



Classes offered in:
Petaluma • Santa Rosa • Sonoma

STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR IRISH DANCE CLASSES

SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

Tuition

Tuition is due of the first dance class of the following months: February, April, August, October, December. There will be a one month fee for June classes. Summer Workshops/Classes in July will be an additional payment.

Contact Filelma for more information about tuition fees. Special discounts discounts for siblings enrolled in the school.

Please make checks payable to Keenan School. Payments received after the second class of the month will be assessed a \$15 late fee.

In order to retrain your spot in class for each coming fall, the registration fee (includes insurance) is due by June 30th.

Proper Attire for Dance Class

Proper dance attire provides ease of movement and better instruction/coaching for the student. It also puts the student in the right frame of mind to focus on his/her dancing.

Dancers should be dressed in the following manner:

Girls:

- Shorts
- School T-shirt (or other t-shirt)
- Shoes - All dancers need soft shoes (ghillies). Hard shoes will be added when the dancer is ready. * Shoes may be purchased from Irish Treasures.

Boys:

- Shorts
- School t-shirt (or other t-shirt)
- Shoes - jazz shoes in black, (can be found at Payless Shoe Source).
- When dancer advances they will be placed in reel shoes. Miss Fidelma will let you know.

CLASS CONDUCT

Arriving to Class

Please arrive to class on time, ready to be attentive and ready to dance.

Parents Dropping Children Off

Please remain in the waiting area with your child until they are called in to class. Many of our locations request that we be good tenants and remain quiet and non-disruptive in the common areas.

Picking Children Up

Please be prompt. Children get anxious when their parents are late. Please remain in the waiting area until the class is dismissed.

Dancing in Class

Students should come to class ready to be fully attentive to their dancing. Here are a few simple rules to help your child get the most out of each lesson:

- Be on time, dressed and in the proper shoes.
- Do not chew gum. It will throw off your rhythm and creates a choking hazard.
- Water is allowed in the classroom but not other beverages.
- Parents, please wait outside until the door is open and children are dismissed.
- Children will be excused to use the restroom, but please be sure to have them use the restroom before class begins.

Missed Classes

If you are ill or need to miss a class for another reason, please call and let us know (707) 542-1367).

Practice

Just like anything, practice helps you to get better. It's the same with Irish dancing. Practicing should be done in dance shoes and with music. Music can be purchased from Irish Treasures.

Recommendations are:

- A Feisin' Statement, Jim Burke
- A Collection of Irish Dance Music
- Pat King
- Let's Dance 2

PERFORMING

School Show: The Keenan School prepares a school show every year. This is a chance for all our students to show off what they have learned throughout the year. The show is usually held in June in Petaluma.

Parade: Every year our school participates in the St. Patrick's Day parade in San Francisco. Class time is spent in the weeks beforehand working on a special dance just for the parade.

Feisanna: The feis (pronounced "fesh") is the cornerstone of bringing together families from large geographic areas to showcase and enjoy Irish dance, music and culture. Irish dancing at a feis is competitive and rewarding for dancers as they improve their craft. The Keenan School participates in several feisanna (the plural of feis) throughout the year. When your child is ready to compete in a feis, you will be notified. Please see our "Feisanna Handbook" for more detailed information on feisanna.

The Keenan Irish Dancers: Select students who have succeeded in competition are chosen to "dance out" at various venues and be ambassadors for our school. This is a great honor to strive for!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - See our website (KeenanIrishDanceSchool.com) for current Feis schedule.

FEIS COMPETITIONS

It is an exciting time when a dancer becomes ready for her first feis. There are lots of question surrounding a feis! This overview will help make it a bit easier for you and help the day go smoothly and be a fun and positive experience for everyone.

Costumes:

A girl dancer's first costumer consists of:

- Keenan Red/White skirt & Top (Contact Kay Gilmore for new uniforms 707-938-3877)
- White poodle socks Purchase from Brigid McMannus Irish Treasures www.irishtreasures.com

For boys

- Black pants
- Dress shirt and tie (Consult with Miss Fidelma on colors)

As a dancer attends more competitions and performs in shows, she will want to consider moving into a traditional costumer and purchase the school dress. This is a red dress with traditional Celtic interlacing and the school's swan motif.

Hair

Hair should be worn tightly and neatly curled. An alternative to curling hair is purchasing a wig. Miss Fidelma will let you know when your dancer is ready for an Irish Dance Wig. Wigs can be purchased from: Young-blood Haircutters (IrishWigs.com) Terry Kelley 602-253-8121

Here are a few key things to know about a feis:

1. Dancers need to be ready to perform 1 hour before their scheduled time, with shoes and uniform on.
2. Dance Cards: You will need to check in at the feis when you arrive and receive your competition number. (Make sure you get there in plenty of time!) The card has your registration number and tells the feis committee who you are. All of your scores for dancing are linked to that number. On the back of the card are listed your dances you will be competing in and what stage they are on. This is your personal guide for the feis. Pin the dance card to the front of your costume, or purchase a plastic number holder from one of the vendors at the feis. Slide the card into the plastic sleeve and tie the ribbon around your waist.
3. Warm up by doing toe raises, stretching, and going through your dances in a quiet area.
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4. Listen for when your dance is called, then go back stage and check in. (Look for the person on your stage with a clipboard.)
5. Only competitors are allowed backstage. Each stage has 1 to 2 designated monitors and will keep track of the dancers.
6. Dancers and parents should set up where they will meet when the competition is finished.
7. Awards are in a separate room or designated area. Results will be listed by the Competition number. You need your dance card to collect any awards you may have recieved.

Each feis runs on its own schedule and has its own structure set by the hosting Feis Committee. Some general rules, however, remain constant.

1. **Registration:** All dancers will need to pre-register on line. Two companies, Feisworx.com and Feisin-fo.com handle registration for the competitions we attend.
2. **Fees:** When registering, you will be charged a fee for the dances, and another fee for entry. The registration site will guide you. Be aware of registration deadlines, as often there is a late charge for late registration.
3. **No videotaping:** As strange as this sounds, there is absolutely no videotaping at a feis. This is a Commission rule. You may take pictures and video of your dancer off the stage.
4. **Be quiet during the dancing.** The noise in the hall or ballroom can build up and get pretty loud, making it hard for the dancers to hear their music.

See our complete Feis Handbook for more detailed instruction on how to prepare for and have a positive Feis experience.

CONTACTING YOUR TEACHER

Right after class, or during a feis is not always the best time to talk with your teacher about your child's progress. Feel free to contact Fidelma by email or phone to schedule a time that is convenient.

Fidelma Keenan-Glaser

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www.keenanirishdanceschool.com