



FSID HANDBOOK

2024

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Fitzpatrick School of Irish Dance! This document outlines important information about our school.

All dancers who perform and/or compete and their parents are required to sign the agreement at the end of this document.

Thank you for being part of the FSID Family!

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ABOUT US

Our Mission: We empower our dancers with the skills and confidence to learn, perform, compete, and above all bring JOY to themselves and others through Irish dance. Dancers develop and work toward their respective goals in a positive, supportive environment that engages and offers opportunities for all.

The FSID Family: Our program strives to cultivate a community of dancers, families and partners who support our mission and share in our joy. Our calendar provides year-round opportunities for the FSID Family to support the school and our wonderful dancers! These events feature live Irish music and all dancers are encouraged to participate and perform for public audiences.

March: St. Patrick’s Day Party & Ceili hosted by the FSID Foundation

May: Annual Recital and Spring Seisiún

July: Tom Fitzpatrick Golf Outing (annual school fundraiser)

FSID Foundation: Our school is designed to be more than just a dance school – we strive to serve as a touch of Ireland on the North Shore. Our Foundation supports this larger mission to cultivate a deeper appreciation for international culture by expanding educational and recreational opportunities related to Irish dance, music, culture, arts and sport. The Foundation hosts our annual St. Patrick’s Day Party & Ceili for the public, underwrites scholarships to our dance camps, facilitates programming for community-driven events and more.

Our Program: All dancers follow a progression that builds on fundamentals and skills in solos, figures and choreographies. Dancers develop and work toward their respective goals and every dancer has the opportunity to perform and compete as they continue to “pass” dances in class.

Our program prioritizes a balance between the art and discipline of Irish dance. We recognize that every dancer has different strengths, learns at a different pace, and progresses in different ways. Our goal is to enable continual learning while cultivating a love for dance in a healthy, happy way.

Levels loosely follow the below sequence:

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
Light Jig Light Jig Choreography Hop 23s Circle Dance	Beginner Reel Beginner 2-Hand Light Jig Line-up Tell Me Ma Choreography Shipping up to Boston Choreography	Beginner Slip Jig Intermediate Reel Beginner 3-Hand Reel Glasgow Reel Choreography 4-Hand Reel Humours of Bandon 4-Hand Cross Reel 8-Hand Fast Treble Jig Fast Hornpipe St. Patrick’s Day Traditional Set Jockey to the Fair Traditional Set	Intermediate Slip Jig Intermediate 2-Hand Reel Intermediate 3-Hand Reel 8-Hand Jig Ceili 8-Hand Reel Ceili 12-Hand Choreography Slow Treble Jig Slow Hornpipe The Blackbird Traditional Set Job of Journeywork Traditional Set Treble Jig Set Dance Hornpipe Set Dance	Advanced 2-Hand Reel Advanced 3-Hand Reel Championship Reel Championship Slip Jig Championship Treble Jig Championship Hornpipe Treble Reel Choreography King of the Fairies Traditional Set The Garden of Daisies Traditional Set Championship Treble Jig Set Dance Championship Hornpipe Set Dance Riverdance Choreography Lord of the Dance Choreography



CLASSES

It is a true honor to teach your dancers! We hope to play a small part in developing them into the best children on and off the dance floor through lessons that are challenging, encouraging and rewarding.

- **Classes** run in 12-week sessions: Fall (Sept, Oct, Nov), Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb), Spring (March, April, May) with an abbreviated Summer session (June, July).
- **Workshops** are 2- or 3-hour sessions that provide a more focused opportunity to learn new material, hone skills, and drill down into steps.
- **Intensive Summer Workshops** are multi-day sessions that feature a world-renowned instructor that we bring in to help teach and train our dancers. This invaluable experience is open to all.
- **Private Sessions** are 1-hour lessons with Katie to focus on perfecting material in advance of competitions.
- **Home practice** is encouraged for ALL dancers, regardless of level! Just 30 minutes of daily practice positions dancers to progress more quickly. Parents can help facilitate proper practice conditions – set your dancer up with a mirror and Irish dance music.
- **Additional resources:** Irish dance music can be accessed for free [here](#). Practice videos featuring FSID steps are our [YouTube channel here](#).

Class Etiquette: We have a lot of dancers coming in and out of one studio. Help classes run smoothly:

- Early is on time and on time is late! Send your dancer to class early and ready to dance - this means dance shoes double-knotted, water bottle filled, hair tied back and bathroom visits complete.
- Dancers should *only* bring their dance shoes and water bottles into classes. Bags, coats, etc. should be left in the hall.
- **Parents should refrain from entering the studio.** Our time in the studio is valuable and we want to minimize distractions. If you have a concern about your dancer, please email Katie prior to class and we will set up a time outside of class to discuss the best path forward.
- We continue to receive feedback about noise level in the hallway during our classes. Please try to promote calm when classes turn over and respect the other tenants.
- We prioritize a positive learning environment and love when dancers come excited, enthusiastic and ready to dance!



PERFORMANCES

Shows are incredible opportunities for dancers to develop stage presence, bond with fellow dancers, and share Irish culture with larger audiences. However, shows also require a high level of attention and discipline from the dancers, and a mutual understanding among parents about how to ensure success for the School and the contracted venue.

PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

Pre-Show

- ✓ Show opportunities are sent through our private school newsletter and registration is required.
- ✓ Detailed instructions are sent prior to the show.
- ✓ Line-up time takes place 30 to 60 minutes prior to stage time.
- ✓ High profile shows may require a separate rehearsal.
- ✓ Dance line-ups are developed prior to shows. If you are unable to make a show that you signed up for, please contact Katie directly ASAP.

Show Line-Up

- ✓ Dancers are required to be stage ready by the line-up time. This means fully dressed in costumes with shoes double-knotted and hair done.
- ✓ Please make sure your dancer uses the bathroom prior to line-up. 9 times out of 10 we do not have time to do this after the line-up is complete.
- ✓ If your dancer is late, or not stage-ready by the line-up time, they will not be added to the dances that have already been coordinated.
- ✓ If your dancer is not dressed appropriately, they will not be allowed to perform.
- ✓ Unless asked to support the line-up, parents are not allowed to wait in the line-up area.

Showtime

- ✓ Katie is the only point of contact with the venue.
- ✓ A parent may be asked to help run music or announce. This will be arranged prior to the show.
- ✓ We are training our young dancers to act professionally and remain focused on their dance line-ups at shows. Trust your dancers to do what they've been working hard on! Minimize your engagement with them so as to eliminate distractions.
- ✓ There is not always an area for parents to watch the show. If we are dancing in a public venue (e.g. restaurant or bar), please wait quietly in the back so the audience can enjoy the show. Do not block paying restaurant patrons by standing in front and taking pictures of your dancers. That is what recitals are for!

Post-Show

- ✓ We will lead all dancers back to the line-up area to change. Unless otherwise specified, plan on meeting our group at line-up to pick up your dancer.



COMPETITION

A *feis* is a local dance competition. Only students of teachers certified by An Coimisiun le Rinci Gaelacha are eligible to compete at sanctioned *feiseanna*. Dancers represent FSID and may only compete with Katie's permission. Additional support and guidance navigating feiseanna is available through our great network of FSID parents. More info about feis levels and FSID guidelines can be found [here](#).

COMPETITION GUIDELINES

Pre-Feis:

- ✓ Don't waste your (and our) time, money or energy! Let's work together to make sure your dancer is prepared. Attendance at class as well as monthly workshops is required, in addition to daily practice.
- ✓ Dancers should go into each feis with clear goals that has been discussed with Katie.
- ✓ Help facilitate proper practice for your dancer by providing a mirror, music and encouragement.
- ✓ Look the part! It is FSID policy that dancers wear a class costume through the Novice level as well as for team dances. A solo dress is earned and a well-deserved reward when upheld by the standards of our School. All solo costumes must be approved by Katie.

Feis Day:

- ✓ Arrive early and make sure your dancer warms up and stretches.
- ✓ Graciously accept both victory and defeat – no gloating over high placings or pouting over low placings.
- ✓ Refrain from critiquing the feis or judges and instead focus on encouraging your dancers to dance their best for them, not others.
- ✓ Irish dance is subjective – this means that each judge prioritizes attributes differently. The following list (in no particular order) details the areas that judges look at during a competition. Hopefully this will provide some insight into the judging.

Timing	Moving and covering the stage	Lively, springy steps	Stamina and fitness
Turnout	Sharp and tight moves	Straight knees	Sportsmanship
Crossing at the knees	Kicks waist-level or higher	Arching	Appropriate steps
Toe height	Pass clicks over the head	Perfect posture	Smile

Post-feis:

- ✓ Share all results with Katie asap.
- ✓ Track your dancer's progress – this makes goal-setting much clearer.
- ✓ Your dancers follow your lead! It takes an enormous amount of courage and confidence to get up on stage at a competition. The rewards are many, regardless of placements. Be positive and proud!
- ✓ That being said, debriefs and goal re-setting are encouraged. Please don't hesitate to reach out to Katie so we can continue to practice and improve!

COSTUME POLICY

CLASS COSTUMES: Class costumes ensure that dancers look cohesive and on brand when performing or competing under the FSID name. All dancers are eligible and encouraged to purchase a class costume and join the fun!

How it works: Dresses are hand-measured and available for purchase only through Prime Dress Designs. Orders require a minimum of five dresses per batch and take approximately two months to complete. When your dancer grows out of their current dress, you have the option to sell it back to the school and/or to a FSID resale group.

FSID Jumper Dress (price ranges from \$300-\$330)

Eligibility: Littles and Levels 1, 2, 3

Sleeveless dress with a long-sleeved white blouse worn underneath. Includes blouse and navy bloomers.

FSID Full Dress (price ranges from \$450-\$500)

Eligibility: Levels 4, 5

Full-sleeved, fully embroidered dress featuring a three-pleat box panel that fits snugly through the torso. Includes navy bloomers.

Ceili Costume (cuffs are \$50; entire outfit is about \$200)

Eligibility: Levels 2 and up who are enrolled in the Teams class

Ceili costumes consist of a metallic navy bodysuit and skirt, embroidered wrist cuffs (hand-measured and custom-made) and bow.

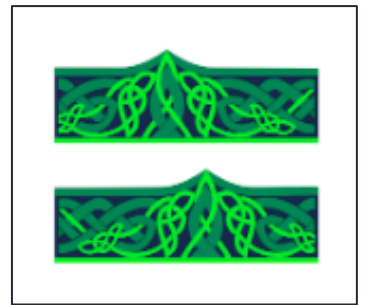
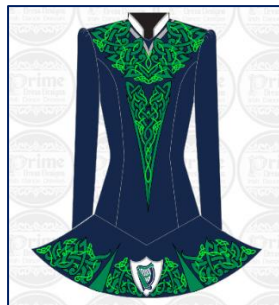
Hair: Bows are available for purchase through Katie. Hair tutorial is [here](#). No ponytails, braids or wigs.

Socks: Ultra low poodle socks (no sparkles) like these [here](#) should be worn with all class costumes. Purchase through Katie or at any of the local Irish shops.

FSID Boys Outfit (vest is \$175; entire outfit is about \$225)

Eligibility: All

Embroidered vest with white oxford [here](#), navy slacks [here](#) and navy socks.





FSID AGREEMENT

CONFLICTS: In the case of a negative interaction or disagreement between parents and/or dancers: take a day or two to refocus and refresh before bringing concerns to Katie. Often, our first reaction is not our final one and the dawn of a new day brings new perspective. If the issue is time sensitive and/or continues to be a source of stress, please escalate directly to Katie so we can work together on a resolution. Please note that we follow a strict 3-strike rule for minor violations and a 1-strike rule for a major violation. Our goal first and foremost is ensuring a safe, happy, healthy environment for all of our families.

FSID Dancers...

- ✓ Contribute to a peaceful and productive class setting.
- ✓ Set goals and work toward their progression as both solo and team dancers.
- ✓ Display respect for teachers, fellow dancers, competitors and themselves.

FSID Parents...

- ✓ Recognize that the kindness of our dancers and generous spirit of the FSID Family is what keeps us coming back.
- ✓ Celebrate the moments that are less visible than victory or perfection but fill our hearts with joy.
- ✓ Display respect for teachers, dancers, fellow parents and themselves.

Thank you for choosing to be part of our School!

Please sign and date this portion and return to Katie by May 1, 2024.

DANCER

- I have reviewed and understand the performance guidelines.
- I have reviewed and understand the competition guidelines.
- I have reviewed the FSID agreement and will uphold all as stated.

NAME(S) AND SIGNATURE(S)

PARENT

- I have reviewed and understand the performance guidelines.
- I have reviewed and understand the competition guidelines.
- I have reviewed the FSID agreement and will uphold all as stated.

NAME AND SIGNATURE