our management system for the whole company to a new platform, called **VBO**. If you don't already have one, you'll have to create an account with us on VBO in order to complete payment.

Every class has the option to pay either the full amount upfront or a \$250 deposit to start. If you pay a deposit, the balance will sit on your account and you can go in and pay the balance, including making partial payments, on whatever schedule works best for you. **The full balance must be paid by December 31, 2026**, or I get in trouble with the accountant. Thank you for your support, I hate being in trouble with the accountant.

UNFORESEEN CANCELLATIONS

The safety of our students, families, and staff is our highest priority.

If Halifax Regional Centre for Education (or Halifax Rec programs on the weekend)

cancels school or after-school activities due to weather, The Studio may also close. However, final closure decisions are made by the Studio Director based on conditions at the rehearsal/performance site.

Notice of closures will be sent by text, email, and posted on our social media channels no later than **2 hours before class start time** whenever possible.

In the event of an unexpected closure (power outage, building emergency, public health concern, etc.), families will be notified as quickly as possible by email and text message.

When classes are cancelled due to weather or emergency, The Studio will:

- Attempt to reschedule the class or rehearsal when feasible, to one of our designated “snow dates” (details below).
- Combine or extend future classes to make up for lost time if possible.
- For performance-based classes, ensure that any essential rehearsals missed are prioritized for rescheduling.

Please note that while every effort will be made to provide make-up opportunities, they cannot always be guaranteed due to scheduling constraints.

REFUND POLICY

Participation in our Company programs is a commitment not only to your own growth as a performer, but also to the ensemble as a whole. Because each student’s role impacts the casting and experience of others, our refund policy is structured to reflect this shared responsibility.

Registration & Deposits

- A \$250 non-refundable deposit is due upon casting to secure your child’s place in the production.
- Payment plans are available, but full payment is required by December.

Withdrawal & Refunds

- Families may withdraw up to 7 days before the first rehearsal and receive a refund of fees paid less the \$250 deposit.
- After this point, refunds are not available once rehearsals begin. This policy ensures fairness to other students and preserves the integrity of the production, as every role and ensemble spot is carefully allocated.

Special Circumstances

- In rare cases of illness, family emergency, or other extraordinary circumstances, the Studio Director may consider accommodations on a case-by-case basis.

LOST & FOUND

The Studio is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please label all belongings. Any found items will be kept for 30 days before being donated.

COMPANY PROGRAM ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rehearsal attendance is a commitment to the entire company. Students are expected to make all rehearsals a priority and to plan their other activities and commitments around the rehearsal schedule.

We understand that illness, family emergencies, bereavement, and other circumstances beyond a student's control sometimes make an absence unavoidable. If you need to miss a rehearsal for one of these reasons, please let the director know as soon as you can.

For absences that could reasonably have been avoided, the director may need to adjust an actor's track or reassign material. This may include changes to scene work, vocal parts, choreography, or fight choreography. **Material rehearsed in a student's absence may not be repeated or re-taught**, and students should be prepared to return and catch up independently.

Attendance at all technical and dress rehearsals is mandatory. These rehearsals are essential to the entire company's preparation, and an absence can prevent other actors from completing their final work. From January 2027 through closing night, students should consider themselves unavailable for other commitments during scheduled rehearsals and must communicate with the director as early as possible if an unavoidable circumstance arises.

Students must be available for all scheduled performances. The company depends on every actor being present and prepared to perform the show as rehearsed.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

No matter which program you're in, you will need to review your materials throughout the rehearsal period. In class once or twice a week isn't really enough to keep a whole play in your brain. Sometimes that means learning lines, or reviewing choreography or vocal parts. This shouldn't be stressful, and we'll certainly talk in class about strategies actors use for review. If you need additional support with this, please let us know! You're never just "on your own"!

POSSIBLE EXTENSION

Our performance schedule has "SNOW DAYS/POSSIBLE EXTENSION" included. While *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Cinderella* are scheduled to close on February 1st

and 3rd, respectively, we have contingencies built in February 4-7, just in case weather gets in the way of our careful plans. We have also, on occasion, been so bowled over by the amount of support for your work that we've added shows in order to seat more people. We would of course, love if that happened, too! Please keep those contingency days available, just in case.

INVITED DRESS REHEARSALS

These are for the Company class students to see each other's work, and provide a "practice audience". If you're in *Cinderelly*, it's for you to see *Much Ado About Nothing*, and vice versa. We love Invited Dress rehearsal night! You are not *required* to attend the invited dress rehearsal of the show you're not in, but we really, really encourage it! It's such a great way to deepen your learning about the performance process, and be part of the broader Studio community.

TICKETS

Tickets are currently available for purchase at shakespearebythesea.ca

This year, they will be listed at \$25 until January 5th, and then go up to \$30, but your code will take \$5 off. So in effect, the ticket prices are actually \$20 and \$25, but they're listed a little higher as an incentive to help friends remember to use your code.

Regarding the TICKET DRIVE and associated promo codes: if it's your first year, this is new information, which is that every year at The Studio, we have a little ticket sales competition. Whoever sells the most tickets wins free SWEET SEATS to SBTS' 2027 Summer Season. We keep track of how many tickets you sell using promo codes that you'll have your guests put in when they book their tickets online.

CINDERELLY

Student	Code
Nora	CINDERNORA
Paige	CINDERPAIGE
Ian	CINDERIAN
Justin	CINDERJUSTIN
Paul	CINDERPAUL
Ryan	CINDERRYAN
Alexandra	CINDERALEX
Charlotte	CINDERCHARLOTTE

Claire	CINDERCLAIRE
Olivia	CINDEROLIVIA
Sam	CINDERSAM
Rae	CINDERRAE
Alyssa	CINDERALYSSA
Saoirse	SINDERSAORISE

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Student	Code
Anna	MUCHADOANNA
Winnie	MUCHADOWINNIE
Wolfgang	MUCHADOWOLFGANG
Rhiannon	MUCHADORHIANNON
Kaya	MUCHADOKAYA
Alexis	MUCHADOALEXIS
Joel	MUCHADOJOEL
Alyssa	MUCHADOALYSSA
Ruthie	MUCHADORUTHIE
Paul	MUCHADOPAUL
Mila	MUCHADOMILA
Justin	MUCHADOJUSTIN

PHOTO & BIO

We include a photo and short biography of each actor in our programme for the show. Please submit yours at your earliest convenience to this [Google Form](#) there's a sample bio provided if you need some inspiration: <https://forms.gle/DjHoCMnp8zNcAKn8>

The deadline for these submissions is December 1st.

VOLUNTEERING

There are occasional opportunities throughout the Studio year for Company Students to volunteer to help us out with the younger classes. We typically appreciate the extra

hands towards the end of their year (between March Break and their recital on May 1), and backstage during their performances. If that's something you want to do this year, please fill out the [Company Student Volunteer Form](#).

Thanks for making it to the end of the Handbook! We are excited for a fantastic year.