

WELCOME TO HIGHLAND

FRASER VALLEY HIGHLAND DANCING ASSOCIATION

NEW PARENT INFORMATION PACKAGE

The FVHDA is thrilled that you have chosen to join our association.

Welcome to the Fraser Valley Highland Dancing Association. The FVHDA really wants this to be a fun experience for you and your dancer. We appreciate that any first time can be a little stressful and anxiety causing and we want to help minimize that.

Your teacher is your most valuable resource and should be your first point of contact for any questions you may have.

This package provides information that relates specifically to what happens at FVHDA competitions and is intended to supplement the information obtained from your child's teacher.



Dances and Dance Categories

Your dancer will have been entered in either the **Primary** or the **Beginner** category depending on his or her age.

Primary dancers - 4 to 6 years

Beginner dancers - 7 years & older.

Your dancer does NOT have to dance all the dances in a competition. Your teacher will advise which dances to enter.

Registrations for the closed competitions are sent in at the beginning of the season. Prior to the competition, please advise the competition secretary if there are changes to the dances your child will compete.

Primary Dances

Pas de Basques

Pas de Basques and High Cuts

Fling

Sword



Beginner Dances

Fling

Sword

Lilt

Flora

Seann Triubhas

Strathspey & Highland Reel

Reel of Tulloch

Understanding the Platform Schedule

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The platform schedule outlines the order in which the **classes** will dance, and which **platform** they will be dancing on.

It gives start times for the whole competition but not for each dance, as this timing needs to be fluid and will vary on how many dancers and **sets** are in each class.

You will not be able to see from this schedule how many dancers there will be in each class, or the names of the dancers.

Classes and Sets:

A **class** is the group of dancers who are competing against each other.

The age of the class will vary from competition to competition depending on the number and ages of dancers entered.

In **Primary** there is usually either 1 class, consisting of all Primary Dancers, for smaller competitions, or 2 classes, being split into Primary 4 & 5 years, and Primary 6 years.

PLATFORMS



Sometimes, a "Platform Schedule" will be sent to you, via email, a few days prior to the competition.



*Line up area backstage.
Dancers are placed in number order low to high.*

In **Beginner** there can be one or more class. The age at which the dancers are split depends upon the number of entries and age of competitors. The more entries a competition has the more classes there will be.

A **set** of dancers is the number of dancers dancing on stage and being judged at a time. This depends on the dance, and the number of dancers in each class.

There will be no more than four dancers in any set, and no less than two.

FVHDA likes to put three out for most dances unless they are premier.

It's not suppose to happen, but sometimes only one dancer is on stage. For example this can happen if the other dancer decides at the last minute not to go out.

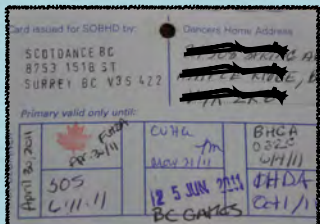


Young Beginner dancers with two Novice dancers filling in.

Dancers waiting to begin dancing.



Dance cards and stamping out:



CATEGORIES

Primary card: Dancers 6 years and younger. Primary dancers do not have their cards stamped.

Beginner card: Dancers 7 years and older. A dancer moves up to Novice when he or she has either 6 Beginner stamps or six months from the date of the first beginner stamp. (which ever is the later)

Novice card: A dancer moves up to Intermediate when he or she has either 6 Novice stamps or six months from the date of the first Novice stamp. (which ever is the later)

Note: A Beginner dancer may elect to compete in a more advanced category at any time but thereafter must continue in this new category .

Intermediate: Your dancer will be issued his or her Intermediate card following his or her first Intermediate competition. A dancer has an Intermediate card for one year.

Premier: (White card.) This is the final dance category. A dancer will remain in Premier for the rest of his or her dance career.



SCOTDANCE CARD:

All dancers must register with Scotdance BC in order to compete. The dancers will show their dance card at the competition to pick up their numbers.

GETTING YOUR CARD STAMPED

If a Beginner dancer has earned a stamp his or her dance card will be stamped and dated. Beginner dancers will receive a stamp on the reverse of their card for a 1st, 2nd, or 3rd placing in any of the Highland Dances only (Fling, Sword, Seann Triubhas, Reels). Your teacher will explain the process in more detail.

AGGREGATE WINNER

For each class the overall winner will be given an aggregate award. The overall winner is determined using a points system. The dancer with the highest number of points in that class will win the award. Note there is no aggregate award for Primaries.

Aggregate Winner

Points given for dance places

1st place	88
2nd place	56
3rd place	38
4th place	25
5th place	16
6th place	10

Getting ready to go on stage: make sure that



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An announcement will be made in the auditorium/viewing area (usually more than once) when it is time for the dancers to line-up.

Once the competition has started you can refer to the platform schedule (which is also in the program) to see the order of the dances. FVHDA typically starts the competition with the Primary dancers. They stay backstage and dance all 4 of their dances in a row. The Beginner dancers typically start as soon as the Primary dancers are finished.

If you don't know which dance is which yet, there are signs to the side of the platform/stage naming the class and dance which you can use to match with the platform schedule.

WHERE TO WAIT FOR YOUR FIRST DANCE:

It is recommended that Primary dancers remain in the warm up/back stage area when ready to dance, and at the start time specified, as they will be called to line-up first. Beginner dancers may wish to wait in the auditorium/viewing area and watch these dances before they are called.

GETTING ON AND OFF STAGE:

Your child will be escorted in their set to the wings of the stage, then, once the previous set has been released by the judge, onto the stage/platform to dance. They will be escorted back to the line-up area after dancing

WHERE TO WAIT FOR YOU NEXT DANCE:

Primary dancers need to remain in the line-up area as their dances are continuous.

Beginner dancers will be released from this area until called for their next dance.

1. Dancers have used the bathroom.

2. Check costume and shoe laces. Line-up volunteers cannot make costume adjustments on children other than their own.

3. Double check which platform you dancer is on and ensure that you know where he or she needs to line up.

4. If the dances your child is dancing has changed since registration check that the line-up volunteer has the correct information.

LINE UP:

Line-up is the process by which volunteers place the dancers in the order they will dance and assist them onto the stage in their sets. If you are unsure you can always check with the line-up volunteer which dance is being lined up.

The volunteer will check with the numbers table just prior to start of competition to ensure all numbers have been collected.

NERVOUS DANCER?

You know your child best. Some children in their first competition are fine to be left in the line-up and have you leave to watch from front stage. Some children would like you to stay with them in line-up until they go through to go on stage.

It is the dancers' / parents' responsibility to get the dancer to the correct place at the correct time so, please make sure you are where you can hear the announcements.

Dancing and Awards



DANCING ON THE STAGE:

The dancers will be spaced evenly on the platform. However, they may not quite finish up where they started! New Primary and Beginner dancers also sometimes dance to the beat of the piper playing in their own head, not the piper playing on stage – the piper may play faster or slower than the tape they have been practicing to – this is one of the things they will learn as they compete. It is super cute and no doubt an ovation will follow, which is a wonderful self-esteem boost to the dancers.

PRIMARY AWARDS:

Each Primary class will be called on stage. All dancers will be given their participation ribbon. Each dancer's name will be called and the dancer will step forward to receive their ribbon. Once this is done the dancers who have placed will be called forward to be given their medals.

All primary dancers in the class are on stage during the presentation of the Primary Awards. This is done to ensure that no Primary dancer misses a call back.

Once all the ribbons and awards are presented the entire class will be asked to take a bow.

BEGINNER CALL BACKS AND AWARDS:

A “call back” is where the dancers who have won medals are “called back” to the stage for the presentation. There is no more dancing, but it is expected the dancers will still be in costume, so don't be in a big hurry to change after your dancers last dance. The dancer must take their ScotDance card on stage if they get a “call back”. These will be taken, checked, and returned after the awards.

DANCING THE REEL

Beginner dancers who dance first may have to fill in, after they have danced, for a reel (if it is being danced) and there are not enough full sets. The reel is always danced in sets of 4 dancers. If this happens their number is removed and they have to dance again. They are judged only on their first reel, but the dancers are expected to complete the dance correctly and to try their best.

ENTERING THE THEATRE

Parents entering the theatre area during the competition should always wait until the dancing on stage is finished, prior to entering the area and taking their seats so as not to potentially disrupt the dancers or piper.

Questions and answers....

JUDGES

How many judges are there?

There will be one judge per platform. The judges will change platforms after each dance is complete.

Why do the judges change platforms?

This ensures that each dancer is judged by more than one judge. Each judge, being an individual, will look for slightly different things and mark in a slightly different way.

How are the dancers judged?

Dancers are given dance points for each dance. The maximum score is 100 points. Your teacher can explain how the judge may have come to the decision, and what they may be looking for while judging. The judge's decisions are final.

PIPERS

How many pipers are there?

There are two pipers at our competitions. The pipers alternate between dances.

Do all pipers play the same tune?

No, some pipers play faster or slower than others. Some pipers play a different tune that what your dancer practices with in class. It is a good idea to practice to many different music selections.

CAN YOU TAKE PHOTOS?

Please feel free to take photos and video of your dancer. Please do not use flash photography for on stage photos as it can potentially put a dancer off. Please do not post video or photos of other dancers on the internet. Some dancers have a no photo request on file.

GETTING READY

What should we pack?

Pack your competition bag with all your costumes and your dance shoes.

Consider packing:

- A sewing kit and extra safety pins
- Shoe polish, spare shoelaces, and very fine sandpaper -for roughing the bottom of the shoes to avoid slipping.
- First Aid Kit
- Makeup bag including hairspray, bobby pins, spare hairnets
- A pair of overshoes such as "Cros" to protect the dancing shoes.

Is there a place to warm up the dancers?

FVHDA events are held at the Chief Sepass Theatre. There is warm up space where the line up area is. Your teacher will advise you on the warm-up requirements for your dancer.



Once you have your dance number it needs pinning on the lower right corner or the centre of your kilt.

You should have safety pins in your bag in case there are no pins provided. You **cannot** use kilt tacks to secure on your number.

DANCE NUMBERS

FVHDA does not mail out the dance numbers. There will be a table in the main lobby set up for you to pick up your dance number. Please remember to bring your ScotDance card. You must have your card to pick up your number.

FVHDA numbers are assigned from low to high. The highest numbers dance last.



Costume Questions

How many costumes are there?

The Primary dancers will only have one costume. They wear their kilt for all four of their dances.

The Beginner dancers will wear a kilt for their Highland dances and an aboyne for their National dances.

Where do the dancers change costumes?

There are both male and female change rooms for the dancers. Dancers must not change in public areas. All costumes must be stored in the change rooms provided. The cafeteria area must be kept clear of all garment bags and luggage.

How much time is given for costume changes?

If your Beginner dancer needs a costume change, meet them in the changing room immediately after their last dance.

FVHDA sets the platform schedule to allow time for a costume change but you need to change quickly. If it is obvious that a short break needs

DANCE COSTUMES



* *Highland Costume : A kiltie or kilt, a vest and blouse. Primary and Beginner can wear white socks with their kilt.*

National Costume: A white dress and plaid or an aboyne outfit - gathered tartan skirt with petal vest and plaid.

to be taken to allow dancers more time to make their costume change, the MC will let the judges know.

Can I leave things in the change rooms?

Do not worry about leaving costumes in the change room. Dancers are very respectful of other peoples' costumes, and the costumes are safe. However, if

you see people who are obviously not dancers in the change area please bring this to the attention of a member of the Executive. We do not recommend leaving purses, wallets, money or anything electronic in the change rooms, just in case.

ScotDance Canada Risk Management

ScotDance Canada has adopted a **Child and Youth Prevention Program** with the purpose of providing a safe and secure environment for children, youth, adults, members, volunteers and visitors. This initiative will impact the following areas for volunteers at our competitions:

Line up - If a dancer needs help with a costume or number there must be two line up marshals present. This is not always a reality, so we need to make sure that parents send dancers to the line up area ready to go on stage. Should a dancer not be ready, volunteers will be asked not to deal with it alone.

Change rooms - FVHDA provides both male and female change rooms. Where possible we will provide a family change room as well. Please be respectful of others and use the appropriate change room for all costume changes. Dancers in public areas need to be fully dressed.

Volunteering

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When you filled in your entry you also completed a Volunteer form. The competitions are run by parent volunteers. Three hours of volunteer time are required for each dancer registered with the FVHDA.

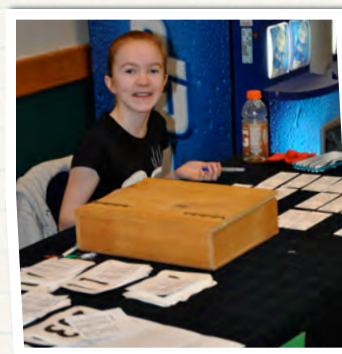
One worry many parents new to competition have is how they are going to do their volunteer duty, watch their child dance, or get them changed, all at the same time. There are always 2 volunteers on duty for any position at any time. One volunteer can man the station while the other changes or watches. Also, the volunteer coordinator tries very hard to pair parents new to competition with

more experienced parents so there is always someone to answer your questions and to show you the ropes.

You could choose to do your volunteer shift before (set up or early door for example) or after the time you dancer is competing (during the afternoon session).

You will be contacted the week leading up to the competition, by the Volunteer Coordinator to confirm your shift.

On arrival at the competition venue you need to find the volunteer sign in table where you will pick up your volunteer package.



Concession and food at the

Each competition has a volunteer staffed concession stand selling drinks and snacks. There is a good variety of choices - even fruit and vegetables! Hot Pizza is sometimes available at lunchtime. Everything is very reasonably priced.

You are more than welcome to bring your own drinks and snacks, but we require you to eat only in the concession area.

Donations of items to sell at the concession, be it home baking or store bought items are gratefully accepted. You don't even need to



ask, just bring them along and give to a concession volunteer.