

# THE STUDIO

at Shakespeare by the Sea



2024/2025 Handbook

## **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 2025!

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 take place at the **Park Place Theatre, 5480 Point Pleasant Drive**. We're in the Lower Parking Lot of Point Pleasant Park, so you would think that parking would not be an issue. Especially if you are dropping off on Saturday morning, this may not be the case! The parking lot is very often quite busy, full of runners, cute dogs, and other park enjoyers, so just be aware that you may need a few extra minutes!

Please also be aware that there isn't a parent waiting area available inside during classes. We're a working theatre company, and the whole building is very often in full use! Many parents like to walk the dog in the park, go get a coffee at Uncommon Grounds (1030 South Park Street), or get the grocery shopping done: The Halifax Seaport Farmers' Market (961 Marginal Road, Pavilion 23), The Queen Street Sobeys (1120 Queen Street), and the Barrington Superstore (1075 Barrington Street) are all within about a 5-minute drive. Thanks for your understanding!

## **LATE ARRIVALS**

Please send an email to your teacher if you're going to be late. We lock the front door to keep the building safe during classes and lessons, and while we usually do have desk staff, they frequently assist in the classroom once the class is underway. If you arrive and the door is locked, please ring the doorbell!

## DURING CLASS

**We are not requiring masks indoors for the 2024/2025 Studio Season, however we request that you exercise great caution when it comes to keeping our community healthy. Please stay home if you are sick.** Theatres were the first industry to be shut down in the COVID-19 pandemic, and they have been the last to come back. Illness is still one of the toughest challenges being faced by theatres. It's much better to miss one rehearsal or class to protect everyone, than to come to class sick and spread the illness.

Shakespeare by the Sea is equipped with HEPA-filtered air purifiers in every room.

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

1. A hoodie/sweater/warm layer
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 studios.**
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 will not be dismissed without a parent or guardian unless specific instructions are provided to the Studio in writing allowing parental permission for students to leave the premises alone.

Students aged 10 and under are dismissed one at a time, which we know takes a little longer, but we want to ensure everyone gets to their adult safely, especially since we are dismissing next to a busy parking lot. Thank you very much for your patience with this process.

Staff will always stay with a student until they are picked up. If you're running more than a few minutes late, please call us at 902-422-0295, or send an email, or if your child is in contact with us via text, please have them let us know.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

All students and staff deserve to be treated with kindness and respect at all times. We aim to provide an inclusive space for people of all identities, and as such, there will be zero tolerance for any kind of disrespectful behaviour or language, bullying or harassment, or any other action which may inflict physical or emotional harm on another person. Engaging in behaviour which goes against our Code of Conduct will result in removal from our programs.

## COMMUNICATION

Email is Shakespeare by the Sea's primary method of parent communication. If you need to be contacted via method other than email, please notify us so that we can have it in our records. Last-minute changes and/or cancellations are bound to happen due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances. An email will be sent out to affected classes. If there is any chance this will not reach you, please identify another means of communication we can use to ensure you don't ever miss the message and end up at the building when we are closed.

Especially in the event of a weather closure, we'll want to send our staff home as soon as possible, so they'll contact you by the means you specify, but once that is done we will close the office, so please help us ensure that we are able to reach you.

All teachers have a company email address that is monitored during their working hours. **Please only reach out to them via this email address.**

Jade Douris-O'Hara (Studio Director): [jade@shakespearebythesea.ca](mailto:jade@shakespearebythesea.ca)

Drew Douris-O'Hara (Instructor): [drew@shakespearebythesea.ca](mailto:drew@shakespearebythesea.ca)

You are being provided with an electronic copy of the Studio Calendar. It details all planned closures and relevant dates. Reminders will be sent out, but please refer to the calendar!

## FOOD

Some classes have scheduled snack breaks, but not all. Please don't send your child with snacks unless their class has a scheduled snack break. No classes

under 75 minutes or any private lessons have a snack break.

Any food that enters our facility must be nut- and sesame-free.

## **PAYMENT**

We do all of our payments via electronic invoice through Square, including tuition, costume fees, photos, tickets, and anything else that comes up. Any reminders you receive from Square are sent automatically, but everything else is done manually. If you need an adjustment to your payment schedule or don't understand a charge, please don't hesitate to ask. Many issues are an easy fix and we want to help you!

If you would prefer to pay via e-transfer at any time, you may do so by sending the amount on the issued invoice to [studio@shakespearebythesea.ca](mailto:studio@shakespearebythesea.ca). We'll mark the payment in Square when we receive it, and you'll be notified.

## **UNFORESEEN CANCELLATIONS**

While of course we hope that our whole year goes according to schedule without interruption, things do happen and sometimes we will have to cancel a scheduled class. The most frequent reason for this is inclement winter weather.

You'll see in our [Studio Calendar](#) that there are some white background/black text-highlighted days that are called "SNOW DAYS". These are extra classes that we put on our schedule specifically to absorb any unforeseen cancellations. If no classes are cancelled, then there will not be a class on the "SNOW DAY". If a class is cancelled, we will let you know which "SNOW DAY" will make-up for that class.

## **ILLNESS AND PERSONAL ABSENCES**

We want you to stay home if you don't feel well. We will always work to be as flexible as possible in accommodating make-up classes for any student who stays home from class due to illness.

That being said, please try to let us know if you're going to be away. Especially after we come back from the winter break in January, all teachers are starting to

prepare the class for their various end-of-year performances. Consistent rehearsals are the best way to combat stage fright! Theatre really is a team sport, and having people on stage who have missed a lot of rehearsal is stressful for everyone involved. We don't want our performances to be a stressful experience, we want them to be fun and triumphant. Because of all this, our policy is that if your student is absent more than three times between January 2025 and the recital, they may not participate in the recital.

**Attendance at all dress rehearsals and performances is mandatory in order to participate in the recital.**

## **COMPANY CLASSES ONLY**

The following policies are only relevant to students enrolled in the Musical Theatre Company and Shakespeare Company classes. If your student is in a Junior, Senior, or Pre-Company class, you don't need to worry about this part! Thanks for getting this far and we look forward to seeing you in class!

Okay, Company Students: If you're absent for a reason other than illness, the director may have recast you, or alter your actor track in some measure. It won't be possible to go back on material rehearsed while you're away. This may include being cut from vocal parts, dance or fight choreography, or scene work.

**Attendance at all dress and technical rehearsals is mandatory...**it's not fair to the other actors to expect them to do their final rehearsals without you. You cannot be absent from any rehearsals in March 2025.

**You must be available to participate in all performances** scheduled for your program. We are all counting on you, so we can put on our play as we rehearsed it.

No matter which program you're in, you will need to do at least a little bit of reviewing your materials throughout the rehearsal period. More so for larger roles, but everyone will have to do a little bit. 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"!

Just like with the regular classes, our performance schedule has "SNOW DAYS" included. While both *Pinocchio* and *As You Like It* are scheduled to close on March 29th, we have contingencies built in on March 23rd, March 30th and April 1st just in case weather gets in the way of our careful plans. We do need you to keep those contingency days available, just in case.

**INVITED DRESS REHEARSALS** are for the Company class students to see each other's work, and provide a "practice audience". If you're in *Pinocchio*, it's for you to see *As You Like It*, 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.

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' 2025 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.

The feedback we've gotten in the past is that sometimes friends & family forget to use your code! Makes total sense, and we've got a solution to try this year. Last year, tickets were \$15 until a month before the show, and then they went up to \$20. This year, they will be listed at \$20 until February 17th, and then go up to \$25, but your code will take \$5 off. So in effect, the ticket prices stay the same, but they're listed a little higher as an incentive to help friends remember to use your code. Hopefully this will work! If not, we'll try something else next year.

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