



**The Aspire Dancesport
Parent and Pupil
Handbook**

Dear Parents and Pupils,

Welcome to Aspire Dancesport. As you will already know Aspire offers classes in and around the Cambridge area, we work hard to provide the highest level of training in all dancesport disciplines; Freestyle and Street dance, Rock 'n' Roll, Modern Ballroom and Latin American.

Our aim is to offer the highest standard of dancesport training in a safe and encouraging environment, thereby helping every dancer to achieve their own personal potential. Within our class program for children and teenagers, all pupils are prepared and have the choice of taking part in examinations with the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing and UKA, both are government recognised awarding bodies. We also provide coaching for area and national competitions for all ages.

At Aspire Dancesport, we take pride in running exciting and safe classes, all teachers are DBS checked, qualified, first aid trained and insured. We are dedicated to providing the highest quality training to all our students; we regularly take continued professional development training including taking higher level teaching qualifications. In addition to this we attend a number of courses and lectures to ensure that our knowledge of dance is constantly developing so that we can pass this onto the pupils, enabling them to gain the most out of their dancing.

In this guide you will find all the information regarding yours or your child's dance class along with our terms and conditions, so hopefully this will be handy having everything in one place. Please take time to read this handbook and should you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

All parents and pupils over the age of 18 must complete a registration form and acknowledge that they have read the schools hand book and agree to our terms, conditions and policies.

Kind regards,

Rachel Glen
Principal of Aspire Dancesport



CONTACT DETAILS



We do not have set office hours, these will vary week to week, but should you need to contact us the best method is via email this way you can send it at a time that is convenient to you. We check emails regularly however we may not respond until 'office hours', we will however aim to respond within 2 days. Do note that on weekends and school holidays response time may be slightly slower. You can of course contact via text or telephone however response time is likely to be slower. You can also drop us a private message via our schools facebook page if this is more convenient.

Email Address: Rachel@AspireDancesport.co.uk

Telephone Number: 07999 483 208

Website: www.AspireDancesport.co.uk

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/aspiredancesport

Facebook parent and pupil closed group:
www.facebook.com/groups/10417975492589



USEFUL ADDRESSES



Visit our website for a map of each location

Mayfield Primary School: Warwick Road, Warwick Road, Cambridge, CB4 3HN

St Luke's Primary School: French's Road, Cambridge, CB4 3JZ

Westfield Primary School: Chalkstone Way, Haverhill, CB9 0LD

Gt Chishill Village Hall: Hall Lane, Gt Chishill, Nr Royston, SG8 8SG

Moulton Village Hall: Bridge Street, Moulton, Suffolk, CB8 8SP

Thurlow Village Hall: The Street, Gt Thurlow, Suffolk, CB9 7LA



ENROLLMENT



All pupils wishing to attend one of the children's group classes are welcome to 3 taster lessons at a reduced fee. This is open to both new and existing pupils when trialling a class that they have not participated in before. Please speak to us to find out more about this taster period and the fee.

Once pupils have completed their 3 taster lessons they will automatically enrol on to the class register. Should you decide that the class isn't suited, and you do not wish your child to enrol, then you must inform us within 5 days of the last taster lesson.

- Must be booked in advanced
- The taster lessons can only be used by 1 pupil in one class e.g. can not be split between siblings or used across different classes.
- The invoice must be settled on the 1st lesson.
- They must be used on 3 consecutive weeks.
- Taster lessons fees are non refundable or transferable, missed weeks for any reason cannot be transferred.

All Pupils remain enrolled on the school register for their chosen classes until 1 month paid notice is given in writing by the parent or guardian.



CLASS FEES



Class fees are issued on a monthly basis, this is based on the number of dance weeks in that month, this does not include school holidays.

Invoices are usually sent by the 15th of each month. If you haven't received yours by this date or you think there is an error, please contact us immediately so we can resolve it. Please do not wait until fees are due.

All group class fees are due by the 1st of each month. If paying by cash do ensure any fees reach us by your child's last class of the month. If paying by BACS do ensure this reaches us no later than the 1st of the month by checking with your bank how long payments take to clear, otherwise you may be charged the late admin fee.

Late payments: Failure to make payment by 1st will result in a £5 late fee being charged. If fees are still not settled by the 3rd week of that month your child will be asked to sit out and watch the class. Repeat offenders will not be offered a place for future terms.

If you are having difficulties making payments, please speak to us and we may be able to arrange a short-term payment plan.

Class fees are non-refundable or transferable.

All non-attended classes must be paid for regardless for the reason of absence, e.g. holidays, sickness, school trips, traffic etc.

Should a class be cancelled by Aspire Dancesport we will try to arrange a replacement class however failing this the fee from the cancelled lesson will be carried over to the next class invoice.



ATTENDANCE



For pupils to achieve the most out of their training it is essential to attend lessons regularly, missing lessons on a regular basis can mean that pupils fall behind.

During exam session it is essential that pupils attend lessons regularly to ensure that they are sufficiently prepared for their examination. Missed lessons may mean we have to postpone the pupil's examination to the next session.

If you or your child is unable to make a class due to other commitments or illness it is most helpful if you can send a quick email or text to the class teacher, so they are aware of the pupil absence as it may affect the class plan.



CANCELLING ENROLLMENT



Should you wish to end your child's enrolment at group classes either by withdrawing them from Aspire Dancesport or just in one particular class, a month's paid notice is required, this will be invoiced accordingly.

Although speaking to us directly is appreciated, formal notice must be given in writing.



UNIFORM AT CHILDREN'S CLASSES



At Aspire Dancesport we do have a uniform that is compulsory for all pupils attending a group class. Dance is a discipline and important that pupils come to class feeling like a dancer which in turn allows them to produce the best work possible, it also ensures that all pupils are equal and are wearing suitable and safe attire.

Pupils are expected to wear the school uniform once they have attended classes for 4 weeks, until then something comfortable and easy to move in such as, leggings/shorts, and t-shirt. Depending on the style within the class do check with us as to whether a light shoe or bare feet are more appropriate.

All pupils should have their hair neatly tied up and off the face (short hair should be held off the face). Simple studs can be worn to class, other jewellery is not permitted

Disco Freestyle Class uniform for girls

- Any plain black leotard
- Plain black leggings or hot pants
- Black jazz shoes
- pupils can choose to dance in bare feet however jazz shoes will be required for exams.

Ballroom and latin Class uniform for girls

- Any plain black leotard
- A plain black latin skirt (not an opaque ballet skirt) please speak to me for advice
- Plain black leggings are optional
- For ballroom shoes please speak to us before purchasing so we can advise you

Disco Freestyle Class uniform for boys

- Aspire Dancesport logo t-shirt
- Plain black jazz trousers or plain black shorts
- Black jazz shoes
- pupils can choose to dance in bare feet however jazz shoes will be required for exams.

Ballroom and Latin Class uniform for boys

- Aspire Dancesport logo t-shirt
- Plain black jazz trouser or similar
- For ballroom shoes please speak to us before purchasing so we can advise you

Uniform can be purchased from the following website [ASD.MYDANCESTORE.CO.UK](https://www.asd.mydancestore.co.uk)
This has been customised specifically for Aspire Dancesport so all items are suitable for class wear. If there is a particular item/style that you are interested but can not see it on the site then please speak to us and we can check the catalogue.

It is not compulsory for you to purchase from the above site but it is here for your convenience. There are a range of other dance shops and online dance stores available.

If you would like to see our ballroom shoe guide please ask us to email you a copy. It is possible for me to order ballroom shoes at a whole sale price so please speak to me for details.

Aspire Dancesport Merchandise

Various logo items are available to purchase through the school, please speak to your child's class teacher for an order form. Boys class t-shirts are also purchased through the school.

It is not advisable to tumble dry hoodies and zipper and do be careful when ironing logo items of clothing.

Personalised items are non-refundable.



CHILD PROTECTION



It is the policy of Aspire Dancesport, wherever reasonably practical, to safeguard its members from physical, sexual and emotional harm while participating in Dance activities. We take all reasonable steps to ensure that through relevant procedures and training; children dance in a safe environment. To protect the well being of children in our care, we would ask you to be fully aware of the following points.

- Classes for children held by Aspire Dancesport take place in public buildings with general access and we strongly recommend that parents or guardians check with those responsible for these premises as to their own safety procedures.
- We respectfully request that parents or guardians be responsible for escorting young persons under the age of sixteen to and from the venues.
- If parents choose to allow their child under the age of 16 to travel to or from class independently they do so at their own discretion but parents should notify a member of staff in writing so we are aware that you are happy for your child to travel independently.
- Parents or guardians of children under the age of twelve should remain in the waiting areas while classes are in progress. It is under the discretion of the parent or guardian if they choose to leave the building during class time but staff should be made aware, and they must return before the end of class.
- Aspire Dancesport are not to be considered in 'loco parentis' outside the main hall of tuition.
- Parents and guardians should be aware that the styles of dance taught at Aspire Dancesport necessitate physical contact between teacher and pupil; if this is not acceptable, the teacher must be notified in writing.
- Where personal tuition is given, parents or guardians are advised to remain in the waiting areas throughout.



CODE OF PRACTICE



- All staff within the school are vetted and have been checked through the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)
- The staff of Aspire Dancesport does not discriminate and offers equal opportunities to all pupils.
- The staff hold qualifications relevant to the training they undertake with pupils and are covered by full Public Liability insurance.
- We ensure that halls used for tuition are safe to use and suitable for the teaching of dancing.



PROCEDURE FOR ILLNESS/ACCIDENTS



- In the event of illness of pupils under the age of sixteen, prescribed medicines will only be given where permission has been given by the parent/carer.
- In the event of an accident in class, first aid will be given and medical assistance sought in cases where it is reasonably deemed necessary.
- Parents or guardians of all pupils should make full contact details available in case of an emergency.
- Details of any accident will be noted in the accident book.



CLASS ETIQUETTE



To ensure the class operates to its best it is important that the following points are followed.

- Pupils should arrive a few minutes prior to the class start time so they are ready to begin on time.
- Parents please ensure your child has been to the toilet before class to avoid disruption.
- No chewing gum
- Pupils should be respectful of each other and the teacher
- Uniform should be smart and tidy
- Hair must be up and off the face.

Watching week: We regularly hold a watching week and we kindly ask that if you are coming in to watch please ensure you sit quietly and make sure you have turned your phone off.



ADULT DANCE COURSES



- Advanced booking is required.
- A £5 non-refundable deposit is required upon booking, this is deducted from the course fee. This must be settled a week prior to the start of the course.
- Courses/lessons are non-refundable or transferable.
- Should a course or a lesson be cancelled by Aspire Dancesport we will try to arrange a replacement lesson however if this is not possible we will either carry the fee across to the next course or issue a refund.

Some questions answered...

Do you need a partner?

If you are not coming with someone you can dance solo and then a teacher, student helper or other pupil can partner you.

What should you wear?

Something comfortable and easy to move in, avoid over tight clothing such as a pencil skirts, or overly long trousers/skirts etc as these are easily stood on.

Do you need dance shoes?

Not straight away, but it may be something you want to invest in once you have been coming for a while. Until then choose something you are comfortable wearing and that has a smoother sole like a formal shoe rather than a thicker sole such as a trainer. Ladies can wear heels if they wish however I would not recommend anything higher than 2.5 inches. If you do decide to purchase shoes, please speak to us first so we can advise you.



ONE TO ONE LESSONS



One to one lessons are a great way to further develop technique and style within your dancing, allowing you to have that individual attention that is difficult to achieve in a group class setting. Many pupils choose to have a weekly or alternate weekly one to one lesson alongside their regular group class to help progress their dancing further. This is especially helpful if they have approaching examinations or competitions. Some pupils opt for the occasional one to one lessons if they are finding they need a little more assistance in a particular area of their dancing or on the lead up to their medal test examination.

One to one lessons must be booked in advance (Subject to availability)

Lessons are available in 30 minutes £14.00, 45 minutes £21.00, 60 minute slots £28.00 (shorter slots are available for children under 6 years or those with special needs)

Locations of 1 to 1 lessons can vary – please take a look at our website for our current locations and days.

- Parents are welcome to sit in on their child's lesson, but this should be discussed with the teacher and child first as some children feel more comfortable without their parents watching. Parents should remember that they are invited into the lesson on a strictly viewing purpose only (whole family groups should not be invited in or young siblings as this will cause a distraction).
- Pupils should arrive 5 minutes prior to their lesson to ensure they are ready and have warmed up if necessary.
- Fees are payable on each lesson in cash or within 24 hours if paying by BACS
- Cancellation policy; should you need to cancel please contact the teacher directly no later than 10am the day before. After this time the full fee is payable.
- If your 1 to 1 lesson is at a school hall the cancellation policy is different. Should you need to cancel after the lessons have been booked, the hall hire fee must still be paid (speak to your teacher to find out what the fee is) if cancelling after 10am the day before the full is payable.
- Should you arrive late to the lesson you will only be allocated the remaining time however the full fee will be charged.



EXAMINATIONS



Within our group children's classes and one to one lessons, we like to actively encourage pupils to participate in regular examinations as we feel it helps give them a goal to work towards with their class work and offers them an amazing sense of achievement when they receive their examination certificate and award.

We offer two exam sessions with the ISTD each year. If we think you or your child is ready for either their first or next exam we will inform you via email. In addition to the above exam board we also offer ballroom and latin exams with the UKA, these session takes place once a year. If we think you or your child is ready for either their first or next exam we will inform you via email.

Pupils will only be given an exam letter if we feel they have the required ability to take either their first or next examination, we must prepare entries some time in advance therefore this is on the assumption that the pupil will continue to make the

predicted progress, if during this time we have concerns that your child is not going to make all the criteria we will inform you so we can discuss either additional training or waiting until a later date. It is our highest priority that pupils have a positive experience when participating in examinations.

1 to 1 lessons are available if a pupil requires some additional training or reassurance prior to the exam. If you are interested in booking 1 to 1 lessons then do get in touch, these lessons book up quickly so do speak to your teacher in plenty of time.

A bit about the exam

Usually the exam will consist of 1 or 2 dances depending on the examination they are taking; these will be routines we have covered in class that term. For all disco/street-based examinations the teacher or a senior pupil will dance in front of each pupil at the lower levels to eliminate any stress from the exam and allow the examiner to assess their dance ability not their memory. For Ballroom & latin examinations pupils will be partnered by one of the teachers.

The exam will only last a few minutes giving the external examiner the chance to assess each pupil. Some examinations pupils enter in pairs or solo depending on the time table.

The exam results usually arrive in approximately 1 month and medals and certificates sometime after, we try to arrange a presentation afternoon where possible, so do keep a check on our class notice boards and website for dates.

All pupils will be required to wear full Aspire Dancesport Uniform to the examination, or relevant competition wear. All pre bronze and above ballroom dancers (girls/ladies) require a long ballroom skirt and latin skirt (not necessary for U12s to have 2 skirts)

Pupils are expected to attend classes regularly up until the exam, too many missed lessons and pupils will be taken out of the exam. All pupils must attend the 2 weeks before the exams, if you are unable to please speak to me well in advance to arrange a 1 to 1 lesson.

A mock exam is arranged approximately a week prior to the exam. This allows pupils to have a run through of their dances just like they would in the actual exam, this helps eliminate any anxieties about the exam and allows the teacher to see any errors/improvements that need to be addressed at the next lesson.

Please note that we do not arrange the exam time table, all entries are given to the exam board and they arrange the time table. Therefore, please do not request a time. If you are only able to do am or pm please let me know as soon as exam letters come out and I will put in a request however this cannot be guaranteed. It is best to

leave the day free until you have your exam time as we can not be flexible with exam times.



COMPETITIONS



For those pupils who wish to push themselves further into dance we offer the chance to join our competition squad in disco freestyle and ballroom and latin. Competitions can give a great sense of pride and also helps teach the valuable skill of good sportsmanship. We have a fantastic competition squad with all parents and pupils encouraging and supporting each other, this all adds to a great atmosphere.

Disco Freestyle Competitions

- We attend ISTD competitions for disco freestyle and Rock n Roll.
- These events happen on a Sunday and we attend between 4 and 5 area events throughout the year, plus the grand finals event in Guildford.
- These events are all day events and run on Sundays.
- Pupils must take at least 1 ISTD exam every year to be eligible to compete.
- We offer a weekly competition class and we try to encourage all competition squad members to attend.
- If you are not able to attend the competition class at least one 1 to 1 lesson is required prior to every competition (this is the minimum), including a pairs lesson if the pupil has a partner and they do not attend the competition class.
- Additional lessons are required when learning new choreography.
- There are strict dress regulations both within the ISTD and our expectations as a school. Please speak to us to find out what you can wear for each event.
- If there are outstanding class/lesson fees pupils will not be offered tickets.

What dances will you be involved in?

- All pupils have the opportunity to participate in a set dance this is a routine that all pupils within an age group and grade learn, this does not change all year. Should the pupil reach a final and gain a qualifying place they will get the opportunity to compete at the grand finals event.
- All pupils have the chance to participate in a solo event. Each pupil will have their own routine but will perform at the same time as other dancers, dancing in an anti-clockwise direction around the floor.
- If there is a suitable partner, there is the chance to participate in a pairs routine and Rock n Roll (an additional exam is required to be eligible to compete in R'n'R) If you have a partner you should be suitably committed to the partnership for that competitive year.

Disco Freestyle Formation Team

The formation team is by invite only, if you are part of the competition squad but would like to register your interest do let us know and we will keep you in mind for when we have an opening or starting the new season.

- Pupils who choose to be apart of the team must be committed to rehearsals.
- Once committed to the team pupils should see through their commitment until the end of the season (last competition of the season is usually mid June).
- Team members are expected to attend all competitions.

Ballroom and latin competitions

- We attend both UKA and invitation competitions for ballroom and latin.
 - These events happen on a Sunday and we attend between 4 and 5 events throughout the year, including dancing in the Winter Gardens Blackpool.
 - These events are usually part days
 - Pupils must take at least 1 UKA exam every year to be eligible to compete.
 - At least two 1 to 1 lessons is required prior to every competition at a minimum.
 - Additional lessons may be required when learning new choreography.
 - There are strict dress regulations, particularly for under 12s.
 - If there are outstanding class/lesson fees pupils will not be offered tickets.
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- All pupils have the opportunity to participate in a ballroom dance, this is partnered by a teacher or senior pupil.
 - All pupils have the opportunity to participate in a latin dance, this is partnered by a teacher or senior pupil.

If you are interested in finding out more about competitions, please speak to us to obtain a full competition pack.



SOCIAL MEDIA AND PUBLICITY



At Aspire Dancesport we have a public Facebook page where we share news, events and achievements.

You can view and 'Like' our page by searching 'Aspire Dancesport' in the Facebook search bar. www.facebook.com/aspiredancesport

We may post photos of pupils from classes, competitions and events. Should we post with a caption/title we will only ever post their first name, never their full name.

Pictures may also be used for publicity material, such as local magazine adverts, posters, flyers, website and online ads.

For parents/pupils that are happy for us to use their child's photo on social media you will be able to select the tick box on our registration form. You can change your mind at any time by putting this in writing to us.

Any parent/pupil not happy for us to use photos we will hide their identity by disguising /blurring their face so they are unrecognisable.

We also have a parent and pupil page where by important information is placed regarding classes and approaching events. This is a private group and only open to parents and pupils, requests must be made and then accepted by admin. The group members are regularly checked for any pupils and parents no longer apart of Aspire Dancesport

You can request to be apart of this group here www.facebook.com/groups/1041797549258900

Do note we often use photos and videos as learning aids in class, this allows pupils to watch their dancing/performance back and evaluate, this is essential for pupils in furthering their dancing. These videos/pictures are not made public and are deleted once no longer needed. Please note this is not included in the permission form and should you not wish you/your child to be involved in this learning tool you must place this in writing.



ETIQUETTE & BEHAVIOUR



Staff at Aspire Dancesport follow strict guide lines to ensure professional behaviour at all times. Should you feel unhappy with any member of staff please raise this with us in writing, so we can look into the situation.

We expect all pupils and their families to treat everyone within Aspire Dancesport with respect and manners. Rudeness, poor behaviour or bullying will not be tolerated and will be dealt with appropriately.

Any pupils and their family/friends attending competitions must remember that they are representing Aspire Dancesport and should ensure that they are acting appropriately.



COMPLAINTS



Should for any reason you need to make a formal complaint you should do so in writing to Rachel@AspireDancesport.co.uk and we will respond in writing within 14 days.



PRIVACY POLICY



A copy of Aspire Dancesport's privacy policy can be viewed on our website. Please familiarise your self with its contents.