



Parents' Handbook



Welcome to the Flying Irish!

P.O. Box 351, Ashby, MA 01431

978-386-2325

www.irishstepdancing.com & www.flyingirish.com

Email: dance@irishstepdancing.com

Thank you for choosing to enroll your child in classes with the Flying Irish! This e-booklet, as well as periodic e-newsletters, website updates, and studio postings, contains important information that will help us build our relationship together. Please add our email to your address book.

Payment & Registration Information

Students are registered for the duration of the year (Sept 1st – Aug 31st). The student's parent or guardian is responsible for tuition and fees through the end of the year. The studio must receive a letter of withdrawal 30 days prior (i.e. 30 days prior to the end of the semester/session) to a student leaving the program, or switching programs, in order to void this contract. Payments continue to be due until withdrawal is complete; no partial payments accepted.

- Payments are made by credit card, through our online studio software (Jackrabbit). Your account will be billed the week before the start of the semester or at the time of enrollment/due date (for new students, privates, workshops, extra classes, costumes, etc).
- To cancel the studio contract (i.e. cease responsibility for paying tuition for the remainder of the year in the event a student wishes to drop out of class/program): a 30-day advance (i.e. 30 calendar days prior to the end of the semester/session) written notice--**no emails**--must be provided. Students are welcome to complete their class schedule during their 30-day withdrawal notice period. At the end of 30 days, the student will no longer be enrolled and will not incur additional fees.
- Student accounts must be current to participate in classes, shows and events.
- Please respect the privacy of the residence attached to the Flying Irish Studio by only coming to the property when the studio is open for business.

Tuition Rates:

Prices listed are for fall, winter & springs semesters, in classes with 5 or more students. During the summer the class schedule changes & tuition fees are adjusted accordingly. Please see the withdrawal policy if your child will not be taking summer classes.

Registration fee: \$20/student per year (9/1-8/31); maximum \$45/year per family.

Family Discounts (dance only): First family member/student pays full single tuition rate. (The first family member is the student with the highest monthly class rate.) The student with the next highest tuition deducts 5% from their tuition rate; all remaining students deduct 10% from their tuition rate.

30-minute class	\$105	45-minute class	\$135	1 class hour	\$170
1.5 class hours	\$250	2 class hours	\$315	2.5 class hours	\$375
3 class hours	\$425	3.5 class hours	\$450	over 3.5 class hours	\$470

30-min private lessons \$30 each in Ashby, \$35 each in Groton

**24-hour notice required to reschedule a private lesson (no refunds or cancellations)

Extra classes, rehearsals, workshops, etc.
Drop ins (currently enrolled students only)
Split Payments (for tuition over \$375, email to schedule)
Payment by Check

Priced individually; see class/program description
\$16/hour in weekly classes (must pre-enroll)
Add \$5/payment
Add \$10/payment (no fee for feis registration)

Class Policies

BRINGING & PICKING UP STUDENTS

To minimize disruptions when dropping off students, please do not arrive more than 10 minutes before scheduled class time, and make sure to pick up students within 5 minutes after class has ended. Parents must come inside the building to pick up young children; please notify the instructor or send in a note if someone other than the parent will be driving students home. Students who are allowed to arrive and leave buildings independently, without a parent's supervision, are their parents' responsibility.

CLASS BEHAVIOR

Studio classes are a social activity and we want students to feel at ease and have fun, but also to leave class having learned. Here are some guidelines to follow (please share them with younger students):

1. Students must be ready to participate as soon as their class begins, and are allowed to leave class only in an emergency. Students who arrive after the class warm-ups are completed may only be allowed to observe class.
2. Being prepared for class involves regular practice during the week to master the material taught in class in a timely manner.
3. Accepting corrections will make students grow as dancers. This includes both personal corrections and those given to the class as a whole. Be attentive while corrections are being given to others.
4. Be respectful of fellow classmates. Watch and learn from their successes as well as their mistakes.
5. Students should be watching, counting the music, or working out material to be prepared for their turn while others are working with the instructor.
6. No talking in class! No running, screaming, swearing, or other rambunctious or disruptive behavior in class or at any events. Flying Irish, LLC, is not liable for any damages or injuries as a result of such behavior.
7. The Flying Irish, LLC, has a zero tolerance policy for bullying. Every student has a right to a safe and productive learning environment. The Flying Irish reserves the right to dismiss, without recourse, any student or family who does not adhere to our policies by disrupting the learning environment. Refunds will not be given.

CLASS PLACEMENT

All students are individuals with very different abilities and will not all progress at the same rate. Students may spend a number of years in a grade/level before moving up. Students may be moved at any time if a different class would better suit their needs and talents. The instructor will have final judgment concerning class placement.

Classes with less than 5 students will be canceled and those students will be placed into alternate classes.

ATTENDANCE

Please make an effort to attend all scheduled classes, as this is important to the student, teacher, and classmates. Participation in special programs & events may have specific attendance requirements; see

information pertaining to each event or program.

Serious injury or illness: A doctor's note explaining the nature of the injury is required. The student can take make-ups in the month(s) following his/her return to classes, within that calendar year. Tuition must be kept up to date to hold class placement and cannot be refunded or transferred to another student. A doctor's note is required stating the student is able to return to dancing. Non-infectious students should observe classes until they are able to participate fully (make-ups will be given for all observation classes).

Attendance Awards: If this is your child's 5th, 10th or 15th year as a student of the Flying Irish s/he will be given an attendance award at the recital. Please be sure to confirm that it is an award year when you enroll your child in the fall.

HOME PRACTICE

Irish Dance is highly cumulative. Regular practice is necessary to remember and master the material taught in class and for advancement. The fast movements and high leaps of Irish Dance require dancers to be physically fit with strong muscles and good stamina to minimize the risk of injury. Practice sessions should include conditioning and drills, adjusted to a dancer's age and ability level.

Parents can help their students' progress by creating a space to practice, having the correct music on hand, watching practice sessions (you do not have to practice with your child) and reviewing practice journals. For your convenience, our website contains helpful handouts with tips for practicing. Creating a rewards system is a great way to create incentives for regular practice.

Irish Dances are named for the type of tune that they are danced to. The speed for the dance is often put in parenthesis next to the tune's name: ex. Reels (113). The speeds we use can be found on the studio's "Feis & Shows" page. CDs and music downloads make fantastic rewards for hard-working dancers; new music can re-invigorate a dancer who has fallen off their practicing.

GRADE EXAMS

Irish Dance is a cultural heritage, an art form and a competitive sport. Specific dances are taught at each grade (level) so that dancers progress in the standard manner. Grade exams were created in Ireland to ensure that students properly learn the dances, technique, music, history and culture of Irish Dance. When a dancer has finished learning the material at a specific grade, s/he will take the grade exam for that level.

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

Dancers learn new material when they advance to another level in competition; private lessons may be required. Dancers are not allowed to compete in a dance unless they have learned the steps for that level. Dancers must retain the material from their previous level until they have passed the appropriate grade exam. Sometimes material must be retained for special events, such as championships or performances.

Non-competitive dancers may advance levels by achieving high honors in their grade exams with a minimum score in certain sections; they must be working at a competitive level throughout the year.

MAKE-UP & SNOW DAYS

If a student is going to be absent, call or text the studio prior to the start of class. Make-ups are only offered if a call or text is received. (Do not email the studio regarding absences.) Make-up classes must be scheduled within 2 weeks of the class missed and taken within a month of the missed class. Make-ups may not be available in all classes at all times.

If the weather is at all inclement, please call the studio AT LEAST TWO HOURS BEFORE your child's class or scheduled event and/or check our Facebook pages ([Flying Irish Studio](#) & [Flying Irish Dancers](#)) for cancellation information. If you hear a standard out-going message (one NOT listing a cancellation), then the studio is open and holding class/the event is on. Please understand that we have customers from many communities and that FIS may be open even if school or other activities were canceled in your area.

When classes are cancelled due to inclement weather, a make-up will be offered or, if no make-up is offered, students may take a make-up in the closest-level class the week of or following a cancellation; tuition will not be adjusted in the event of cancellations.

There are no make ups/refunds/credits for missed classes in workshops, mini-sessions (6 weeks or less) and programs with single class offerings.

CLASS ATTIRE

Please take note of our dress codes! What looks great on stage starts in the classroom. Extra clothing obscures alignment, muscle tone, and faulty technical habits and can be a safety hazard. Failure to dress appropriately for class can result in a student observing, not participating in, that class (no make-ups will be given). Ordering information is available on the studio's "[Resources](#)" page.

Class Uniform:

Girls: Flying Irish tee shirt and Flying Irish black logo shorts, poodle socks.

Boys: Flying Irish tee shirt, fitted black dance/athletic shorts; white socks.

Adults: Flying Irish tee, black athletic pants (fitted below the knee).

Long hair must be pulled off the face and neck; hair accessories must stay secure on the head.

Shoes:

Students aged 6 & under and 1st year beginners wear black leather ballet shoes. All other females wear ghillies; male students must wear black split-sole jazz shoes (Beginner - Intermediate) or Irish reel shoes (Novice – Champion or ages 12 & up). Rutherford brand hard shoes are recommended: [Inishfree Jig Shoe](#) for Beginner - Intermediate and [Super Black Suede Sole Flexi Jig Shoe](#) with Sound Blaster Sand Glass tips for Novice - Champion.

All shoes must be fitted (the end of the shoe hugging the toes). Leather shoes stretch over time and will need to be replaced with a tighter, pair when this occurs. Buy shoes from a dedicated Irish Dance shoe merchant ONLY or you may get that do not fit properly (and which will have to be replaced with ones that fit).

Dance or other class footwear must be clean and worn in the dance areas only. Dance/class shoes being worn outside of dance areas must be covered with outside footwear.

For safety, only minimal, secured jewelry may be worn in class. No inappropriate attire. Cover class attire

with appropriate outerwear whenever outside the studio. Children aged 9 & up need to use deoderant.

****The Flying Irish name & logo (winged gillie) are trademarked; the winged gillie, hard shoe & double hard shoes (from website & tee shirts) are all copyrighted and may not be used or copied without permission.**

WAITING DURING CLASS

In order to keep things running smoothly, we ask that you respect the following:

1. Parents should not speak to their child while class is in session. Guests are not allowed in the studio.
2. Parents must wait in the lobby during class. A parent observation week will be held once a year, during the full week before Thanksgiving.
3. When possible, refrain from eating & drinking in the lobby. *Bring perishable waste home with you.*
4. Smoking is not permitted inside the building, or on Studio property.
5. For safety and to keep our facility enjoyable for all, we ask that children in the lobby are monitored closely and not be allowed to climb on seats and furniture or hang on/block the windows and doors.
6. The Flying Irish is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Please only bring class supplies to class.
7. Parents must bring dirty diapers home with them. Used diapers cannot be accommodated in the trash receptacles. Please take care of all private needs of young children in the bathroom or changing area.

SUMMER SESSIONS

Irish Dance is a year-round sport. New material may be covered during summer classes, as well as review of older material. Summer classes may be required for certain programs and/or level advancement.

SNACKS

If there is any food on premises the parent/adult should first check with other guests to make sure no one suffers from allergies. Any parent of a student with allergies must assume the responsibility of staying with their child. ONLY WATER is allowed in the studio.

HEALTH & MEDICATIONS

All students must have insurance and up-to-date vaccinations.

Parents are solely responsible for their child's medication. Parents must agree to stay with their child and make advance arrangements to chaperone events if a medical issue exists.

Video & Photography Policies

VIDEO & PHOTOGRAPHY

Pictures or videos may be taken and published by Flying Irish, LLC, throughout the dance season for use to celebrate and promote student accomplishments and the Flying Irish programs.

Parents may video free public events for private viewing (private events or events with an admission fee may not be filmed). The majority of our material is choreographed in-house; please request permission before posting performance videos online; these videos may not include full "steps". Parents who do not want their child photographed or videoed should pass on all events. Videotaping is strictly forbidden at competitions, with the exception of sanctioned representatives of the host organization. Material may be videotaped during private lessons for at-home tutoring (no sharing).

Parents need to continually monitor their child's and their own social media pages to ensure the privacy of

other people is being respected. If a fellow student is in the picture, and/or if private photo is tagged, it must be done with the permission of the fellow student's parent and all content must be appropriate for families.

Performance Opportunities

PERFORMING MATERIAL OUTSIDE CLASS

No student with the Flying Irish, LLC, is permitted to perform or teach material learned in class without the express permission of one of the instructors. Non-traditional material is proprietary to Flying Irish, LLC.

Dancers who wish to perform their own choreography (ex. in talent shows or Freestyle competitions) must work with an instructor prior to auditioning/performing/competing.

RECITAL

Participants in regularly scheduled weekly dance classes are welcome to join our recital. Recital costumes are purchased by parents. Team costumes, worn at the recital and at other events, are available for purchase in the fall.

TEAM COSTUMES

Flying Irish team costumes can be worn for all shows and competitions. These handmade outfits, unique to our school, identify the wearer as a member of the Flying Irish Dancers. Team costumes remain the same design for a number of years.

Girls must wear the team hairpiece with the team costume and any team accessories. No substitutions are permitted. Makeup is to be worn by female dancers over age 5. Links for makeup and hairpieces can be found on the [Resources](#) page.

Currently enrolled students may sell their team costumes (if in good repair) to other enrolled dancers within the school or turn them in for credit towards a new costume. Donations of outgrown costumes are always accepted. Donated costumes are sold or rented to dancers who have missed the purchase period or have outgrown their previous costume; funds go to the fundraising account to benefit the whole school.

Competition and Performances

There are many performance & competitive opportunities available to dedicated students with the Flying Irish. Students must meet certain requirements (practice time, class levels, attendance, etc) to participate and may need to audition for placement. Students may only participate if all accounts are current.

For those who are selected for extra programs, a fee may be due by a preset date. This fee covers the lessons for the program. Additional fees may be required to cover additional expenses (travel, costuming, competition fees, etc). All predetermined rehearsals are mandatory.

THE FLYING IRISH DANCE TROUPE

The Flying Irish Dance Troupe is the studio's performance & competition team for our most dedicated dancers. These dancers have the opportunity to perform in a variety of venues and settings throughout the year. See the FIDT hand-out for membership requirements.

FEISEANNA (COMPETITIONS)

Feiseanna: Dancers who have regular attendance in class and maintain regular home practice throughout the year may participate in [Rince Tuatha Nua](#) and Open Platform competitions. Be aware that other organizations have different rules and adjudication rubrics than our organization (Rince Tuatha Nua)—speak with your child’s instructor before signing up for these events.

National & International Championships: Solo dancers who wish to attend National and International events must meet qualification requirements; must take the required classes; may not miss classes in the week prior to the event; may not miss more than 6 of their regularly scheduled solo dance class nights in a calendar year (make ups required for missed classes); and are required to attend all extra classes or workshops associated with that event.

Dancers who attend are representing the Flying Irish and, in International competitions, the United States. They must dress and behave appropriately both on and off the dance floor.

Parents will know their child is ready for these events if they are practicing regularly throughout the week without reminders and practice sessions include working to improve each of their steps (rather than just running through their material), technique drills and conditioning exercises. These dancers need to attend numerous feiseanna throughout the year to stay sharp competitively and to move up the levels.

Team Dancing: Team members are chosen by audition and/or instructor selection. Tardiness or absence from classes can result in a dancer losing their place on the team. Traditional dances (ceiles, figures) are danced in the Flying Irish team costume. Freestyle routines may require additional costumes that are either purchased or rented by the dancer.

SOLO COSTUMES

Solo costumes (dresses for females or vests/jackets for males) may be worn by Novice & up competitive dancers. These costumes MUST be pre-approved prior to purchase by the instructor; these outfits cannot be worn in performance or competition if they have not been pre-approved.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students transferring from another Irish Dance Academy will undergo a retraining period. They may participate in competitions once they have mastered the Flying Irish material needed for feiseanna. Transfer students may need to be assessed within a class to determine the best class placement.

THANK YOU

Your cooperation with our policies is greatly appreciated. **In order to ensure fairness to all, Flying Irish, LLC, is unable to accommodate exceptions.** We thank you for your patronage and wish you an enjoyable season. The Flying Irish is honored to be the choice of families in Massachusetts & New Hampshire since 1997.