

## **Dance Grades at Feis**

### ***Beginners / Novice***

These dancers are ones who are new to Feisanna. When you get a FIRST, SECOND, or THIRD then you move up to the next grade for that dance Only.

### ***Primary***

This is the first 'proper' grade and is quite difficult to achieve a medal place. You HAVE to get a FIRST place to move on to the next grade.

This means that at each Feis three move in to Primary (from Beginner) but only one moves out into Intermediate.

### ***Intermediate***

As with the Primary grade only one dancer moves up to the next grade. It is in this grade that most dancers get their first 'SOLO' dress, if they are lucky!.

### ***Open***

This is the top grade and some of the dancers have been in it for many years so it is a very high standard.

All Intermediate and Open dancers are eligible to dance in Championship competitions where these are held.

At the start of each New Year an Open Dancer can drop back down to the Intermediate Grade, if they wish. This means that the grade is of a very high standard indeed. Obviously they can still dance in the Open Grade as well, as most usually do.

A dancer can be different grades for different dances and because of this sometimes has to wait around for ages between their competitions.

## ***Competitions at the Feis***

Competitors are split into age-groups, usually with one for each year (e.g. U9, U10, U11 etc.). They are then split into levels based on their ability and success at previous Feiseanna. Dancers move through the levels by fulfilling certain criteria, such as winning

In solo competitions each dance is judged and awarded separately. The dancers perform two or three at a time. The judge will usually have a small bell to ring so the dancers know when to stop. They then bow to the judge, return to the back of the stage then wait for a second bell, when they bow to the judge and musician and walk off stage. Judges identify dancers by the number pinned to their costume. Results are either announced or posted, and those placed receive medals.

A Premier Competition is judged by only one adjudicator. Dancers usually do a "step down the line" or "step about" (where they line up on stage and each performs one step) of a jig or hornpipe and reel.

A Championship requires three judges, and the dancers perform a full reel or slip jig, and a full heavy jig or hornpipe. In larger competitions there may also be a recall, where the top dancers return to perform their Set dance.

The awards for these competitions are usually trophies, with the winner often receiving a perpetual cup, which they engrave with their name, and must return to the feis for the next years' competition.