



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.

- *The first month's tuition and the month of June's tuition payment are due up front.*
- Payments are made by credit card, through our online studio software (Jackrabbit). Payments for weekly classes are due by the first of the month; your account will be billed on the 1st (or the closest following business day if the 1st is a weekend day or a holiday) if you have not already made the payment. There is a \$15 late fee for all payments received after the third of the month.
- Payments for private lessons and workshops are due at the time of enrollment. Payments for mini-sessions are due 1 week prior to the start of classes, unless otherwise stated.
- 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 month) 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:

The prices listed are for monthly payments (due on the 1st of the month Sept – May). There is a 5% discount for students making semester payments (payments are due on September 1, December 1 & March 1) or for those paying for the full year in September. Tuition remains the same if there is 3, 4 or 5 classes in a month.

*Trial classes are \$15 each; amount will be applied to registration fee upon enrollment.

Registration fee: \$25/student per year (9/1-8/31); maximum \$55/year per family.

45 minute class \$50/month 1 hour class \$60/month 90 minute class \$90/month 2 hour class \$120/month
30 minute private (Beginner/Intermediate only) \$40 each 45 minute private (all levels) \$60 each
Studio 2 Usage \$8/hour, \$5/30-minutes, for dancers waiting during classes (if not in use)

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.

Multiple Class Discounts: The first weekly class (longest class time) is full price. All additional weekly classes are discounted 5%. Discounts do not apply for privates, workshops, master classes or mini-sessions.

Family Discounts (dance only): First family member pays full single tuition rate. (The first family member is the student with the highest weekly class rate.) The student with the next highest weekly class tuition deducts 5% from their tuition rate; all remaining students deduct 10% from their weekly class tuition rate. Discounts do not apply for privates, workshops, master classes or mini-sessions.

New Beginner & Intermediate students will receive notebooks in their first class containing practice logs and important dance information. The notebooks cost \$5, added to your parent portal upon enrollment.

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 home practice.
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 different abilities and will not all progress at the same rate. Students may spend a number of years in a grade before moving up. Students may be moved at any time if a different class would better suit their needs & talents. The instructor will have final judgment concerning class placement.

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. There are no refunds, transfers or credits for missed classes.

Low enrollment policy: Classes with less than 5 students will have their time reduced (tuition will remain the same) or will be canceled and those students will be placed into alternate classes.

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—congratulations! They will be given an attendance award at the recital.

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.

MAKE-UP & SNOW DAYS

If a student is going to be absent from a group class, call or text the studio at 978-386-2325 at least 1 hour 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. All make-ups must be prescheduled. Make-ups may not be available in all classes at all times (ex during feis preparation times). Each class has a maximum of 2 make-ups per month.

If the weather is at all inclement, please call the studio as early as possible. (You must call to get a make up.) If enough people call to say they will not be attending, classes will be cancelled for that night. If you hear a standard out-going message (one NOT listing a cancellation), then the studio is open and holding class. The FIS may be open even if school or other activities were canceled in your area. Cancellations are also listed on our Facebook pages ([Flying Irish Studio](#) & [Flying Irish Dancers](#)).

When classes are cancelled due to inclement weather, either a make-up will be offered or 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.

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).

****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.**

Class Uniform: Ordering information is available on the studio's ["Resources"](#) page.

- Flying Irish tee shirt
- Flying Irish black logo shorts (student's choice on length)
- Poodle socks (females) or white sports socks (males)
- Long hair must be pulled off the face and neck; hair accessories must stay secure on the head.
- Only minimal, secured jewelry.
- Cover class attire with appropriate outerwear when outside.
- Children ages 9 & up need to use deoderant.

Shoes:

Females wear ghillies; males wear black split-sole jazz shoes (Beginner - Intermediate) or Irish reel shoes (Novice – Champion). Rutherford brand hard shoes: [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. Buy shoes from a dedicated Irish Dance shoe merchant ONLY to ensure proper 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.

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.
3. When possible, refrain from eating & drinking in the lobby. The Flying Irish Studio does not have trash services. *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.

SUMMER SESSIONS

Irish Dance is a year-round sport. Summer classes are required for 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 be up-to-date with standard 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 or during awards.

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.

Competitions & Performances

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 competitions) must work with an instructor prior to auditioning/performing/competing.

RECITAL

A recital in June is for weekly class participants to showcase what they have learned outside of competitions.

TEAM COSTUMES

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

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 in the recital, when under stage lights, or teenagers in competition. 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. Donations of outgrown costumes are always accepted. When donated costumes are sold the funds go into the studio's fundraising account to benefit the whole school.

FEISEANNA (COMPETITIONS)

Feiseanna: Dancers participate in Open Platform competitions. Be aware that other organizations have different rules and adjudication rubrics than our organization ([Cumann Rince Dea Mheasa](#)) - speak with your child's instructor before signing up for these events.

Flying Irish Feiseanna: The Flying Irish host the New England Championships the first weekend in November and a spring feis. Our dancers are expected to compete in both of 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 weeks prior to the event; may not miss more too many regularly scheduled solo dance class nights (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 instructor selection and/or audition. Tardiness or absence from classes can result in a dancer losing their place on the team. Ceilis and figures are danced in the Flying Irish team costume. Freestyle routines may require the purchase of additional costumes.

SOLO COSTUMES

Solo costumes (one-of-a-kind dresses for females or vests/jackets for males) may be worn by Novice & up competitive dancers, in Novice & higher level dances only. These costumes **MUST** be pre-approved prior to purchase by the instructor and cannot be worn in performance or competition without approval.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students transferring from another Irish Dance school 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.