

Dance Exam Information

Joanne Banks and Kay Clarey are qualified members of the International Dance Teachers Association (IDTA) and, as such, are able to put children forward for dancing exams. Many children in the dancing school have taken up this opportunity and have successfully passed grade and performer exams in the various subjects available. This information sheet is to inform those of you who are new to the dancing school about this exam system.

Who can take dance exams?

All pupils, including adults, are eligible to take dance exams provided they are studying the subject they wish to take the exam in (for example, if you do not take ballet lessons you cannot take a ballet exam).

Do I have to take a dance exam?

No, absolutely not. Unlike many other dancing schools the taking of dance exams is optional and up to the individual.

How will I know if I am ready?

By filling in and returning the form we give you at your first class with us you are indicating that you would like to be considered for exams. When we feel you are ready to take an exam we will let you know. Although we cannot guarantee you will pass, we will only ever put forward children who we feel will be successful.

Are they expensive and what will I get if I pass?

Dance exams start from around £14 for a Rosette exam and increase with the standard you are working at. Performers/Professional exams are expensive but you would only take these after many years of dancing and with a real interest in taking your dancing further. Every pupil who takes an exam will receive a report form with their marks and a few comments about their performance. Each successful pupil receives a certificate, banner and rosette or small trophy/badge with their name engraved on it.

What is the exam board and what are the exams I would take?

The IDTA is a very well known and long established association with worldwide recognition. The IDTA Theatre Grade system is what we follow and exams are available in Tap, Ballet, Theatre Craft, Gym and Musical Theatre. Young children begin with a Rosette, Star Dance, Preparatory or Primary exam, around the age of 5, 6 or 7. Older pupils who have not gone through the system from a young age will be placed at the grade level most suitable for them. Grades run as follows: Rosette, Star Dance, Preparatory, Primary, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, Grade 4, Grade 5 and Grade 6. After Grade 6 exams then move to a professional level of performing or teaching. Obviously to reach this level takes many, many years of hard work.

What will I have to do and how and where does the exam take place?

Over the course of a term you would learn all the exercises and routines for the exam and we would fully prepare you for what to expect in the exam itself. You would have to practice at home and there could be a little theory to learn (parents can help with this!). The exams take place in our studio on a date requested by us. This is usually a weekend or a mid-week day at the end of term (i.e. the last school day before Xmas). Pupils are examined in small groups and are given a set time for the exam. An examiner from the IDTA comes out to our studio and assesses the pupils on the work they have been learning from the set grade syllabus. The pupils enter the exam room and work together although some routines/exercises are performed one by one.

How often will I take exams?

We normally have several exam sessions in a year, around the end of each term. Pupils normally take one or two subjects a year but this is very flexible depending on who is ready for what exam.

What if I have anything else to ask?

Then please feel free! Any of our Receptionists should be able to help you with any enquiries.