

intune

DANCE & MOVEMENT

BUILDING CONFIDENCE WITH EVERY STEP

Technique HANDBOOK



THIS HANDBOOK

THE AIM OF THIS HANDBOOK IS TO CLEARLY
OUTLINE THE ELEMENTS OF BALLET TECHNIQUE
WE TEACH AND THE STAGE AT WHICH THEY ARE
INTRODUCED.

At Intune Dance and Movement, we are committed to establishing strong technical foundations at every stage of a dancer's training. We believe that progress is not defined solely by the steps a dancer can perform, but by the quality, understanding and control with which those steps are executed.

In ballet especially, how a movement is performed is just as important as what is performed. Alignment, **YOUR PARAGRAPH TEXT** strength, coordination and musicality must be carefully developed and consistently reinforced.

By prioritising sound technique from the earliest stages and building progressively as dancers mature, we create a clear, structured pathway for development. Strong foundations enable dancers to advance safely, confidently and with artistic integrity, ensuring that each new step is supported by secure fundamentals rather than rushed progression.

In this handbook, we examine each of the following elements at every stage of training:

- Posture
- Weight placement
- Turnout
- Positions of the feet
- Port de bras
- Musicality
- Performance

There is an overview at the start, followed by a more detailed description and suggested imagery for each aspect.

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CONTENTS



1

An Overview

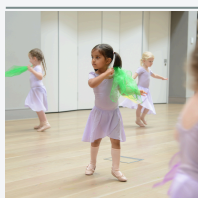
PAGES 4-6



2

Dance Explorers

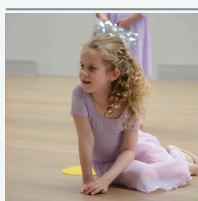
PAGES 7-9



3

Pre Primary Ballet

PAGES 10-15



4

Primary Ballet

PAGES 16 - 21



5

Grade 1 Ballet

PAGES 22 - 27



6

Grade 2 and 3 Ballet

PAGES 28 - 35

Technique

OVERVIEW

	Dance Explorers	Pre Primary
Positions of the feet	Parallel and First Position	Parallel and First Position
Port de bras	Hands on waist Holding skirt Position of fingers	Hands on waist Holding skirt Position of fingers Arms to the side at shoulder height
Posture	Poise	Poise Core stability
Weight placement	-	-
Turnout	Natural Standing on two legs	Standing on two legs
Foot articulation		Seated Jumps
Musicality		Musical introductions
Performance		Being ready Still at the end

Technique

OVERVIEW

	Primary Ballet	Grade 1 Ballet
Positions of the feet	Primary	Second and Third position
Port de bras	Parallel and First Position	Bras bas Second position Third position Fifth position Allonge
Posture	First Position Demi Seconde Demi Bras Open 5th Arm swinging in opposition	Pelvis placement Rib cage
Weight placement	Pelvis placement	Weight distribution
Turnout	Weight distribution	Plies Tendu Devant Tendu devant on fondu Tendu to seconde
Foot articulation	Seated Plies	Rises Tendus Jumps
Musicality	Seated Jumps Rises	
Performance	Musical introductions	

Technique

OVERVIEW

	Grade 2 Ballet	Grade 3 Ballet
Positions of the feet	Third position	-
Port de bras	Use of arms from the back	
Posture	Pelvis placement Rib cage	Pelvis placement Rib cage
Weight placement	Weight distribution	Weight distribution
Turnout	Tendu derriere	
Foot articulation	Tendus Fondus Jumps	
Musicality	Facing the barre Sideways to the barre	
Performance		

DANCE EXPLORERS



At Dance Explorers level we would expect pupils to develop some technical understanding of:

- Correct ballet posture (to include a sense of poise and standing tall)
- Parallel and natural 1st position of the feet
- Correct placement of hands on the hips, correct holding of skirts and sensitive use of fingers.



POSTURE AND POISE

At this level we would expect pupils to develop some awareness and understanding of poise.

✨ A Golden Thread Pulling You Up from the Top of Your Head - "Imagine there is a magical golden thread attached to the very top of your head. This thread is gently pulling you up, up, up toward the sky!"

🌳 A Tall and Graceful Tree - "Stand like a tall, beautiful tree in a big, open field."

👑 A Prince or Princess Wearing a Crown - "You are a royal prince or princess, walking through a grand ballroom."

POSITIONS OF THE FEET

At this stage pupils learn parallel and first positions with their feet.

Parallel

Pupils should be able to stand with their feet together and squeeze their legs together.

🚂 Train Tracks - "Imagine your feet are train tracks. They need to stay straight and side by side so the train (your body) can travel safely!"

🛷 Ski Feet - "Pretend you are wearing skis—your feet have to stay straight so you don't fall in the snow!"

1st position

Pupils should be able to stand in a natural 1st position.

🍕 A Slice of Pizza - "Your feet make a little pizza slice—just a tiny one, not too big!"

🧜 Mermaid Tail - "Stand tall like a mermaid, with your feet making the shape of a beautiful mermaid tail!"

🦋 Butterfly Wings - "Your heels are touching, and your toes open like gentle butterfly wings."

Transitioning from parallel to 1st position

📖 Book Opening - "Imagine your feet are a closed book in parallel. Gently open the pages to make a wide 'V' for 1st position."

🦋 Butterfly Wings - "Your feet are two butterfly wings, closed together in parallel. Let them open up gently into 1st position."

☀ Sunrise Feet - "Your toes are the sun rising in the morning, opening up to shine in 1st position."

🍕 Pizza Slice - "Your feet start like two breadsticks (parallel), then open up into a little pizza slice (1st position)."



PORT DE BRAS

Placement of hands on the hip

At Dance Explorers level pupils should be working towards placing their hands on their hips with their fingers together, and fingers further towards their tummy button to avoid the elbows going behind the mid line of the body.

Holding a Bubble – Their hands rest gently on their hips as if holding a delicate bubble against their tummy. If their elbows go too far back, the bubble might "pop!"

🦋 **Butterfly Wings Resting** – Their elbows should stay slightly forward, like a butterfly resting its wings gently, not folded behind.

👉 **Ballet Pockets** – Their hands rest as if they are tucking their fingers into tiny, invisible pockets, keeping their arms nicely shaped.

Holding of skirts

Pupils should be working towards holding the edge of their skirts.

🌸 **Holding a Daisy Chain** – Their fingers gently pinch the edge of their skirt as if holding a delicate daisy chain, keeping their arms soft and slightly forward.

🦢 **Swan Wings** – Their arms extend gracefully, as if they are swan wings resting gently in front, never stretching too far back.

🌀 **Lifting the Edges of a Magic Cloak** – Their fingers lightly hold the fabric like they are lifting an enchanted cloak, making sure it stays in front of their body.

SENSITIVE USE OF FINGERS AND HANDS

At Dance Explorers level pupils should be working towards soft hands and fingers, expressive, and naturally shaped—without stiffness or exaggerated positions. Here's what to aim for:

Hand Shape

- **Relaxed & Gentle** – Hands should look soft, not stiff or clenched.
- **Slightly Curved Fingers** – Like holding a delicate bubble or a small, imaginary pearl.
- **Open & Expressive** – Avoid flat, "floppy" hands; instead, they should have energy and intention.

Finger Shape

- **No Stiff or Straight Fingers** – Fingers should be gently extended, not stretched rigidly.
- **The Thumb Stays Close** – Not sticking out but softly following the shape of the hand.
- **Delicate & Controlled** – Like the fingers are painting in the air

🌿 **Feathers in the Wind** – Their fingers float lightly, like soft feathers drifting on the breeze. Keep the fingers soft and expressive, as if they are moving with the air.

🎵 **Playing a Melody** – Imagine their fingers lightly tapping, as if playing soft, flowing musical notes on an invisible piano. The fingers should stay relaxed and expressive, moving like the notes in a beautiful song.

🎀 **Holding a Ribbon** – Their fingers gently curl around an imaginary ribbon, as if holding it with softness and control. The fingers should move with fluidity, as if the ribbon is floating through the air

PRE PRIMARY



At Pre Primary level we would expect pupils to develop some technical understanding of:

- Correct ballet posture (to include a sense of poise and core stability)
- Parallel and 1st positions of the feet
- Turn out from the hip sockets in 1st position
- Articulation of the feet during seated exercises, rises and jumps.
- Port de bras, including correct placement of hands on the hips, correct holding of skirts, arms to the side at shoulder height and sensitive use of fingers.
- Musical introductions recognised at the start of exercises
- Performing (to include being still before an exercise begins and still when it finishes)



POSTURE AND POISE

At this level we would expect pupils to develop greater awareness and understanding of poise.

Correct posture and poise is covered in the warm up exercise but should be reinforced throughout the whole class

🌟. A Golden Thread Pulling You Up from the Top of Your Head - "Imagine there is a magical golden thread attached to the very top of your head. This thread is gently pulling you up, up, up toward the sky!

🌳 A Tall and Graceful Tree - "Stand like a tall, beautiful tree in a big, open field.

👑. A Prince or Princess Wearing a Crown - "You are a royal prince or princess, walking through a grand ballroom.

CORE STABILITY

At Pre Primary level we would expect pupils to develop an awareness of the need for core stability to support their ballet technique, but they should **not** be encouraged to have a flat stomach.

🎈 A Balloon in Your Belly - "Pretend there is a balloon inside your tummy. When you stand tall, the balloon is big and full of air. As you bend and stretch, the balloon gets smaller, but your tummy stays firm to keep it from popping

🐚 A Seashell - "Picture a seashell inside your tummy, like the one you might find at the beach. When you stand tall, you gently hold the seashell in place so it doesn't fall out. Keep your tummy nice and steady like the shell, and your whole body will stay strong!"

💃 A Ballet Dancer's Belt - "Imagine you're wearing a special ballerina belt around your waist that's keeping you nice and tall. Every time you do a bend or stretch, you tighten the belt to keep it on your body. The tighter the belt, the more balanced you'll be!"

🧸 "Teddy Bear Hug" - Imagine hugging a teddy bear with your tummy—just enough to keep it close, not squish it!



POSITIONS OF THE FEET

At this stage pupils practice parallel and first positions with their feet.

Parallel

Pupils should be able to stand with their feet together and squeeze their legs together.

 **Train Tracks** – “Imagine your feet are train tracks. They need to stay straight and side by side so the train (your body) can travel safely!”

 **Ski Feet** – “Pretend you are wearing skis—your feet have to stay straight so you don’t fall in the snow!”

1st position

Pupils should be able to stand in a natural 1st position.

 **A Slice of Pizza** – “Your feet make a little pizza slice—just a tiny one, not too big!”

 **Mermaid Tail** – “Stand tall like a mermaid, with your feet making the shape of a beautiful mermaid tail!”

 **Butterfly Wings** – “Your heels are touching, and your toes open like gentle butterfly wings.”

Transitioning from parallel to 1st position

 **Book Opening** – “Imagine your feet are a closed book in parallel. Gently open the pages to make a wide ‘V’ for 1st position.”

 **Butterfly Wings** – “Your feet are two butterfly wings, closed together in parallel. Let them open up gently into 1st position.”

 **Sunrise Feet** – “Your toes are the sun rising in the morning, opening up to shine in 1st position.”

 **Pizza Slice** – “Your feet start like two breadsticks (parallel), then open up into a little pizza slice (1st position).”



ARTICULATION OF THE FEET

At Pre Primary level pupils should work towards showing articulation of the feet when performing seated exercises, doing rises and during jumps.

Seated exercises

Pupils should be encouraged to work through their ankle, ball of the foot and toes - and the same in reverse.

They should be a feeling of resistance, scarves and resistance bands can help to achieve this.

Rises

Pupils should be encouraged to work through the foot to demi pointe and to keep their legs and ankle stuck together - and the same in reverse.

✨ Magic Glue - "Your heels are covered in magic glue—if they come apart, the magic disappears!"

🪙 Squeezing a Magic Coin - "Imagine there's a tiny magic coin between your heels—don't let it drop as you rise up!"

🧜♀️ Mermaid Tail - "Your legs are a mermaid's tail—keep them stuck together as you float up onto your toes!"

Jumps

Pupils should be encouraged to work through the foot when they take off and land.

👉 Point Your Toes Like a Shooting Star - "When you jump, stretch your toes like a star shooting across the sky!"

✨ Magic Wand Toes - "Your toes are magic wands! As you jump, point them to send out sparkles!"

🖋️ Straight Pencil - "Your legs are two perfect, straight pencils, sharp and long—don't let them bend as you stretch them out in the air!"

Imagery for landing softly can include:

☁️ Marshmallow Landing - "Land on soft, squishy marshmallows so no one hears your feet!"

Bubble Landing - "Imagine you are landing inside a bubble—be very gentle so it doesn't pop!"

❄️ Snowflake Landing - "Land as quietly as a snowflake falling to the ground."



PORT DE BRAS

Placement of hands on the hips

At Pre Primary level pupils should be working towards placing their hands on their hips with their fingers together, and fingers further towards their tummy button to avoid the elbows going behind the mid line of the body.

Holding a Bubble – Their hands rest gently on their hips as if holding a delicate bubble against their tummy. If their elbows go too far back, the bubble might "pop!"

 **Butterfly Wings Resting** – Their elbows should stay slightly forward, like a butterfly resting its wings gently, not folded behind.

 **Ballet Pockets** – Their hands rest as if they are tucking their fingers into tiny, invisible pockets, keeping their arms nicely shaped.

Holding of skirts

Pupils should be working towards holding the edge of their skirts.

 **Holding a Daisy Chain** – Their fingers gently pinch the edge of their skirt as if holding a delicate daisy chain, keeping their arms soft and slightly forward.

 **Swan Wings** – Their arms extend gracefully, as if they are swan wings resting gently in front, never stretching too far back.

 **Lifting the Edges of a Magic Cloak** – Their fingers lightly hold the fabric like they are lifting an enchanted cloak, making sure it stays in front of their body.

Arms to the side at shoulder height

At Pre Primary level pupils should be working towards holding their arms out to the side at shoulder height (not higher) and slightly in front of the mid line of the body.

 **Floating on Water** – Their arms are like little boats resting on top of the water, floating gently without sinking or tipping too high.

 **Holding Two Balloons** – Imagine holding a balloon in each hand, keeping them steady so they don't float too high or drop too low.

 **A Bird Gliding** – Their arms float gently like a bird soaring through the sky, keeping the wings level to glide smoothly.



SENSITIVE USE OF FINGERS AND HANDS

Pupils should be working towards soft hands and fingers, expressive, and naturally shaped—without stiffness or exaggerated positions. Here's what to aim for:

Hand Shape

- Relaxed & Gentle – Hands should look soft, not stiff or clenched.
- Slightly Curved Fingers – Like holding a delicate bubble or a small, imaginary pearl.
- Open & Expressive – Avoid flat, "floppy" hands; instead, they should have energy and intention.

Finger Shape

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🎀 Holding a Ribbon – Their fingers gently curl around an imaginary ribbon, as if holding it with softness and control. The fingers should move with fluidity, as if the ribbon is floating through the air

MUSICALITY

At Pre Primary level pupils should recognise that exercise start with a musical introduction, which serves as their "getting ready music. They should know to remain still until the music tells them to dance.

PERFORMANCE

They should be able to stand still in their starting position before and exercises begin, and finish in a still position. This encourages not only discipline and focus but also helps the dancers understand the importance of posture and control—fundamental principles in ballet.

PRIMARY



At Primary level we would expect pupils to develop greater technical understanding of:

- Correct ballet posture (to include a sense of poise and core stability from Pre Primary and now adding correct placement of the pelvis).
- Weight placement with $\frac{2}{3}$ of the body weight over the balls of the feet, $\frac{1}{3}$ over the heels
- Parallel and 1st positions of the feet.
- Turn out from the hip sockets in 1st position and in demi plie.
- Articulation of the feet during seated exercises, jumps and demi pointe.
- Greater use of Port de bras which now includes correct placement of 1st position, demi seconde, demi bras, open 5th and arms swinging in opposition.



POSTURE AND POISE

At this level we would expect pupils to develop greater awareness and understanding of poise.

Correct posture and poise is covered in the warm up exercise but should be reinforced throughout the whole class

✨ A Golden Thread Pulling You Up from the Top of Your Head - "Imagine there is a magical golden thread attached to the very top of your head. This thread is gently pulling you up, up, up toward the sky!

🌳 A Tall and Graceful Tree - "Stand like a tall, beautiful tree in a big, open field.

👑 A Prince or Princess Wearing a Crown - "You are a royal prince or princess, walking through a grand ballroom.

CORE STABILITY

At Primary level we would expect pupils to develop a greater awareness of the need for core stability to support their ballet technique, but they should **not** be encouraged to have a flat stomach.

🎈 A Balloon in Your Belly - "Pretend there is a balloon inside your tummy. When you stand tall, the balloon is big and full of air. As you bend and stretch, the balloon gets smaller, but your tummy stays firm to keep it from popping

🐚 A Seashell - "Picture a seashell inside your tummy, like the one you might find at the beach. When you stand tall, you gently hold the seashell in place so it doesn't fall out.

👙 A Ballet Dancer's Belt - "Imagine you're wearing a special ballerina belt around your waist that's keeping you nice and tall. Every time you do a bend or stretch, you tighten the belt to keep it on your body. The tighter the belt, the more balanced you'll be!"

🧸 Teddy Bear Hug"– Imagine hugging a teddy bear with your tummy—just enough to keep it close, not squish it!

PELVIS PLACEMENT

At Primary level we would expect pupils to start to develop awareness of correct placement of the pelvis to assist with core stability and turnout.

They should be encouraged to develop a neutral pelvis, not aching but also not tucking under.

🐟 Goldfish Bowl – Imagine a bowl of water resting on your hips. Keep it steady so the fish don't splash out!

🍰 Cupcake on a Plate – Your hips are like a plate holding a cupcake. If you tip the plate, the cupcake might fall!

💡 Headlight Hips – Imagine there are little flashlights on your hip bones. They should shine straight ahead, not down to the floor or up to the ceiling.



WEIGHT PLACEMENT

At Primary level we would expect pupils to start to develop awareness of correct weight placement.

This should include $\frac{2}{3}$ of the body weight on the balls of the feet and $\frac{1}{3}$ on the heel.

This should activate the correct leg muscles and prepares them for quick changes of direction.

🏔️ Little Mountain – Your foot is a small mountain. You want to stand balanced right on the top, not falling down the front or back of the hill.

☁️ Cloud Heels – Your heels are resting gently on soft clouds—not sinking in, just floating lightly.

🐞 Ladybug Landing” – A tiny ladybug is sitting under your heel. Keep it safe, but don’t squish it!

All ten toes should be on the floor, not rolling in either direction. This will be more obvious in turn-out.

▲ Triangle Feet – Your weight should be balanced between your heel, big toe, and little toe, like a strong triangle standing on the ground.

☀️ Magic Stickers – Your feet have magic stickers under your big toes, little toes, and heels. Keep them all stuck to the floor evenly!



POSITIONS OF THE FEET

At Primary level pupils continue to reinforce parallel and 1st position with their feet.

There are two progressions from Pre Primary - introduction to the concept of the body weight being slightly more over the toes than the heels.



TURNOUT

Greater awareness of turnout when standing in 1st position, both with straight legs and in demi plie.

✿ *Golden Ribbons- Pretend golden ribbons are wrapped around your legs. As you turn out, they gently spiral down from the tops of your legs to your heels.*

🍋 *Squeezing Lemons - Imagine there's a juicy lemon behind each knee. Gently squeeze them to make lemonade without squashing them!*

✨ *Magic Strings - A little fairy is gently pulling two invisible strings from the tops of your legs, helping them turn out magically.*

📖 *Turning Open a Book- Your legs are like the pages of a book, gently opening outward from the spine (your centre).*



ARTICULATION OF THE FEET

At Primary level pupils should work towards showing articulation of the feet when performing seated exercises, doing rises and during jumps.

Seated exercises

Pupils should be encouraged to work through their ankle, ball of the foot and toes – and the same in reverse.

They should be a feeling of resistance, scarves and resistance bands can help to achieve this.

Rises

Pupils should be encouraged to work through the foot to demi pointe and to keep their legs and ankle stuck together – and the same in reverse.

✨ Magic Glue – “Your heels are covered in magic glue—if they come apart, the magic disappears!”

🪙 Squeezing a Magic Coin – “Imagine there’s a tiny magic coin between your heels—don’t let it drop as you rise up!”

🧜♀ Mermaid Tail – “Your legs are a mermaid’s tail—keep them stuck together as you float up onto your toes!”

Jumps

Pupils should be encouraged to work through the foot when they take off and land.

👉 Point Your Toes Like a Shooting Star – “When you jump, stretch your toes like a star shooting across the sky!”

✨ Magic Wand Toes – “Your toes are magic wands! As you jump, point them to send out sparkles!”

✏ Straight Pencil – “Your legs are two perfect, straight pencils, sharp and long—don’t let them bend as you stretch them out in the air!”

Imagery for landing softly can include:

☁ Marshmallow Landing – “Land on soft, squishy marshmallows so no one hears your feet!”

Bubble Landing – “Imagine you are landing inside a bubble—be very gentle so it doesn’t pop!”

❄ Snowflake Landing – “Land as quietly as a snowflake falling to the ground.”



PORT DE BRAS

Primary level introduces more formal arm positions and greater use of port de bras.

Positions include 1st position, demi seconde, demi bras, open 5th and arms swinging in opposition.

Arms should be stiff and not tense, soft sensitive fingers and a sense of holding the arms from the back.

First Position

Fingers tips should be opposite their belly button, not too high and not too low

🍕 Pizza

🍰 Cake

Ballet Bubbles - Imagine the arms are holding a big bubble, hold it gently so it doesn't pop.

Demi bras

The arms should be held not too close together and not too wide, elbows supported.

🍕 Pizza slice

🍰 Cake slice

Demi seconde

The introduction to this is by holding their skirts properly. Arms should be straight, but rounded slightly at the elbows and the skirt held between the thumb and middle finger.

They arms should be just forward of the mid line of the body, so as to maintain correct posture.

☂ Umbrella arms - Open up your umbrella to stop your toes from getting wet.

Open 5th

Arms should be extended and just forward of the mid line of the body, so as to maintain correct posture.

Shoulder should pull down the back, the neck should be long and the eye line slightly lifted.

🦋 Butterfly wings

Shoulders sliding down into back pockets

Arms swinging in opposition

This take place in Marches. Pupils should hold their arms at should height, not too high and not too low.

Some will not rotate the back arm and the palm will face upwards, it should face down so the shoulder does not lift.

👮 Soldier arms

Swing and switch - One arm says 'hello' while the other says 'bye', then they switch."

GRADE 1



At Grade 1 level we would expect pupils to develop greater technical understanding of:

- Correct ballet posture, to include poise and core stability from previous grades and now adding correct placement of the pelvis and rib cage.
- Weight placement with $\frac{2}{3}$ of the body weight over the balls of the feet, $\frac{1}{3}$ over the heels
- Parallel, 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions of the feet.
- Turn out from the hip sockets in 1st position, demi plie and dégagés.
- Articulation of the feet during seated exercises, jumps, demi pointe and battement tendus.
- Greater use of Port de bras which now includes correct placement of 1st position, 3rd position and 5th position



POSTURE AND POISE

At this level we would expect pupils to have a greater understanding of poise and core stability .

✨ A Golden Thread Pulling You Up from the Top of Your Head - "Imagine there is a magical golden thread attached to the very top of your head. This thread is gently pulling you up, up, up toward the sky!

🌳 A Tall and Graceful Tree - "Stand like a tall, beautiful tree in a big, open field.

CORE STABILITY

At Grade 1 level we would expect pupils to develop a greater awareness of the need for core stability to support their ballet technique, but they should **not** be encouraged to have a flat stomach.

🎈 A Balloon in Your Belly - "Pretend there is a balloon inside your tummy. When you stand tall, the balloon is big and full of air. As you bend and stretch, the balloon gets smaller, but your tummy stays firm to keep it from popping

🐚 A Seashell - "Picture a seashell inside your tummy, like the one you might find at the beach. When you stand tall, you gently hold the seashell in place so it doesn't fall out.

💃 A Ballet Dancer's Belt - "Imagine you're wearing a special ballerina belt around your waist that's keeping you nice and tall. Every time you do a bend or stretch, you tighten the belt to keep it on your body. The tighter the belt, the more balanced you'll be!"

PELVIS PLACEMENT

At Grade 1 level we would expect pupils to develop greater awareness of correct placement of the pelvis to assist with core stability and turnout.

They should be encouraged to develop a neutral pelvis, not aching but also not tucking under.

🐟 Goldfish Bowl - Imagine a bowl of water resting on your hips. Keep it steady so the fish don't splash out!

🍰 Cupcake on a Plate - Your hips are like a plate holding a cupcake. If you tip the plate, the cupcake might fall!

💡 Headlight Hips - Imagine there are little flashlights on your hip bones. They should shine straight ahead, not down to the floor or up to the ceiling.

RIB CAGE PLACEMENT

At Grade 1 level we would expect pupils to develop awareness of correct placement of the rib cage.

They should be encouraged to open their shoulders and lift their chest, but to keep their rib cage closed.

🤗 Hug your ribs - Pretend someone is giving you a soft hug around your middle, keep the ribs close in.

🎈 Balloon - Imagine a gentle balloon in your chest that you lift up tall without letting it puff out to the sides or pop.



WEIGHT PLACEMENT

At Grade 1 level we continue to reinforce awareness of correct weight placement.

This should include $\frac{2}{3}$ of the body weight on the balls of the feet and $\frac{1}{3}$ on the heel.

This should activate the correct leg muscles and prepares them for quick changes of direction.

🏔️ Little Mountain – Your foot is a small mountain. You want to stand balanced right on the top, not falling down the front or back of the hill.

☁️ Cloud Heels – Your heels are resting gently on soft clouds—not sinking in, just floating lightly.

🐞 Ladybug Landing – A tiny ladybug is sitting under your heel. Keep it safe, but don't squish it!

All ten toes should be on the floor, not rolling in either direction. This will be more obvious in turn-out.

▲ Triangle Feet – Your weight should be balanced between your heel, big toe, and little toe, like a strong triangle standing on the ground.

☀️ Magic Stickers – Your feet have magic stickers under your big toes, little toes, and heels. Keep them all stuck to the floor evenly!



POSITIONS OF THE FEET

At Grade 1 level pupils continue to reinforce parallel and 1st position with their feet.

There are two progressions from Primary - introduction of 2nd and 3rd positions.

In 2nd position - They should take care to keep heels underneath their shoulders and not over turn out feet.

🕒 *Clock face* - Stand on a clock face that fits just under your shoulders; your heels stay inside it as you move.

🕒 *Clock feet* - Imagine your feet are the hands of a clock: your toes point to 10 and 2, not 9 and 3



TURNOUT

Continue to develop awareness of turnout when standing in 1st position, both with straight legs and in demi plie.

A progression from previous grades is the requirement to maintain turnout when one leg is extended devant and to 2nd position.

Degage devant

Pupils should be encouraged to move heel first and then stretch toes, and then toes and heel in reverse. They should try to keep their hips straight.

★ *Star feet* - Imagine a star sticker on you heel and you are turning it up towards the night sky.

Degage a la seconde

Again pupil should think of moving their heel first to develop floor pressure. Their toes should be inline with the toes of the supporting leg, so 10 and 2 and not 3 and 9.

★ *Star feet* - Imagine a star sticker on you heel and you are turning it up towards the night sky.



ARTICULATION OF THE FEET

At Grade 1 level pupils should continue to work articulation of the feet when doing rises, tendus and during jumps.

Rises

Pupils should be encouraged to work through the foot to demi pointe and to keep their legs and ankle stuck together - and the same in reverse.

✨ Magic Glue - "Your heels are covered in magic glue—if they come apart, the magic disappears!"

🪙 Squeezing a Magic Coin - "Imagine there's a tiny magic coin between your heels—don't let it drop as you rise up!"

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Jumps

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Imagery for landing softly can include:

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Battement Tendus

Pupils should be encouraged to work through the foot to demi pointe followed by the full point, and the same in reverse.

🖌 *Smooth Paintbrush* - Your foot paints a line on the floor without lifting.

Magic Carpet - Slide your foot forward on a magic carpet that glides smoothly across the floor.



PORT DE BRAS

At Grade 1 level new arm positions are introduced: Bras bas, Second position, Third position and Fifth position.

Bras bas

Arms should be held in a relaxed circular shape, with the palms facing up towards the face. Take care that elbows do not go behind the mid line of the body and there is a slight lift under the arms so the arms are not stuck to the side of the body.

🧸 Holding a sleepy teddy - "Your arms are gently holding a sleepy teddy – don't squash it, don't drop it."

😊 Smiling elbows - "Let your elbows smile at each other."

🍦 Arms floating, shoulders melting" - Your arms float... your shoulders melt down like ice cream."

Seconde position

Arms are open to the sides, level with the shoulders, slightly rounded at the elbows. Fingers are soft and gently extended, palms facing slightly forward. Shoulders are relaxed and down, elbows soft, and arms float lightly as if hugging two friends.

Take care that arms do not go behind the mid line of the body . The should be just in front and pupils should be able to see their fingers wriggling out of the corner of their eye.

🤗 Hugging Two Friends - "Imagine you're hugging one friend on each side. Keep them close but don't squash them.

🌟 Showing off your sparkly bracelets - "Turn your arms so everyone can see your sparkly bracelets."

Third Position

One arm is raised in front of the body, slightly rounded at elbow height, while the other arm is in 1st position (finger tips opposite the belly button). Fingers are soft and gently extended, elbows slightly rounded. Shoulders are relaxed and down.

Use the same imagery as previous grades.

Fifth position

In 5th position the arms form a soft, oval shape above the head. Elbows are slightly rounded, shoulders relaxed and down, and fingers are soft and gently extended. The arms feel long and lifted, without stiffness, and in line with the body.

Take care that arms do not go behind the mid line of the body . The should be just in front and pupils should be able to see their fingers wriggling out of the corner of their eye.

🌅 Sunrise arms - "Your arms rise like the sun – tall, round, and glowing."

🎈 Balloon in the sky - "Your arms are holding a floating balloon – gentle, round, and light."

🕯️ Candle flame - "Imagine a candle flame between your hands – don't squish it, let it flicker."

GRADE 2 AND 3



At Grade 2 and 3 level we would expect pupils to develop greater technical understanding of:

- How to stand at a ballet barre, both facing and sideways.
- Correct ballet posture, to include poise and core stability, correct placement of the pelvis and rib cage.
- Weight placement with $\frac{2}{3}$ of the body weight over the balls of the feet, $\frac{1}{3}$ over the heels
- Parallel, 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions of the feet.
- Turn out from the hip sockets with the introduction of battement tendu derriere.
- Articulation of the feet with emphasis on foot articulation in battement tendus, battement fondus, grand battement and allegro.
- Spotting during turns



BARRE WORK

Grade 2 is the first time pupils start dancing with use of a ballet barre.

The barre is a support tool that helps children:

1. Balance and stability – allows them to focus on learning movements without worrying about falling.
2. Posture and alignment – helps them keep their spine tall, shoulders down, and hips square while moving.
3. Strength and control – provides support while they develop leg, core, and arm muscles.
4. Coordination and confidence – allows them to practice steps, stretches, and port de bras safely.

The barre is a helper, not a crutch – they should use it lightly, keeping the body tall and active, rather than leaning on it.

FACING THE BARRE

Pupils should be close enough that their elbows are relaxed but not bent. Not too close, but not too far.

Finger tips should rest lightly on the barre and at waist height.

SIDEWAYS TO THE BARRE

The same rules apply as facing the barre.

The hand should be placed slightly forwards of the midline of the body to maintain correct posture.

Pupils should take care to not lean on the barre.



POSTURE AND POISE

At this level we would expect pupils to have a more secure understanding of poise and core stability .

✨ A Golden Thread Pulling You Up from the Top of Your Head - "Imagine there is a magical golden thread attached to the very top of your head. This thread is gently pulling you up, up, up toward the sky!

🌳 A Tall and Graceful Tree - "Stand like a tall, beautiful tree in a big, open field.

CORE STABILITY

At Grade 2 and 3 level we would expect pupils to have a more secure awareness of the need for core stability to support their ballet technique.

🎈 A Balloon in Your Belly - "Pretend there is a balloon inside your tummy. When you stand tall, the balloon is big and full of air. As you bend and stretch, the balloon gets smaller, but your tummy stays firm to keep it from popping

🐚 A Seashell - "Picture a seashell inside your tummy, like the one you might find at the beach. When you stand tall, you gently hold the seashell in place so it doesn't fall out.

💃 A Ballet Dancer's Belt - "Imagine you're wearing a special ballerina belt around your waist that's keeping you nice and tall. Every time you do a bend or stretch, you tighten the belt to keep it on your body. The tighter the belt, the more balanced you'll be!"

PELVIS PLACEMENT

At this level we would expect pupils to have a more secure awareness of correct placement of the pelvis to assist with core stability and turnout.

They should be encouraged to develop a neutral pelvis, not arching but also not tucking under.

🐟 Goldfish Bowl - Imagine a bowl of water resting on your hips. Keep it steady so the fish don't splash out!

🍰 Cupcake on a Plate - Your hips are like a plate holding a cupcake. If you tip the plate, the cupcake might fall!

💡 Headlight Hips - Imagine there are little flashlights on your hip bones. They should shine straight ahead, not down to the floor or up to the ceiling.

RIB CAGE PLACEMENT

At Grade 2 level we would expect pupils to have amore secure understanding of correct placement of the rib cage.

They should be encouraged to open their shoulders and lift their chest, but to keep their rib cage closed.

🤗 Hug your ribs - Pretend someone is giving you a soft hug around your middle, keep the ribs close in.

🎈 Balloon - Imagine a gentle balloon in your chest that you lift up tall without letting it puff out to the sides or pop.



WEIGHT PLACEMENT

At Grade 2 and 3 level we expect pupils to have a more secure understanding of correct weight placement.

This should include $\frac{2}{3}$ of the body weight on the balls of the feet and $\frac{1}{3}$ on the heel.

This should activate the correct leg muscles and prepares them for quick changes of direction.

🏔️ Little Mountain – Your foot is a small mountain. You want to stand balanced right on the top, not falling down the front or back of the hill.

☁️ Cloud Heels – Your heels are resting gently on soft clouds—not sinking in, just floating lightly.

🐞 Ladybug Landing – A tiny ladybug is sitting under your heel. Keep it safe, but don't squish it!

All ten toes should be on the floor, not rolling in either direction. This will be more obvious in turn-out.

▲ Triangle Feet – Your weight should be balanced between your heel, big toe, and little toe, like a strong triangle standing on the ground.

☀️ Magic Stickers – Your feet have magic stickers under your big toes, little toes, and heels. Keep them all stuck to the floor evenly!



POSITIONS OF THE FEET

At Grade 1 level pupils continue to reinforce parallel, 1st, 2nd and 3rd position with their feet.

2nd position

In 2nd position - They should take care to keep heels underneath their shoulders and not over turn out feet.

 *Clock face* - Stand on a clock face that fits just under your shoulders; your heels stay inside it as you move.

 *Clock feet* - Imagine your feet are the hands of a clock: your toes point to 10 and 2, not 9 and 3

3rd position

In 3rd position the heel of the front foot should be placed against the instep of the back foot. Both legs should be evenly turned out.

TURNOUT

Degage derriere

At Grade 2 level pupils are introduced to battement tendu derriere.

A battement tendu derrière is a slide of the working foot straight back along the floor, keeping the toes pointed, the knee straight, and the body upright. The foot remains in contact with the floor throughout the movement and returns to the starting position quietly.

Take care that the foot does not lift off the floor, goes out to the side, the knee bends during extension, the body leans or collapses forward/back and toes not pointed or foot turned out incorrectly.

 Drawing a line with your pencil - "Your toe is a pencil drawing a straight line along the floor behind you."

 "Heel leads out, toes bring it in."

 Sunflower body - "Your body is a sunflower - tall, straight, reaching up."

 Secret path - "Follow the secret path behind you - straight as a train track."



PORT DE BRAS

At Grade 2 and 3 levels new arm positions are introduced: 4th position, and 1st and 2nd arabesque.

4th position

In fourth position of the arms, one arm is rounded above the head (like in fifth position) and the other arm is rounded in front of the body (like in first position). The arms form two soft, rounded ovals at different levels.

Take care that arms are not too stiff or too lo, the bottom arm is not collapsed or too far from the body, shoulders are not lifted, elbows not locked or fingers clenched.

Reuse the same imagery as previous grades.

ARABESQUE LINES

In an arabesque, the arms are extended to complement the line of the body, creating a long, flowing shape from the fingertips of the front arm to the tip of the back arm.

1st Arabesque

In first arabesque, the arm opposite the working (extended) leg reaches forward, and the arm on the same side as the working leg extends to the side or back.

2nd Arabesque

In second arabesque, the arm on the same side as the working (extended) leg reaches forward, and the arm on the opposite side extends to the side or back.

In both lines take care that the front arm is not too low or stiff, back arm is not drooping or lifted too high, shoulders are not lifted or tense, elbows are not locked or fingers clenched.

Also look for correct rotation of the back arm as this can cause the shoulder to lift.

USE OF ARMS FROM THE BACK

At this level we would expect pupils to have greater awareness of using their arms from their backs.

The back muscles (mainly the latissimus dorsi, trapezius, and rhomboids) help support the arms, control movement, and maintain posture as the arms move through all positions.

What to Feel:

Shoulders stay down and relaxed.

Shoulder blades slide gently toward each other, like giving yourself a tiny hug.

Arms float smoothly without dropping or flopping.

📦 Shoulders melt down, back muscles carry the arms."

✏️ "Pinch a tiny pretend pencil between your shoulder blades — don't let it fall."



ARTICULATION OF THE FEET

This level pupils should continue to work articulation of the feet when doing rises, tendus, glisses, fondus and during jumps.

Rises

Pupils should be encouraged to work through the foot to demi pointe and to keep their legs and ankle stuck together - and the same in reverse.

✨ Magic Glue - "Your heels are covered in magic glue—if they come apart, the magic disappears!"

🪙 Squeezing a Magic Coin - "Imagine there's a tiny magic coin between your heels—don't let it drop as you rise up!"

🧜♀ Mermaid Tail - "Your legs are a mermaid's tail—keep them stuck together as you float up out of the water"

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Battement Tendus

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🖌 Smooth Paintbrush - Your foot paints a line on the floor without lifting.

Magic Carpet - Slide your foot forward on a magic carpet that glides smoothly across the floor.

Battement fondus

Pupils should be encouraged to draw the foot along the floor with the toes displacing the heels before the foot points.

🎨 "Imagine you are painting the floor with your toes."

🐌 "Slide your foot like a snail crawling slowly along the floor and up your leg"



SPOTTING

Spotting is the technique dancers use to keep their balance and orientation while turning. It involves fixing the eyes on one spot and whipping the head around to refocus on it during turns, which helps prevent dizziness and maintains alignment.

- Helps them avoid getting dizzy while turning.
- Maintains balance and posture through rotations.
- Supports cleaner, more controlled turns.
- Builds coordination between the head, eyes, and body.

Pupils should:

- Eyes: Choose a focal point at eye level and look at it first.
- Head: Turn the head quickly last, so the eyes are the last to leave the spot and the first to return.
- Body: Should stay upright and tall, not leaning or tipping.
- Spotting Rhythm: Eyes move first on the return, head follows smoothly, arms and body maintain alignment

Common faults at this level

- Forgetting to spot, causing dizziness.
- Head turning too early or too late, and tilting (keep ears level)
- Leaning or collapsing through the torso.

🪞✨ "Pick a window, light, or sticker to look at — your eyes don't leave it!"

📷 "Your head is a fast camera snapping back to the spot."

🦸♂️ "Imagine your eyes are a superhero laser that always returns to the same point."

