



PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

Theatre School Family Handbook

INTRODUCTION

Performing in front of an audience doesn't have to be scary. With practice, anyone can gain the presentation skills and confidence to act, sing, or dance onstage. The key is finding a nurturing environment where you can hone your craft—a place that encourages you to try new things without fear and lets you explore your talents and creativity in a fun, encouraging setting. That's who we are, and that's what we do.

Whether you are an aspiring performer or you simply want to increase your comfort level with public speaking, there is a part for you at Paper Mill Playhouse Theatre School. For over 25 years, we have been helping students of all ages and skill levels develop their passion for performance and communication—qualities that are invaluable in every career, from Broadway to the boardroom.

Whether it's singing, dancing, acting, or learning how to connect with an audience, with help and instruction, you won't believe what you can do! Surprise yourself!

Questions? Please email Michelle Tempkin at MTempkin@PaperMill.org or call **973.315.1666**.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

PAYMENT

Registration for our fall semester requires a \$50 non-refundable deposit, per child, per class, payable by cash, credit card, or personal check, which is applied directly toward class tuition. This deposit holds your place in the class. The remaining balance is due in August. Payment plans are available upon request, with all tuition due no later than December. For the six-week Mini-Session in the spring, payments are due in full upon registration.

REFUND POLICY

The \$50 deposit, which covers processing and registration costs, is non-refundable upon registration. Cancellations will be accepted until the second week of October. Refunds will be given, minus the non-refundable deposit and prorated for classes already taken. No refunds will be given after the designated date in October.

CLASS CANCELLATION/WAIT LIST POLICY

If a class does not have sufficient enrollment after the deadline, we will inform you as soon as possible so you have time to consider another selection. This is one reason why we encourage you to mark a second choice on your form. If a class is sold out, we will put students on a wait list for any openings that become available, or in some cases we can open another section.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Students are placed in a class on first-come, first-served basis. Students will be placed in the class that is tailored for their age group. In order to receive the full benefit from our curriculum, our classes are designed for specific ages and maturity levels. It is important that students are placed appropriately. Students must reach the required class age by the first day of class.

SWITCHING CLASSES

If, after trying a class, either the student or teacher feels it is not the right fit, we will try to enroll the student in a different class, if there is still room. Otherwise, we will issue a refund within the designated period. Cancellations that happen after that date will be given a credit to be used during the spring Mini-Session. Credits may not be carried over to the following school year.

DRESS CODE

We ask that students wear age-appropriate apparel that is easy to move in. Closed-toe shoes are required and no flip-flops are allowed. Hair should be combed and pulled away from faces. Jazz shoes and tap shoes are recommended for dance classes but not required. A sneaker for jazz and a hard-sole shoe for tap will work as well. Jazz shoes are sometimes required for a production class.

FACULTY

Paper Mill Theatre School classes are taught by highly qualified professionals. We feel very lucky to have such an accomplished staff. Many of our teachers are performing artists as well, so occasionally a teacher may have a scheduling conflict. In that case a guest artist will be contracted to teach so that there will be continuity in the class curriculum.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

In most cases we follow the school cancellation policy of the Millburn Schools. In some cases, because our classes happen later in the day, we may still hold them if we feel all conditions are safe. Because of time, class space, and teacher contracts, we try to cancel only when necessary. When possible, we will email students when classes are cancelled, but the information will be on the Paper Mill website, Facebook page, and on the voicemail of Michelle Tempkin, Education Associate (973-315-1666).

MISSED CLASS/MAKEUP POLICY

Students taking private voice lessons are given one makeup class at the end of the school year. For all other classes, if the same class is offered at different times, it is possible, at the discretion of the teacher, to attend an alternate class as a makeup. Otherwise, there are no special times for makeups. The teachers are contracted and the rooms scheduled for specific times only. A makeup class will be scheduled if we cancel a class due to weather or other conflicts.



TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Children should come to class prepared. If just one child comes unprepared, it affects not just them, but the momentum of the whole class. Time that can be better spent moving classes forward is not as productively used when we have to spend the time catching students up.
2. It is imperative that the children attend all classes and arrive on time. Meeting only once a week is not much time, so each class counts! These are ensemble classes, and missed rehearsals impact everyone in the final showcase.
3. Remember that performing is the most fun for the children when they are not nervous about what they are to say and do, and that can only happen if they have attended the rehearsals and have had the opportunity to practice.
4. It is unavoidable that there will be some waiting time when teachers are working with individual students, so it is important that each child is disciplined enough to use this time to learn from watching and listening so they are ready when they are called on.
5. Students are always treated with respect and kindness and encouraged to be supportive and encouraging to their fellow classmates as well. Bullying will not be tolerated.

By helping us with these things, we can help the children to realize that show business means business! Acting is a wonderful experience, but it is dedicated hard work as well. Let's join together and make a commitment to excellence!

BEHAVIOR ISSUES

Our teachers are skilled at handling any behavioral problems that may arise. The teacher will first give a warning to the student if he or she is being disruptive. Should the problem continue, we will reach out to the parent(s)/guardian(s). If the problem remains an issue, we will ask the parent to withdraw the student from the class and perhaps try to come back again for the Mini-Session. We ask for your full cooperation in these matters. We all want the experience to be a positive one, and we want your child to get the most out of the class. Often just waiting a little longer and allowing more time for maturity can make a world of difference.

“SHARING”

Because most classes are not tied to a production, we offer what is called a “sharing” on the last day of class. These are informal demonstrations where family and friends are invited to watch a typical class or watch a prepared presentation. Not all sharings are alike. The content will be determined by the teacher.

ALL-STAR PERFORMING GROUPS

Junior All-Stars and Children’s Theatre on Tour are two outreach components of our Theatre School. These classes tour productions to various local children’s hospitals, nursing homes, and schools. The Junior All-Star class and the Children’s Theatre on Tour classes are the only Paper Mill Theatre School classes for which an audition is required. You may only audition for Junior All-Stars if you have completed the Creative Drama I or Creative Drama II course. You need to have taken any teen course with us to be able to audition for the Children’s Theatre on Tour Company. Auditions are in March for the following September.

Please note that even if your child has similar course experience, it is still required that he or she complete the required Paper Mill Theatre School classes before auditioning for our All-Star classes. Membership in All-Stars is a privilege and we ask that our students work toward it by completing the recommended curriculum here at Paper Mill.



PARENT WAITING AREA

We kindly ask for parents to wait in the designated parent waiting area only—located on the right side of the main theatre lobby. Wifi access is available upon request.

SAFETY

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

The safety of our students is of the utmost importance to us. Please park in designated parking spots only. If you park in a lot across the street from Paper Mill, please cross at the crosswalk. Brookside Drive is a very busy street and cars tend to travel at high speeds.

During performance days, please listen to our parking attendants. They are aware that we have students here and will make sure you can get your child and be safe.

ON-TIME PICK-UP

Please try to be on time to pick up your child after class. We understand that sometimes late pick-up is unavoidable. If you are going to be late, please notify the Paper Mill receptionist at 973-379-3636. Your child will be escorted to the main office to wait to be picked up.

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