



Information Manual
Student/Parent

the School of
Fine Arts
A MINISTRY OF
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH DECATUR



Welcome!

Thank you for being a part of our First Baptist/School of Fine Arts (SoFA) family! We are blessed to have your child in our program. This opportunity to teach, instruct and mentor students comes with a responsibility, one that our staff does not take lightly. It is our hope you, your child, and family will have positive, meaningful experience with our program. If you have questions not addressed by the contents of this agreement, please arrange an appointment with the SoFA Director.

First Baptist Church
Decatur, Alabama

Purpose

The School of Fine Arts (SoFA) is a ministry of First Baptist Church (FBC). It is our mission to provide quality instruction in music, dance and visual arts from a Christian perspective. Our use of a variety of traditional and modern teaching methods encourages students to develop their God-given talents and to use the arts for the glory of God.

Role of the Director:

The SoFA Director is a member of the FBC Staff and reports to the Minister of Music & Worship. The Pastor has delegated the responsibility for administration of daily operations related to staff, policies, and facilities to the Director. The Director will be open to discuss with parents any issues or concerns related to the school.

Conduct Code

Students should arrive on time (not early). Parents should respect the time of the instructor by returning to pick up the student at the appropriate time. We ask students and parents to be respectful and courteous to the SoFA Staff and fellow students/parents. Please respect the facilities of SoFA/FBC. Use of mobile/smart phones for personal use (call, text, email or social media) is not permitted during class. Usage of the FBC Wi-Fi subjects users (parents, students, guests) to the FBC IT Security Policy (below).

Facilities / Waiting Area:

All facility space within the FBC footprint is designated as multi-purpose. Parents and friends of students are encouraged to use the ROC/Gym area (equipped with game room, walking track, vending and convenient restrooms) on the 2nd Floor as a waiting area. The Coffee Bar is also an appropriate area for those seeking a quiet place for study, reading or computer use. It is incumbent on all to maintain and share use in a cooperative-spirit/team approach to best serve FBC/SoFA. Smoking/use of any form of tobacco is prohibited on the campus, or any SoFA event/activity. Please respect the facility by picking up trash and returning any church items to the respective place.



Safety / Security / Inclement Weather:

In the event of fire or smoke, activate the alarm by engaging panic boxes located throughout the facility. All should be aware of the location of panic boxes and extinguishers. Exits are appropriately marked.

When there is a threat of severe or inclement weather, staff/class should seek shelter in the basement (near restrooms/kitchen) or in a stairwell. Those in Annex should shelter in the interior closets and hallway. Should severe or threatening weather conditions exist, the Director will determine to open/close the school and may refer to and/or follow the Decatur City Schools direction related to weather/emergency decisions. The decision to open/close the school will be announced on the SoFA Facebook page.

Calendar:

Each area of instruction will establish a specific calendar of meeting times, subject to celebration of the following holidays:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (Wednesday – Friday)
- Christmas - **New Year's School Break**
- Decatur City School Spring Break
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July

Schedule:

Lessons are scheduled Monday-Saturday between 9:00 a.m.–7:30 p.m. Number of classes/lessons vary dependent upon the program. Typical *schedules are:

- Musikgarten: thirty-two class meetings
- Dance classes: thirty-four sessions, August through May
- Piano classes: thirty-two sessions, August through May
- Acting classes: thirty-two class meetings
- Art Classes: vary; usually scheduled in six-week or one-semester sessions
- Private instruction: vary from teacher to teacher

**Summer Schedule will vary dependent upon demand for class, instructor availability and access to facility.*

Lesson Cancellation/Make-Up

Student Initiated: Should a conflict arise with an individual lesson (illness, death in family, or emergency), the student is responsible to notify the Instructor. Lessons may be re-scheduled when notification of conflict is provided 24 hours prior to the lesson time. Instructors are not required to make-up sessions for students absent from group classes.

Instructor Initiated: In the event an instructor must cancel a lesson, a make-up session will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time.



Dress:

Students are expected to present a modest appearance appropriate for a church environment. Attire should also be appropriate for the class/lesson the student is attending. Dancers should follow the dress code outlined in the dance brochure and on the website.

Illness:

While we encourage consistent attendance in class, we ask students to stay home in the case of illness. Please refrain from attending class until fever, vomiting, and other symptoms of subsided for at least twenty-four hours.

Music Selection Policy:

Given the Mission of FBC and the Purpose of SoFA, our staff will seek to use appropriate music for teaching, demonstration, programs and recitals. We believe music is a gift from the Lord and intended for His glory, and desire to select music to engage our students. While we use hymns and praise music in our classes and performances, we also allow music from a variety of genres, including Christian, classical, jazz, and others. All of our music is carefully screened for lyrics, message, and age appropriateness of each song.

Class Placement and Promotion:

Private lessons are tailored to the student's **age, level, and ability**. Student placement and promotion in the class setting is determined by the instructors and based on a number of factors, including but not limited to age, years of study, natural ability, class attendance, number of classes taken per week, and work ethic. Our instructors are committed to placing each student in a class that will allow him/her to learn, grow, and enjoy his/her study. Being promoted to the next class is not always best for students, as a too-difficult class may cause discouragement.

Recitals:

Events will be scheduled by the Director and instructors and open to the public. Students are strongly encouraged to perform in recitals. Please be cognizant that programs are often team events which require a commitment of attendance in practice and performance.

When attending SoFA recitals (dance, music, or other), **students'** families should plan to remain for the entire program. Each recital is a showcase of all the students have learned and accomplished during the year. We want to be courteous and respectful to each student, including those performing at the end of the show.



Dance Recital:

Dance recital will be held on the first Saturday of June at Hartselle High School. **If a dancer plans not to perform in recital his/her parent MUST inform the student's instructor and the School of Fine Arts Director no later than January 1.** After January 1, parents are responsible for paying recital and costume fees. Please be aware **that a student's** decision to withdraw from recital during the second semester will affect every child in his/her class, as the instructor must significantly alter the choreography.

Dance recital photo day and dress rehearsal are held the Thursday and Friday before recital, respectively, and are also mandatory events. Again, the absence of one child affects the entire class. Parents should plan all summer camps, family vacations, and other activities around these days. Dates and times for the photo day, dress rehearsal, and recital are available at the beginning of the school year to allow for planning.

Registration Fee:

The annual, non-refundable, family registration fee of \$50 is due at the beginning of the fall semester or upon registration if a student should begin lessons later in the year. Immediate family members may attend other classes in the SoFA without remitting an additional registration fee. Musikgarten registration fees may be paid by the semester (\$25 fall; \$25/spring and \$10/summer). Summer camps and short-term classes of 6-9 weeks require a registration fee of \$10/class (\$50 fee does not apply).

Tuition:

Tuition must be paid (in full) on/before the first scheduled lesson of each month. Musikgarten tuition is due on/before first class of the semester or paid in two installments with second payment due by the eighth week of class. Lessons will not be conducted until tuition, registration, and Student/Parent Agreement has been returned to Director.

Termination:

In the event that a student/parent wishes to terminate instruction, a thirty-day written notice should be provided to the Director. The student/parent will be responsible for payment of lessons within the thirty-day notice period.

SoFA reserves the right to remove students from class or recital for conduct detrimental to the class, performance, or school, which may include: excessive absenteeism, habitual tardiness, disruptive behavior, lack of dedication/practice, or non-adherence to the appropriate behavior. SoFA may also remove students for behavior that is detrimental to fellow students, instructors, or other staff.



IT Security Policy:

The intent of the IT Policy is to protect users (employees, members, guests, FBC, and SoFA) from illegal or damaging Information Technology (IT) related actions. Networks, equipment, software, storage, E-mail, internet, and data on church systems remain the property of FBC. As such, confidentiality of personal information on network/devices cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, users must exercise prudent judgment regarding personal use.

Users agree to refrain from:

- Illegal activity under local/state/federal or international law utilizing FBC resources.
- Violation of rights protected by copyright, patent, or other intellectual property.
- Unauthorized digitization/distribution of photographs or music.
- Introduce malicious programs onto network or server.
- View or transmit inappropriate or illicit material.
- Send unsolicited email, including "junk mail" or material not requested (spam).
- Harassment via email or phone through language, frequency, or message size.
- Posting non-Church-related messages to large numbers of Usenet newsgroups.



Student/Parent Agreement

The School of Fine Arts (SoFA) is a ministry of First Baptist Church (FBC). Our purpose is to provide quality instruction in music, visual arts and dance/creative movement. Lessons and classes are taught from a Christian perspective. We thank you for being a part of SoFA and hope your experience will be first class!

Expectation of the Student/Parent:

1. Arrive on time/Picked up on time. Please do not drop-off student early.
2. Present a modest appearance appropriate for a church environment.
3. Exhibit respect and courtesy to the SoFA Staff and fellow students/parents.
4. Respect the facilities of SoFA/FBC.
5. Assist in the promotion of SoFA within the community.
6. Use of mobile phones (call, text, email or social media) is not permitted during class.
7. Usage of FBC Wi-Fi, subjects users to the FBC IT Security Policy.
8. Encourage your child!
9. In the event there is a need to discuss a concern with the Instructor or Director, please schedule an appointment. Remain courteous and refrain from discussing sensitive topics during class and/or in the presence of students.

You will be asked on the registration form to sign that you have read and agree to abide by the policies within this manual.