



HANDBOOK

2024-2025

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Dance is for everyone. We are an inclusive and collaborative dance and creative movement community, where students of all ages, races, genders, religions, cultures, ethnicities, nationalities, sexual orientations, backgrounds, and abilities are welcomed, loved, and supported. Everyone involved with Prairie North Dance will work together to voice, share, create and celebrate the stories of our families and our communities through the modality of dance and creative movement. The environment of Prairie North Dance will always be safe, both mentally, emotionally, and physically, for everyone who walks in the doors. Every student will be met where they are at and supported through a variety of methods to achieve meaningful success through genuine support, camaraderie, and care from both the teachers and their classmates. Honest, effective, and timely communication between teachers and the students will be a hallmark of Prairie North Dance.

Lacey Blowers

Director/Owner, Prairie North Dance

Our Dance Curriculum

Prairie North Dance is a technique-based, skills-based, dance and creative movement program with its instructional foundation rooted in Safe Dance Practice and Brain-Compatible Dance Education. Our program is progressive and allows dancers to develop at their own pace while feeling challenged and empowered by their growth in their technical dance skill set. All dance classes at Prairie North Dance will have instructors who will:

1. Create a physically and psychologically safe and supportive environment.
2. Understand relevant anatomical principles and biomechanically sound alignment.
3. Implement effective physiological preparation and progression in dance technique and skill acquisition.
4. Minimise injury risk and understand injury management.
5. Tailor delivery of dance technique and movement instruction to the specific needs of the participants.

Currently, Prairie North Dance is offering Irish Dance classes, where students will learn a mixture of traditional, modern and performative Irish Dance. Irish Dance is very unique in the dancing world as it encompasses two complementary, yet vastly different shoe types/styles of dance: Light shoe (aka Soft Shoe) and Heavy shoe (aka Hard Shoe).

For Light Shoe/Soft Shoe, dancers wear ghillies (sometimes referred to as pumps or soft shoes) and learn a series of different styled patterned dances. There are four main Soft Shoe dances that students will learn: the Reel, Single Jig, Light Jig, and Slip Jig. The style of soft shoe is characterized by a lightness on the feet, incorporating many technical skills like high kicks, jumps, and turns, and is similar to ballet in look and feel.

For Heavy Shoe/Hard Shoe, dancers wear hard shoes (sometimes referred to as Jig Shoes), which, at first glance, look similar to a tap shoe, except instead of metal plating screwed into the bottom of the shoe, a Hard Shoe/ Jig Shoe has rounded down fibre glass tips on both the tip/front of the shoe and the heel. Heavy Shoe/Hard Shoe dances differ from soft shoe in that they are a powerful, percussive style of dance made up of intricate rhythms and explosive, athletic movements. It is often compared to tap dance, as it makes sound with the shoe's tip and heel and has much of the same technique as tap. There are four main Hard Shoe dances that students will learn: Treble Reel, Hornpipe, Heavy Jig, and a Traditional Set.

The technical elements involved in Irish Dance (both Soft Shoe and Hard Shoe) include: timing, rhythm, lift, volume, crossing, turn-out, toes, extension, posture, and stage presence.

Competitive Irish Dance

Prairie North Dance is a registered member of Cumann Rince Náisiúnta (CRN), based in Dublin, Ireland. With this membership, our students have the opportunity to compete in CRN's Open Platform Feile (competitions), which take place at the Regional, National, and World Open levels.

Cumann Rince Náisiúnta, CRN, was founded in 1982 and since its formation, has grown in strength and numbers and currently has a membership base in Ireland, the UK, across mainland Europe, USA, Canada and Australia.

As an organisation, CRN has a strong Code of Ethics and encourages fairness of competition for all dancers, teachers and members. CRN promotes an open platform for competition allowing dancers from all over the World to compete in a safe, fair, and friendly environment.

CRN is widely known as a traditional dance organisation and it has successfully maintained the integrity of traditional dances, while actively encouraging the development of new and innovative work. Great thought was put into considering the developmental levels of students and their capacity to execute work in solo dances.

Five (5) grades/levels of dance were established. In an ongoing effort to honour tradition and continually protect the developmental process of dancers a grading system is in operation in all 5 levels and grades. This system ensures that appropriate technique is being taught at each level.

The five (5) Solo Levels of CRN are: (1) Bunghrád, (2) Ullmhúchán, (3) Meanghrád, (4) Ardghrád, and (5) Craobhghrád. Solo competitions within the CRN are offered for all ages and abilities, including adult students. Team competitions include all traditional figure dances as well as modern choreography.

CRN takes great pride in that their organisation is open to new ideas, gives a voice to the young teachers and is always willing to listen to new ways of moving forward, whilst preserving the traditions of Irish dancing, music and culture.

Student Dance Levels

Prairie North Dance uses a levelled organizational system to help dancers progress through our Dance Curriculum. As dancers grow and achieve success and meet the general and specific learning outcomes of each level, they move to the next level.

Prairie North Dance Levels include:

- (1) **Beginner:** This level includes new students ages 5 or older, as well as existing students between the ages of 5-9 years of age. These students are able to compete at the "First Feis" and/or Bunghrad level at CRN sanctioned competitions.

- (2) **Novice:** This level includes new students over the age of 10, as well as existing students who have completed all of their Bunghrád level dances and are working on their beginner hard shoe dances. These students are able to compete at the Bunghrád and/or Ullmhúchán level at CRN sanctioned competitions.
- (3) **Advanced:** This level includes dancers of all ages who have completed all of their Ullmhúchán level dances in both Soft and Hard Shoe and are currently working on their Meanghrád dances. These students are able to compete at the Ullmhúchán and/or the Meanghrád level at CRN sanctioned competitions.
- (4) **Championship:** This level includes all Advanced level dancers of any age who have won their way out of ALL Meanghrád dances and are now working on specific custom Prairie North Dance Solo and Teams Choreography. These students are competing at the Ardghrád and/or Craobhghrád Championship levels at CRN sanctioned competitions at the national and international level.
- (5) **Adult:** This level includes all new or existing students who are over the age of 18 who are wanting to dance casually OR who are wanting to compete in their age and levelled category at CRN sanctioned competitions.

When Can I Enroll?

Enrollment occurs three times a year: In August/September, December/January, and March, lining up with the start of the Fall, Winter and Spring Sessions. Student's can choose to enroll and attend both the Fall and Winter Sessions (for a full year of dance instruction) or opt to choose only 1 session



per year (either the Fall or the Winter). The spring session registration in March is only open to current dancers who have attended **both** the Fall and Winter sessions of that Dance Season and are wanting to compete at local dance competitions as well as CRN sanctioned Irish Dance competitions (called “Feile” or sometimes “Feisianna” in Irish).

Registration and enrolment for dance classes is all done through our Prairie North Dance Parent Portal through Dance Studio Pro (DSP). See and access everything you need in one convenient spot with DSP Parent Portal! From registration and class schedules, to competition, performance and costume information, its all there for you to easily manage from your own personal device.

Download our FREE app today via the link listed below to easily access your Prairie North Dance Parent Portal through DSP:

<https://dancestudio-pro.com/online/prairienorthdance>

This link is also listed on our website, under the “For Parents/Dancers” page.

Once parents/dancers have created their profile in the Prairie North Dance DSP Parent Portal, they will be able to sign up for auto pay and register and pay for classes for a dance session. All important documentation for each dance class will be available in the parent portal. Parents and dancers can also use communicate directly with their dance teacher via the in-app messaging function. Parents can also always contact Prairie North Dance via email (prairienorthdance@gmail.com) at any time.

Season At a Glance

This is Prairie North Dance’s second year of operation, and we are so excited to see familiar faces return for this new dance season, along with new faces from members of our Interlake

community! Currently, we are focusing on building a solid foundation in dance and creative movement through offering both traditional and competitive Irish Dance classes, but in future seasons we hope to create a dedicated performance division where we are able to connect and collaborate with other local dance schools/studios to put together shows to perform locally to tell the stories of all the people who share the land where we live.

Prairie North Dance offers a competitive dance program along side our recreational program as a registered member of Cumann Rince Náisiúnta (CRN), based in Dublin, Ireland. Those dancers who choose to compete with Prairie North Dance will have the opportunity to compete in CRN's Open Platform Feile (competitions), which take place at the Regional, National, and World Open levels throughout the year, in addition to any general local dance competitions, like the Rockwood Festival of the Arts.

Class Types and Schedule

Beginner Irish Dance – Ages 5-9

Sundays: 3:00-4:00 pm
(Fall & Winter Sessions)

Novice Irish Dance – Ages 7-10

Sundays: 4:00-5:00 pm
(Fall & Winter Sessions)

Boy’s Only Irish Dance – Ages 10 & Up

Sundays: 5:00- 6:00 pm
(Winter Session)

Novice Irish Dance – Ages 10-17

Sundays: 6:00-7:00 pm
(Winter Session)

Adult Irish Dance – Ages 18 and up

Fridays: 8:00-9:00 pm
(Fall & Winter Sessions)

Competitive Irish Dance – Beginner

Sundays: 3:00-4:00 pm
(Spring Session ONLY)

Competitive Irish Dance – Novice

Sundays: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
(Spring Session ONLY)

Competitive Irish Dance – Adult

Sundays: 5:00– 6:00 pm
(Spring Session ONLY)

Closed Dates

No classes on the following dates:

- Friday, October 11, 2024
- Sunday, October 13, 2024
- Friday, November 1, 2024
- Friday, January 24, 2025
- Sunday, February 26, 2025
- Friday, February 14, 2025
- Sunday, February 16, 2025
- Sunday, April 13, 2025
- Sunday, April 20, 2025
- Sunday, May 11, 2025

Policies & General Information

Absences

If a student is unable to attend class please notify the studio in advance via your parent portal on the Dance Studio Pro App or by email at prairienorthdance@gmail.com.

Behaviour

Anyone entering Prairie North Dance is expected to always demonstrate respectful behaviour. Please respect our space, instructors, students, and their families. Bullying and/or harassment will not be tolerated.

Observation

For all regularly scheduled dance classes, Parents will be required to bring their child(ren) into the dance studio waiting area 5 minutes before the start of class (The waiting area is located directly inside the backdoor to the studio – parents will see a seating area with a boot rack and bathroom). Parents are responsible for making sure their child(ren)s outdoor shoes are removed and placed on the boot rack and assist with any clothing changing/putting on of dance shoes IF their child is unable to do this themselves.

Parents can choose to stay in the waiting area for the duration of the class or leave once their child(ren) begin their class and return for pick-up at the end of class. For the parents who are choosing to stay, please keep noise to a minimum, so as not to distract the students or teachers during class time. Parents will be invited into the actual dance floor studio space to stay and watch for any special occasion dance classes/performances that are done in the future. This information will be communicated to parents via the parent portal on your Dance Studio Pro App or by email.

Emails & DSP Parent Portal

All important information will be communicated to students and parents via the DSP (Dance Studio Pro) Parent Portal, as well as by email. Students and parents are responsible for checking their DSP Parent Portal and emails regularly.

Class Attire & Footwear

Footwear

Irish Dance shoes (Soft Shoes or Hard Shoes), or Ballet Slippers are **not** required to start dance classes with Prairie North Dance. All new students are welcome to do their first two months of classes in bare feet or non-slip indoor runners (or if you already have dance shoes – you are welcome to wear any type of soft soled dance shoes like a ballet or jazz slipper). After the first two months of classes, if the dancer would like to obtain proper Irish dance footwear, please let us know and we will provide information on what to purchase and from where.

Attire

All students should wear socks with their shoes (unless you are going barefoot) for dancing, although the white poodle socks that are typical for Irish dancers are not required for regular classes (just for dance competitions or performances).

It's important to wear something that is comfortable and easy to move in! The clothes you choose shouldn't restrict movement, so jeans and ankle length skirts will not work well for dance class. Some students prefer to wear athletic clothes, some wear leotards, tutus and tights, and some wear t-shirts and shorts – whatever you prefer to move your body in!

All dancers with hair longer than their shoulders, please have your hair tied back.

Performance/Competition Costumes

All competitive dancers who will be performing at local festivals or shows and/or competing in CRN Feile (competitions) will need to purchase a Prairie North Dance costume through our custom online e-commerce store through Malley Sport. This costume will be used for all performances and competitions

until the dancer either grows out of it and needs to replace the costume with a bigger size, or the dancer is at a championship level in competitions and is at the stage where they will be purchasing their own custom designed solo dress (female)/ Vest (male) that is unique only to them.

As our school grows, we hope to be able to facilitate a sale every fall for dancers and their families to buy/sell/swap their dance costumes and shoes that no longer fit with other families in our dance school who are in the market for different sized costumes/shoes for their dancers.

For female competition dancers, they will need to purchase the **Malley Sport Shortsleeve Dress** (price is \$155). For male competition dancers, they will need to purchase the **Malley Sport Rugby Polo** (price is \$69) and provide their own black dress pants.

In addition, ALL CRN competition students who are competing at the Ullmhúchán level or higher will need to purchase the custom **Prairie North Dance Malley Sport Tracksuit jacket and matching Leggings or Skinny Pants** (price is \$199 for both) that must be worn to every competition or event where dancers are representing Prairie North Dance in a public setting. While these purchases are a requirement for our competition dancers, any dancer regardless of whether they will be performing or competing can purchase custom Malley Sport wear or costumes from the online e-commerce store.

Our Prairie North Dance custom Malley Sport e-commerce store will be open for orders TWO times throughout the 2024-2025 dance season, so parents will have two different opportunities to purchase the required costumes/tracksuit should they decide their dancers are wanting to compete in the 2025 Spring Session competitions.



The first opening of the e-commerce store for orders is from October 21 – November 3rd, 2024, with a delivery date of December 20th, 2024. The second opening will be sometime in February for a March 2025 delivery date (exact dates TBA by the end of December 2024).

When the store is open online, Parents will be notified via the DSP Parent Portal and email and provided with the link to the site. Parents can then order directly through the site, pay through the site and all **ORDERS ARE SENT TO PRAIRIE NORTH DANCE IN BULK** for distribution during regular class time once they have arrived. All orders made via the site are packed and labelled individually within the bulk shipment, to ensure everyone will receive their correct orders.

There are several garments available for purchase in online store in addition to the required costumes and tracksuits. It is completely up to each family if they would like to purchase additional Prairie North Dance garments when making their orders. There is a lookbook of available garments in your DSP Parent Portal app. The list of available garments for purchase includes: Shortsleeve Dress (costume for girls), Regular fit hoody, round neck tee, training shorts, Rugby polo (costume for boys), skinny pants (joggers), full zip tracksuit top, full length leggings, tank top, shorts, studio skort, gym sac bag, and Polar fleece jacket.

Size charts will be available in the DSP Parent Portal as well as on the site. Please note, the Malley Sportswear sizes are **not standard** so we advise to measure against the size guide and not to go by your "standard size" or age. The garments are slim fitting so if you are in between sizes, we recommend that you size up.

More information about costumes, and the custom Prairie North Dance wear will be directly communicated to you via email and your DSP Parent

Portal by the beginning of October 2024, before the opening of the e-commerce site on October 21, 2024.

Class Drinks

All students should bring a water bottle for dance class. Students may also bring juice boxes or Powerade/Gatorade, but please no pop.

Cell Phone Policy

All students who carry cell phones must put their phones on silent during class time, and store them with their other belongings (bag, coat, outdoor shoes, etc.) in the waiting area beside the dance floor. Phones will not be used during class time but can be checked on break times.

Class Recordings

Parents, guests and students are not allowed to take photos and/or videos during class time without prior Director approval.

Student Waiver and Media Release Form

Our student Waiver and Media Release form must be completed and signed by all students/parental guardians by the class of the season/session. This form is located in your DSP parent portal – you will be prompted to sign it when you register your child(ren) for their class(es). It can also be found on our website <https://prairienorthdance.ca>, on the "For Parents/Dancers" page, at the bottom under the heading "Important Forms for Dancers/Parents".

Missed Classes

There are no refunds for missed classes or make-up classes except where said class is cancelled by the studio. Refunds will be processed through the DSP parent portal in the form of initial payment (the credit card on file) and will be reflected on your



account page and in your Prairie North Dance invoice for the session.

Opening & Closing Time

The studio will be open 5 minutes prior to the start of class & close promptly after the last class of the evening. Please pick up your dancer on time after their class ends.

Financial Policies

Cost

All classes at Prairie North Dance are \$25 + GST per class. The total cost for each session is determined by the number of classes in that session. For the 2024-2025 Dance Season, below are the costs per session:

Fall 2024:

- All Beginner + Novice Classes: 11 classes total = total tuition cost of \$275 + GST
- All Adult Classes: 10 classes total = \$250 + GST

Winter 2025:

- All Beginner + Novice (including Boys Only) Classes: 8 classes total = \$200 + GST
- All Adult Classes: 9 classes total = \$225 + GST

Spring 2025:

- All competition classes (Beginner, Novice & Adult): 5 Classes total = \$125 + GST

Payments

Prairie North Dance accepts registration payments via the DSP Merchant Services Auto Pay, accessible through your DSP Parent Portal app. Accepted forms of payment through Auto Pay include debit and credit cards. Please speak to the director prior to the first class of the session

if you would like to pay in person for the session via cash, e-transfer, debit or credit.

There is a one-time \$20 registration fee per family, per year (the year includes the Fall, Winter and Spring sessions) that will be added to your session payment at your initial registration. Example, if the registration fee is paid in the fall session, it is not paid again when the student registers for the subsequent Winter or Spring Session.

Families with more than one dancer registered in classes in a given dance session will receive a 15% multi-student discount off tuition for that session.

Prairie North Dance offers a multi-class discount in all sessions of the dance season. If a dancer registers for 2 classes in a session, they will receive 10% off total tuition amount. If a dancer registers for 3 or more classes in a session, they will receive 15% off total tuition amount.

If the full session tuition payment is received before the start of the first class of the dance session (Fall, Winter, or Spring), the student will receive 10% off the total tuition amount for the session.

While sessions must be paid for in full upfront in order to register for a class in a specific session (fall, winter or spring), there is an option for parents to get on a monthly payment plan through the DSP Merchant Services Auto Pay in the DSP Parent Portal. If you would like to opt to pay for your session monthly instead of in full, please contact us directly at prairienorthdance@gmail.com to get this set up in your DSP Parent Portal. Please be aware, that if you are on a monthly payment plan, you are ineligible for the 10% full session payment discount (discount received when you pay for your dance session in full BEFORE the start of the first class of that dance session).

Session fees must be paid in full before the start of the first class of the session.



Refunds

Refunds will only be issued up until the fourth class of the applicable Session. The refund issued will be for the remaining classes that the student has not yet participated in, therefore if a student decides the class is not for them by the fourth class and the parent chooses to withdraw their child, the parent has only paid for the classes their child has attended and will be refunded the amount for the classes the child has not attended. Refunds will be via the same payment method used for initial session payment.