

# **Hagen School of Irish Dance** **Intro to Feis-ing Info Packet:**

**For Our New-ish Families Interested in Attending a Feis:**

## **Hagen School**

The Hagen School is directed by Jean Hagen Duffy, A.D.C.R.G. which means she is a certified teacher and adjudicator by An Chomhdháil na Muinteoiri le Rinci Gaelacha Teoranta in Ireland. HK belongs to the [USA Irish Dance Alliance](#) which offers our students the chance to compete, perform, and be assessed in their technical dance skills. There are opportunities for competitive and non-competitive students alike.

Here at the Hagen School, not only is Irish step dancing learned, friendship and team spirit is stressed as well. Students are very supportive and respectful of one another. The dancers work hard and are challenged to do their best not only by their instructors, but also by their classmates. All of us at the H-K School are dedicated to preserving and expanding the beautiful art form and wonderful tradition of Irish dance.

## **What is a Feis? (pronounced “fesh”)**

A feis is an Irish Dance Competition. It is loud, crowded, exciting, exasperating, exhilarating, fun, and tiring. The word "Feis" comes from a Gaelic word meaning "festival".

Throughout the year, there will be several opportunities for your dancer to participate in a feis. The Hagen School is very proud to offer a local feis in October each year.

Each Feis provides an opportunity for your dancer to compete against others in the same age group and level. For your dancer, this is a fun and exciting occasion. For a “feis parent”, the experience can be very overwhelming! Following is some information to help make the event a little less stressful!

## **What are the competition levels at a Feis?**

- Pre-Bun / Pre-Cup (our very youngest dancers)
- Bun Grad A (equivalent to Beginner)
- Bun Grad B (equivalent to Advanced Beginner)
- Bun Grad C (equivalent to Novice/Prizewinner)
- Pre-Open Champs (equivalent to advanced Prizewinner & Preliminary)
- Open Champs

## **How does a dancer move up through the competition levels?**

In An Chomhdháil, dancers move up a level in a specific dance as soon as a first place is achieved in that dance. ***For the win to count, there must be 10 dancers in the competition, or the judge may indicate an advancement if there are not 10 entered.***

It is possible (& likely!) that competitors will have dances in various levels at any given time. For instance if your dancer is dancing the Reel and Light Jig in Bun Grad A, but places first in a competition with more than ten dancers in the Reel, for the next Feis they will dance in Bun Grad B for the Reel and stay in Bun Grad A for Light Jig.

There are times when even if there are less than 10 competitors a judge can decide that the child danced well enough to move up. In this case Ms. Jean or your child's instructor will let you know once they have received copies of the judges' results.

## **Dancer's Feis Age**

**Your dancer's age level for the year is whatever age they are on January 1 of each year.** If your dancer is 7 years old on January 1st, they will dance in the Under 8 category for the entire year, or January 1st through December 31st (even after their birthday passes).

Sometimes, due to the number of registrations, age groups will be combined at a feis. For example, instead of U6, U7, U8, U9, & U10, the only available categories for registration will be U6, U8, & U10. Your child may be in U9 but will dance in the U10 at that particular feis.

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## **So you are interested in attending a Feis, now what?**

### **First Feis:**

Whether your child has just begun dancing at The Hagen School or it has been a few years now, we highly recommend our dancers try their very first feis competition at the Hagen Feis. Our feiseanna are held locally and they help our younger dancers (and their parents!) get acclimated to the feis format and environment.

### **Signing Up:**

**The first step is speaking with your child's instructor or Ms. Pat Kelly or Ms. Jean Duffy.** They can help you figure out the events that your child is ready for. Tip: Write down whatever events they tell you to sign up for and keep that paper somewhere so that you will have the information for the next feis. When your child is ready for Bun Grad A and beyond, check back in periodically with your child's teacher as your child will learn more and more dances until they are ready

to dance them all (Reel, Light Jig, Slip Jig, Hop Jig, Treble Jlg, Horn Pipe, Traditional Set(aka St.Patrick's Day!)).

Once you speak with your child's instructor about signing up for a feis, you will head to [Welcome to FeisWeb!](http://feisweb.com) (feisweb.com) where you will need to set up an account and register your child before you can sign up for any feiseanna. **Please refer to the document [How to Create a FeisWeb Account](#) for detailed information.**

The feiseanna we participate in are Open Platform. Once you click on the appropriate feis you will follow the instructions and sign your child up for the appropriate events. This is where you will enter the events for your dancer. You will need their level, age group, and dance. (ie Bun Grad A, Under 8, Reel and Light Jig)

Registration for the feis usually begins 1-2 months before the date of the feis. There is a deadline for registration and you can be shut out. So be sure to check [feisweb.com](http://feisweb.com) OR [usairishdancealliance.com](http://usairishdancealliance.com) for a look at all the upcoming feiseanna for the entire year. HK will also send out emails with reminders for sign-ups - so make sure you are on the email listserv and that they aren't going to spam!

Once you have paid for the feis events on Paypal, you can go back into Feisweb a few days before the actual feis to print out your child's number card. This number card is important for the feis. It must be safety-pinned to the **center** of your child's dress/vest near the bottom. The judges use this number to identify your dancer. If you forget to print out the number card, the registration desk at the feis will usually have a number card printed out for you. The number is also what the presenters use when calling out awards.

If this is your first Hagen feis and you discover that you signed up for the wrong thing, don't worry! The Hagen Feis is hosted by our own parents and teachers, so it is easy to make a change at the registration desk upon arriving. If you need to add an additional event that you forgot, that's okay too.