

# The Conlan College



## Parent and Student Handbook 2020

This handbook is intended to give general information to parents and students of The Conlan College. Please refer to this document in the first instance and, if required, please email [info@conlancollege.com](mailto:info@conlancollege.com) for any clarification necessary.

Director: Susan Anderssen JP,BCom, FCA, GradDip CSP, AGIA, ACIS, MCommLaw, GAICD  
Level 1, 25 - 27 Bridge Street, NSW Pymble 2073 Australia ABN 80 601 640 126  
T +61 2 9144 6532 E [info@conlancollege.com](mailto:info@conlancollege.com) W [www.conlancollege.com](http://www.conlancollege.com)

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## **1/ Introduction**

It is our absolute pleasure to warmly welcome you into The Conlan College family. Our team is thrilled to see many familiar faces return to the studio and even more excited to see some new faces join our community. We have created this one-stop handbook to shed some light on how things will run throughout the year as well as answer a lot of queries you may have before the year begins. While we would love you to take the time to read this information carefully and keep your handbook in a safe place to refer to as you need, don't forget that our friendly office staff are always here to help and will happily answer any queries you may have. Nothing is too big or too small, we promise!

### **QUICK REFERENCE STUDIO INFORMATION**

<b>Address:</b>	<b>Level 1 25-27 Bridge Street Pymble NSW 2073</b>
<b>Phone Number:</b>	<b>+612 9144 6532</b>
<b>Email:</b>	<b>info@conlancollege.com</b>
<b>Website:</b>	<b>www.conlancollege.com</b>
<b>Executive Directors:</b>	<b>Susan Anderssen Paul Anderssen</b>
<b>Teachers:</b>	<b>Emma-Jane Morton Courtney McKeown Alfred Taahi Lorena Otes Kim Traynor Stephanie Hancox Mitchell Turnbull Karina Pobereznic Millie Garrick Jess Howley Nicola Humphries</b>
<b>Administration</b>	<b>Katherine Garrick</b>
<b>Café</b>	<b>Fiona Batten</b>
<b>Physiotherapist</b>	<b>Simon Walsh</b>

## **2/ Studio Ethos**

It's important to us at The Conlan College that all members of our team share our vision, our purpose and the philosophy that encompasses everything we do both in

and outside of our classes. This is a vision that is shared and demonstrated by the Directors, teachers and staff members at our studio and it is the driving force behind every interaction with our students and their families.

The Conlan College is a place where children of all ages, shapes and sizes learn to dance and perform. This is a studio where creativity is encouraged and we have a community of teachers, students and families who are passionate about striving for personal best. Our goal is to create a positive and happy experience for all our students. We strive to nurture and develop talent, celebrate the achievements of all students and inspire a love and appreciation of all styles of dance and the arts. We are committed to providing a safe and positive environment in which all students can feel comfortable and free to express themselves.

### **3/ Enrolment**

Before coming to classes, it's important that all parents – whether returning or new – fill out our online enrolment forms, which include our standard terms and conditions, along with our various releases. Children cannot be accepted into classes until and unless those enrolment steps are carried out.

Please ensure that you re-enrol early so that in the event of classes reaching capacity before the year starts, you will be guaranteed a place in the class/es of your choice. Some of our classes are already full in certain year groups and, as classes will never be overfilled, please make sure you re-enrol as soon as you can.

Private lessons requests cannot be guaranteed for night school students as we have a huge demand. Certainly, requests for certain days, times or teachers are unlikely to be available. If you wish for your child to have private lessons, the more options you have available for us, the more likely it is that we will be able to give your child a time. Very restrictive requests are likely to result in no private lesson being available.

Private lessons will all be assumed to be working on technique and exam work unless solo competition work is specifically approved by the Executive Director as per section 12 of this Handbook.

**Re-enrolment for 2020 will open on 28 October 2019 and can be done via our online system. All current families will receive their re-enrolment link on that date. Enrolments for new families will open from 18 November 2019 and enrolment links can be accessed by emailing us at [info@conlancollege.com](mailto:info@conlancollege.com). Places in all classes are limited and once capacity is reached, you will be placed on a waiting list.**

Our annual registration fee must be paid in full at the time of re-enrolment or on initial enrolment. Enrolments, including class allocations, will not be processed until that fee is paid. The fee is based on the level of the eldest child in the family as follows:

One class per week: \$17 per annum  
Two classes per week: \$27 per annum  
Three or more classes per week: \$37 per annum

This fee covers an additional accidental injury insurance policy (provides a level of cover for genuine accidents that occur in the studio with no one being held responsible). Details of this insurance are available from Reception. Make sure you get your payment in via internet bank transfer, debit/credit card (plus applicable fee), cash or cheque as your places will only be confirmed once payment is received.

Free trial classes are available to all, subject to availability in the class. Please contact reception if you would like to try a new class and we will happily fit you in for a trial (provided the class has not reached capacity).

#### **4/ Communication**

Communication at The Conlan College is considered imperative. It is our promise to respond to all enquiries as soon as possible and we will never leave a query unanswered. Our friendly reception staff can be contacted on (02) 9144 6532 between 3.00pm and 6.00pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and between 9am and 1pm on Saturdays.

For convenience, our primary means of communication is via email. You will receive important information via email so please ensure you have provided the studio with an up-to-date email address. We are, of course, happy to include multiple email addresses per family if you would like your correspondence sent to numerous recipients. Don't forget to add our email address [info@conlancollege.com](mailto:info@conlancollege.com) to your contacts so we don't end up in the dreaded Spam folder!

In the infrequent case of urgent information (for example, unexpected class cancellations or performance changes), we will send an SMS and/or telephone call to all families. So, for this reason, please make sure the mobile phone number you have provided to the studio is correct and up-to-date.

Facebook and Instagram are a great way for us to keep in touch with a large number of people at once, so we encourage all families to join our Conlan College Community Facebook group or to follow our Instagram page. Our Facebook page can be found at The Conlan College - Arts and Entertainment - School and will be monitored to ensure all content is appropriate and relevant. Please follow us on Instagram at the [the\\_conlan\\_college](https://www.instagram.com/the_conlan_college).

We are always happy to chat in more detail about communications you may receive

from the studio, so if you need any clarification please don't hesitate to call us on (02) 9144 6532 to chat with one of our helpful team members.

## 5/ Important Dates

We understand wholeheartedly how busy the lives and schedules of our dance families can get as the year rolls on, so we have tried to get all of our important dates organised and ready for you so you can plan other commitments. Next, we have listed some of our most important "Save the Dates" with more information (including times, costumes, requirements, etc.) to be communicated via email as we get closer to the events. If you know ahead of time that your family will be unable to attend these events due to planned holidays or existing commitments, please let reception know at your earliest convenience.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Who it involves</b>
<b>Monday 28/10/2019</b>	Re-enrolment opens for existing families	Register for your 2020 classes	Everyone
<b>Monday 18/11/2019</b>	Enrolment opens for new families	Register for your 2020 classes	Everyone
<b>Friday 6/12/2019</b>	End of Term 4 2019	Classes break for school holidays	Everyone
<b>Monday 9/12/2019</b>	Summer program begins	Three half days a week offered	Grade 3 2020 and upwards
<b>Monday 20/01/2020 - Friday 24/01/2020</b>	Introductory week	Half days offered	Compulsory for all full-time students and recommended for all students from Grade 3 and upwards
<b>Tuesday 28/01/2020</b>	Start of Term 1	Classes Begin and all term 1 payments due	Everyone
<b>Thursday 9/04/2020</b>	End of Term 1	Classes break for Easter and school holidays	Everyone

<b>Tuesday</b> <b>14/04/2020 –</b> <b>Friday</b> <b>24/04/2020</b> Please note – Easter Sunday is 12/4 and ANZAC day is Saturday 25/4	Intensive weeks	First week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive classes for vocational students</li> <li>• Eisteddfod Group rehearsals for Open Age groups</li> </ul> Second week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eisteddfod Group rehearsals for 10's, 12's, 14's</li> </ul>	All students sitting exams in the May/June session  All students participating in Eisteddfod Groups
<b>Monday</b> <b>27/04/2020</b>	Start of Term 2	Classes recommence and term 2 payments due	Everyone
<b>Sunday</b> <b>10/05/2020</b>	Expected date of IRBD Eisteddfod Groups	To be confirmed once final information is received from the IRBD organising committee	All students involved in Eisteddfod Groups
<b>Sunday</b> <b>24/05/2020</b>	Expected date of DanceLife Unite Groups	To be confirmed once final information is received from the organising committee	All students involved in Eisteddfod Groups
<b>May/June</b> <b>2020</b>	Exams	RAD exams for vocational students	All students sitting exams in the May/June session
<b>June 2020</b>	Expected date of Sydney Eisteddfod Groups	To be confirmed once final information is received from Sydney Eisteddfod	All students involved in Eisteddfod Groups
<b>Friday</b> <b>03/07/2020</b>	End of Term 2	Classes break for school holidays	Everyone
<b>Monday</b> <b>20/07/2020</b>	Start of Term 3	Classes recommence and term 3 payments due	Everyone

<b>Friday</b> <b>25/09/2020</b>	End of Term 3	Classes break for school holidays	Everyone
<b>Monday</b> <b>28/09/2020 -</b> <b>Friday</b> <b>9/10/2020</b>	Intensive weeks	First week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive classes for vocational students</li> </ul> Second week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive classes for graded students</li> </ul>	All students sitting exams in the October/November session
<b>Monday</b> <b>12/10/2020</b>	Start of Term 4	Classes recommence and term 4 payments due	Everyone
<b>Friday</b> <b>4/12/2020</b>	End of Term 4	Classes break for school holidays	Everyone

## 6/ Code of Conduct

To ensure the smooth, safe running of The Conlan College and an enjoyable experience for all, the following is our code of conduct. As always, we are open to feedback, so if any of the requirements outlined below are unclear or concerning, please give us a call to discuss further.

Families who do not comply with their fee or costume payment obligations will be charged our usual administration surcharge of 10%. Unless formal payment arrangements are entered into via filling in, signing and returning our Payment Plan form, external debt collection may occur when fees remain overdue and this will be at the expense of the parents as per our usual terms and conditions. Costume expenses are the responsibility of the parent, and costumes will not be issued to students with unpaid class fees.

No classes (including private lessons) or teachers are to be disturbed unless it is an emergency. Parents are not to approach teachers or students during class and if messages or food/drink/medication needs to be passed on to a student, it must be done through a staff member. We have provided a wonderful café for parents and friends to use so please sit back, relax and have a coffee while you're waiting.

We have gone out of our way to provide amazing schoolwork and hang out facilities for our students and we are very happy to have children wait in the studio in between classes, or indeed, before or after their class times. Siblings younger than 5 years old are not permitted into the teacher/student areas as we are unable to

provide appropriate supervision for such young children. Children are expected to behave appropriately at these times and not run around or be excessively noisy. All dishes and cutlery from the café must be returned by the child BEFORE their class starts. If any messes are left, children will be asked to leave class and to clean their area before they can return to class. Please ensure you collect your child at the latest by 10 minutes after the last class of the day as our teachers need to go home after their long days at work.

Any questions or complaints must go through Reception – teachers are highly professional and deserve to be paid for their professional time. As such, we do not permit parents and/or students to contact them via phone/text, in person, or via email/social networking with studio issues. This includes parents and students from our full-time programs. If you need to meet directly with a teacher or the Executive Director, an appointment must be made via Reception with information provided as to what the meeting is to cover so that the staff member can be properly prepared. Discussion topics not previously advised will not be covered. All appointments with teachers should be made during a student's private lesson time.

In the rare case of a parent or student showing disrespect or defamation to any parent, staff member or student, a meeting will be called immediately and a resolution sought. Physical, mental, emotional or cyberbullying by parents, staff or students will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the studio.

The Conlan College takes no responsibility for any stolen or misplaced property on the studio premises and we encourage our families to avoid bringing valuable items into the studio where possible. Please also remember to name ALL items of uniform for your child.

Only private lesson students are permitted to enter solo competitions and it must be with the permission of their teacher and choreographer. Parents are required to adhere to any decisions made by teachers regarding whether their child is able to compete in any given competition or not.

The Conlan College reserves the right to change teachers or timetabling when necessary at any time throughout the year.

Choreography, costuming, music licences and studio policies remain the intellectual property of The Conlan College and may not be reproduced or sold by any students, parents or staff without the written permission of the Executive Director. No eisteddfod solos are permitted to be performed by students or ex-students under the direction of any other school and/or teacher.

## 7/ Classes Available and Age Groups

### *Twinkle Toes – ages 3 and 4*

Twinkle Toes is an introduction to classical ballet using creative, imaginative role-playing and fun props. This class may involve pretending to be animals, playing instruments to learn rhythm, learning balancing, skipping and running and techniques using costumes and ribbons, or picking up flowers from the ground to develop their hand-eye coordination. This class is suitable for both boys and girls who are having so much fun that they don't even realise that they are learning the fundamentals of ballet technique along the way.

### *Royal Academy of Dance – Pre-Primary to Solo Seal*

RAD classes are recommended for students who will be aged 5 or up by 1 September in any given year. The Royal Academy of Dance is one of the largest and most influential dance educational and training organisations in the world with over 14,000 members in 83 countries. Its mission is to promote knowledge, understanding and practice of dance internationally and boasts HM Queen Elizabeth II as patron.

The Conlan College has chosen to educate our students using the RAD syllabus and progression as we believe it is the best possible basis and foundation for training in classical ballet and provides all students with appropriate scaffolding to support their learning. The vast majority of our students study the RAD syllabus and progress through the levels over their childhood and adolescence. The exams and other assessments provide our students with wonderful opportunities to set and achieve their goals. The feelings of pride and accomplishment our students feel after their exams are wonderful to witness.

The age requirements are set by the RAD and they have made it clear that exceptions will not be made to their age requirements. Please see the table below for information:

Pre-Primary	Aged 5 by 1 September
Primary	Aged 6 by 1 September
Grades 1-5	Aged 7 by 1 September
Intermediate Foundation	Aged 11 by 1 September
Intermediate	Aged 12 by 1 September
Advanced Foundation	Aged 13 by 1 September

Advanced 1	Aged 14 by 1 September
Advanced 2	Aged 15 by 1 September
Solo Seal	Aged 15 by 1 September

### ***Open Class - Intermediate Foundation and up***

Open Class: This is a traditional classical ballet class, however it consists of unseen work. Students need to engage their brains and concentrate on picking up new choreography very quickly and to perform the steps accurately and with strong technique. All vocational level students are strongly advised to attend an open class at least once a week as their exams will include significant marks allocated to unseen work.

### ***Repertoire - Intermediate Foundation and up***

Repertoire: The study of valuable repertoire benefits all students, whether they intend to pursue ballet as a career or if they wish to increase their enjoyment of the art form via a greater understanding of the ballets that are performed around the world.

### ***Contemporary - Grade 1 and up***

Introductory Contemporary: In this class students learn the basics of contemporary technique as well as an understanding of the nature and the freedom of contemporary dance. All pure contemporary dance (as opposed to what is often seen in the media) is based on classical technique and therefore these classes are offered as an add-on to existing classical classes. We do not encourage students to attend contemporary classes without having a minimum level of classical technique as we find they struggle to gain a good understanding of the requirements and master the exercises.

Level 1 Contemporary: This class builds on the technique gained from the Introductory Contemporary Class and extends students' knowledge and confidence of contemporary technique. Jumps, floor work and more advanced moves are taught and mastered over time so as to ensure all students progress in the safest possible manner. Dangerous dance moves such as aerials are not taught at The Conlan College.

Level 2 Contemporary: This class builds again on the technique learned in Level 1 Contemporary and a high level of technique is taught. More complex and challenging choreography is mastered over time and students are prepared for more advanced levels of contemporary dance. Level 2 Contemporary is only available to students who attend our ballet classes at least twice a week.

### *Australian Dance institute (ADi) Jazz Syllabus - all ages*

ADi is dedicated to the professional development of dance teaching and learning that provides Nationally recognised training from Certificate I through to Certificate IV in Dance. The Conlan College uses the ADi syllabus to provide the basics and foundation of the study of jazz, which follows on to professional qualifications including teacher training.

ADV - Levels 1-4: These classes are a combination of dance training and academic study and are age appropriate. The academic units are designed to complement dance training with engaging workbooks which enables students to learn the other aspects of dance including health and safety standards, nutrition, body science and dance history.

ADV - Prelude to Major 3: These classes follow on from Levels 1-4 and take students to a more advanced level of jazz training.

### *Strength and Conditioning - Grade 3 and up*

Junior: This class works with our younger students to condition their bodies ready for a higher level of dance training. The more advanced study of dance requires strength in the core, the feet and ankles, the back and many other areas of the body. In addition, advanced levels of flexibility are required in order to master more advanced techniques and this class helps to prepare our young dancers for this increased level of training. This class is suitable for students in Grades 3 to 5.

Senior: This class builds on the work done in the junior classes and continues to build strength, particularly in preparation for and the ongoing study of pointe work. This class is very important for all vocational students to attend as the RAD syllabus is harder than it used to be and significantly increased levels of strength and conditioning are required. This class is suitable for students from Intermediate Foundation and up.

### *Adult Ballet*

Adult Ballet: This once a week class is for all ages and abilities and focuses on strengthening and toning the muscles whilst getting the heart rate up. No experience is necessary and the class is run in a relaxed environment with no need for tights and leotards.

## *Eisteddfod Groups*

Eisteddfod Groups: Participation in The Conlan College eisteddfod groups is only available via invitation and requires a high level of commitment to the team. Our eisteddfod groups showcase our dancers and provide the opportunity for students who are “dance orientated” to participate in a team environment. Involvement in eisteddfod groups is a pre-requisite before solo eisteddfod dances will be given to our students. Our ethos of team involvement as a first priority is very strong and helps children to value a team over the individual – an important life lesson. Our eisteddfod groups participate at an elite level and are characterised by a sense of hard work, fun and achievement of a difficult goal. All students from Pre-primary and up will be observed in each of their regular classes and offers to join the Eisteddfod groups will be made in September each year based on the child’s commitment, focus, discipline, work ethic and attendance.

## **8/ Full Time Programme**

Whilst the vast majority of our students dance with us for the love of it, a small number of very talented and dedicated students may wish to pursue dance as their career. For those students, we offer a full-time dancers program.

Our full-time program takes one of two main forms:

1. Traditional full-time training – these students generally start with us in their Year 8 academic year, upon leaving their academic school. Students attend The College from around 8am until 4pm each day and spend their days working primarily on ballet and contemporary dance technique. They enrol in distance education to complete their academic studies and there are several options for this. The choice of distance education provider is up to the parents, however we are happy to provide as much information and insight as we can to assist with the decision. We do allow some time each week for students to complete their academic schooling, however the bulk of their work is done at home after ballet each day or on the weekends. Students need to be highly self-motivated to choose this path.

Students may enter the classical, contemporary or teacher training streams.

These students generally spend three to four years in our program and move on to pre-professional training when they are around 16 or 17 years old. Our goal is to prepare our students for life as a professional dancer or dance teacher and to make them employable.

Our program is very rigorous and students who do not have the will to succeed may find that the program is too demanding. It is a truly elite program and is not to be undertaken lightly.

Joining this program is strictly by audition or invitation only and is at the discretion of the Directors. We firmly believe that it is not in a child's best interests to leave their academic school unless we can genuinely see a pathway to their next step. We take our role in this very seriously and for this reason, we have a 100% placement rate for our full-time graduates. One look at our "Wall of Fame" will show you where our graduates have ended up and we are so very proud of each and every one of them.

2. Launched for the first time in 2018, we offer Nationally Recognised Training - Certificate IV in Dance (Elite Performance) CUA 40113 and Advanced Diploma in Dance (Elite Performance) CUA 60113. Our courses have been specifically developed with the whole dancer in mind and covers not only the practical components of dance but also covers areas such as nutrition, wellness, safe dance practice and anatomy.

In addition, we are also thrilled to offer a one year Certificate IV in Dance Teaching and Management CUA 40211 for any student who wishes to pursue a career in dance teaching. This is a great gap year option for night school students once they have completed year 12 as it allows them to earn qualified teacher wages whilst they complete any further studies at university.

These courses will suit school leavers who have either completed the HSC or who have finished year 10 and wish to study dance in a full-time vocational environment.

For suitably qualified students, we are also able to support them to complete their Certificate in Ballet Teaching Studies through the Royal Academy of Dance, allowing them to be an RAD Registered Teacher. This is a two year course.

These courses are headed by the amazing Mr Alfred Taahi, the Head of Vocational Training for The Conlan College.

Please contact the Executive Director if your child is interested in any of these courses.

## **9/ Safety**

With the safety of our students and their families a number one priority, The Conlan College is very serious about upholding Child Protection laws and policies within the studio as well as at public performances and in the online arena (website and social media).

As part of your registration, you will have read and signed a media waiver allowing us to proudly use images and video footage of your child for advertising and

promotional purposes. Should you have any concerns whatsoever with signing this declaration, please see our office staff who will happily assist you. If you would rather not have your child featured, it is fine not to sign the release.

All of our teachers and staff members have undergone official checks allowing them to work with children and all have the safety of each child as their number one priority. Parents are more than welcome to wait in our café area where they will be no more than a moment away from their child in case they are needed. A full first aid kit is available and many of our staff members are senior first aid trained.

Here at The Conlan College, we are well aware of the negative impact of inappropriate music and costume selection when it comes to performing dance routines and are wholeheartedly committed to ensuring children in all of our dance routines are not subjected to any inappropriate songs or costuming. We recognise that songs with sexist, explicit, violent, racist, homophobic or criminal content may influence our dancers and/or audience and will strive to avoid using such music. We will not costume any child in a way that projects sexuality.

The Conlan College takes no responsibility for any stolen or misplaced property on the studio premises and we encourage our families to avoid bringing valuable items into the studio where possible.

You will find, within our enrolment process, a medical release clause as part of our normal terms and conditions. Please read this carefully prior to the commencement of classes so you fully understand the rights and responsibilities of your family and our studio.

## **10/ Privacy**

When you enrol your child with The Conlan College, the information we may collect from you includes your name, address, telephone numbers, email addresses and medical information. It may also include details of the products and services we provide to you as well as the status of your enrolment. We only collect information directly from our students or their parents/ guardians primarily for the purpose of providing services and products to you and to administer and manage invoicing and debt collection.

We may occasionally use your information to let you know of additional classes on offer which we consider may be of interest to you unless you contact us and tell us not to do so.

We will never sell or pass on any of your information to third parties unless required by government authorities or in the event of debt recovery. Any information passed on will be done so with appropriate privacy and confidentiality protection.

Information is stored securely in paper or electronic form and is accessible only by authorised personnel.

If you would like to know what information we hold about you or wish to update the information, or if you wish to be removed from all further direct marketing communications, please contact our office on telephone (02) 9144 6532.

## **11/ Eisteddfod Groups**

At the Conlan College, we take pride in our eisteddfod groups, which start from the 10 and under age group, and move through to the Open Age groups. Groups may be in classical and/or contemporary styles of dance and we make decisions each year on what groups will be available for students to enter. Students from Pre-primary and upwards are eligible for our groups and they will be assessed in Term 3 for an invitation to the group for 2021.

The criteria the teachers will be looking for are primarily dedication, attendance, technical competence (age appropriate), performance quality and a will to work hard. Membership of the groups is a privilege that needs to be earned so all through terms 2 and 3, our teachers will be keeping an eye on the students and creating a list of invited students. We also hope that you continue to encourage those qualities in your dancer throughout the year.

For the children already participating in groups, these provide the most wonderful experiences and teach the children much about performing, and also many positive life lessons, such as teamwork, co-operation and a sense of putting your team first. This is particularly important for children who do not otherwise participate in team sports and/or activities. Our eisteddfod groups are definitely hard work and require a level of commitment required by any team that works well, but the rewards are huge.

It is important to note that students who are not in attendance on days where choreography is occurring will not be included in that part of the performance. This is purely because we do not have time to re-teach choreography, nor is it fair to the students who were in attendance on the day in question.

## **12/ Eisteddfod Solos**

For students who already participate in relevant eisteddfod groups, attend all required ballet classes each week, and demonstrate their dedication to their dance, we offer the opportunity to take on eisteddfod solos. These solos are considered a

reward for the hard work put in to their classes and group(s) and are a wonderful way for students to hone their technical and performance skills. Many of our students have had the most wonderful times of their lives participating in these competitions. Again, our aim is for personal best from each student as many of the eisteddfods are highly competitive and we demand good sportsmanship from all teachers, students and parents. Not all results will be what the student wants, and resilience and a determination to keep working hard are the qualities needed from these dedicated students.

In order to participate in eisteddfod solos, private lessons will be required - the number and duration to be determined on a case by case basis.

It needs to be clearly understood by parents that private lessons must be maintained for the entire time a student is competing in eisteddfod solos. If private lessons are not attended for any reason, your child may not participate in any competitions, regardless of any entry fees or costume expenses you may have outlaid. Further, contemporary or lyrical solos are not to be performed unless your child attends all available ballet classes for their level in addition to their contemporary class each week. The safety of your child is of utmost importance to us and solos are an added stress on their bodies. If your child does not or cannot attend their usual ballet classes and/or private lessons (even if they are sick) they are likely to lose the physical strength needed to perform to their best. In this event we require them to refrain from competition until their teacher advises them that they are physically cleared to return to competition.

If your child would like to participate in eisteddfod solos, please contact Susan Anderssen on (02) 9144 6532 to discuss what will be required.

### **13/ Exams and Class Awards**

As a studio which values the growth and commitment of our dancers from all ages, it's our pleasure to offer exams and class awards to students in both classical ballet and jazz as a part of our program. In 2020 our assessments will be held in May/June and October/November with the exact dates to be confirmed at a later date via formal notification. We encourage all students who attend the required classes each week to enter for an assessment as we feel they give the students a huge sense of accomplishment.

While exams and class awards are not compulsory, our program through the RAD is

the most highly recognised ballet syllabus worldwide. Similarly, the ADi syllabus is a top ranked jazz syllabus in Australia. If your child is considering continuing to dance as they grow older, we strongly recommend completing their assessments as suggested by our teachers.

On a side note, our vast experience shows that formal exams and class awards present a unique opportunity for the children to demonstrate their individual advancement and take pride in how hard they work. Our assessment students always find their experience to be uplifting, beneficial and rewarding.

As part of the exam and class award preparation, students need to attend a minimum of 2 classes per week from Primary to Grade 5, and 3 classes per week from Intermediate Foundation and upwards. Exam and class award students will also need to attend an intensive vacation/holiday workshop on the dates and times advised in our calendar in section 5.

The cost of assessments each year is set by the examining body and you will be advised of the cost prior to entering for an exam or class award. Payment is due no later than the date noted on your entry form by cash, cheque, credit card or direct bank transfer. If you have not paid by this date, your child will not be entered.

### **What happens in a ballet/tap/jazz exam or class award?**

The students will come to the studio about an hour and a half before their assessment begins.

Their hair will be done by our teachers and helpers, and uniforms with hair pieces will be provided by the studio at a small hire fee.

In groups of 2-4 students, they will enter the studio (with or without their teacher, depending on the type of assessment) and greet their examiner.

Students will learn their examiner's name prior to the exam so they can greet them by name. For example: "Good Morning Ms Hartley."

Over the course of between 30 minutes and an hour and a half (depending on the assessment taken), they will perform their entire syllabus for the examiner, both as a group and individually.

There is no theoretical/written exam involved, although for the jazz exams, their workbooks (which are completed prior to the examination) are reviewed by the examiner.

It usually takes several weeks for all assessment data to be compiled, but once the examining body has completed the marking process your child will be presented

with their assessment grade and their certificate.

Your child's results and certificate will be awarded in class once they are received by the studio.

#### **14/ Timetable**

Timetabling our classes is a huge task and we take all care to ensure that children are given classes at an age-appropriate time without long hours that may lead to fatigue or disrupt home and school life. Our detailed timetable is available in our enrolment pack.

Whilst we endeavour to schedule private lesson times when students request them, it does need to be understood that timetabling for the very large number of students who participate in private lessons is a huge task. We can never guarantee particular times and/or days. As such, we ask that you provide us only with times and days that you absolutely cannot do. Overly restrictive requests are likely to mean that a private lesson cannot be allocated to your child.

#### **15/ Uniform**

At The Conlan College we believe that wearing studio uniforms gives students a sense of belonging to our family as well as creating an identity for our studio in the greater community.

The study of dance, and classical ballet in particular, is a discipline that involves so much more than learning the actual steps. Ballet teaches children important life lessons such as a respect for their teachers, self-discipline, the benefits of working hard, how to deal with successes and disappointments in life, perseverance and the joys of accomplishing a difficult goal. Part of the rich history of ballet includes the wearing of a particular uniform and a need for lovely grooming. Following these rules of the classroom is a major part of learning these life lessons and sets children up well for their later lives...be they in ballet or elsewhere. Students who learn dance with these requirements are much more likely to grow into well-adjusted young adults who are respectful of themselves, their peers and their elders, and more than ready to take their chosen place in society, whatever that may be. Please refer to our uniform information for grooming requirements...in particular, the need for a ballet bun in every class from Primary and up.

**Please ensure all parts of your child's uniform are clearly labelled - individual shoes, socks, underpants...you'll be amazed at the amount of lost property we generate! All too often a parent will telephone us about a lost item and when we**

**ask if it is named, we find the answer is “no”. Please understand that we have absolutely no chance of returning lost items to you unless they are clearly named.**

All uniform items (except demi-pointe and pointe shoes) are available for sale from our 'Ballet Bling' shop located in the studio foyer for your convenience.

## **16/ Fee Structure**

Our price list is available in our enrolment pack.  
We offer the following options for fee payment:

**Term Fees** – you will receive your term invoice prior to the commencement of each term and have until the first class of that term to pay these fees in full. Payment options include cash, cheque, debit/credit card (plus applicable fee) or internet bank transfer.

Bank Transfers can be made into the following bank account:

Account Name:	The Conlan College
BSB:	083-088
Account Number:	74-200-3227

Overdue fees will accrue a surcharge of 10% of the outstanding amount if fees remain unpaid at the end of week 2 of classes, unless a specific payment plan is entered into by filling in, signing and returning a payment plan form. All payment plans are to be cleared no later than the end of the term in question.

**Please note:** All students are invoiced based on a term so your invoice will be the same each term unless you change classes. One term's notice **MUST** be received in order to withdraw from or change classes. Unfortunately, due to a very large number of parents causing significant lost administration time as a result of giving insufficient notice, we will again be enforcing this condition, without exception, in 2020.

Refunds will not be issued for missed classes, however make up classes can happily be arranged through Reception.

If you wish to withdraw from classes at The Conlan College it is a requirement that you notify the studio in writing, giving a full term's notice.

**Private Lessons** – these may be paid for at the beginning of the term, or at the time of the lesson, as long as payment is made on or before the lesson occurs. Payment options are the same as for term fees. Private lessons not paid for on or before the day of the lesson will automatically incur our 10% administration fee.

**Holiday Classes** – all holiday classes, whether privates, exam intensive sessions, workshops or ongoing ballet fitness sessions, must be paid for by the date on your

form. This is to allow our administrative staff a few days off as these can be very hard to come by.

## **17/ Attendance**

Your child's attendance in class is very important to their peers and our teaching staff. As a member of the team, it is a commitment for you to ensure your child attends their classes on time each week and attends all lessons planned for them. Not only do absences impact the learning of the students, it also impacts the social and confidence-building principles we work hard to foster in each age group.

If you know ahead of time that your child will be absent due to holidays/vacations, commitments or school trips, please let us know ahead of time so the class impact is minimal. If your child is too unwell to attend class, we ask that you inform our Reception as soon as you can so they can let the teachers know and preparations can be made to catch up on any missed work.

If, in the opinion of the teaching faculty, a student has attended too few classes to enable them to perform to the best of their ability, the taking of exams will not be permitted. Exams at The Conlan College are meant to be a positive and rewarding experience for all and this is simply not possible if a student is not confident with their work. If absences are due to genuine and unavoidable issues, it is possible to arrange make up private lessons through Reception to allow a student to catch up.

At The Conlan College, we present our concerts once every two years. 2020 is not a concert year but we look forward to bringing you another wonderful production in 2021!

## **18/ Social Media**

The Conlan College has a Social Media Policy that refers to all social networking sites, video/photo sharing sites, blogs, micro-blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, instant messaging and geo-spatial tagging (for example, Facebook check-ins). Please see below for our regulations regarding Social Media and feel free to contact our office staff if you have any questions.

-Please remember that your anonymity on Social Media is never guaranteed and to exercise particular caution when posts, images or videos identify children in your care.

-Remain mindful that your behaviour on Social Media remains in keeping with our code of conduct as outlined in section 6 of this handbook.

- Any comments or posts perceived to be obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful towards our staff, students or families are not acceptable in any way.

- Should you wish to engage on Social Media while identifying as a studio volunteer or employee, you may only do so with integrity and respect whilst adhering to our privacy and confidentiality policy.

- Any content revealing or referring to sensitive studio information is not allowed to be shared online.

- Intellectual property laws (for example, costume design and choreography) must be observed by all studio patrons when posting online.

- While affiliated with our studio, (for example, images of your child in The Conlan College uniform) we will not tolerate any posts that are racially, sexually, physically or religiously offensive.

- All matters pertaining directly to the studio - whether it be fees, scheduling, placements or performance opportunities - may not be communicated via Social Media. We have an open door policy and encourage all communication, complaints and feedback to be communicated to the Executive Director who will deal with them in a timely manner.

- We discourage parents, students and teachers from becoming 'friends' or 'followers' on Social Media, unless there is an existing relationship. We consider all studio members to be family and as such feel the obligation to respect and monitor personal boundaries.

- Photos or Videos taken from performances or rehearsals may NOT be posted online.

- You may not post photographs / videos that feature The Conlan College dancers other than your own online without the consent of their parent/guardian.

## **19/ Our Teachers / Faculty**

Finally, it's our pleasure to introduce our hand-picked faculty for 2020! Our enthusiastic, passionate and dedicated teachers are thrilled to be a part of your family's dance journey this year. We are truly looking forward to growing together to train this generation of skilled, confident, genuine and unique performers.

## **Susan Anderssen**

### **Executive Director**

Susan began dancing at the age of 3 with Gail Meade Performing Arts Centre in Perth, studying a combination of classical ballet, theatrical dance and tap. At 13 she was accepted into the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts part time program, studying ballet, contemporary and Spanish dance under the direction of Lucette Aldous.

Having suffered an injury in her late teens, Susan made a dramatic career change and trained as both a Chartered Accountant and in the legal profession. Her experience includes working in a broad range of industries in Australia and Internationally for over 25 years with the last 7 focused on the education industry.

Susan began teaching ballet again 16 years ago and took ownership of The Conlan College five years ago. Since then, The College has gone from strength to strength. Happily, this dual background in ballet and business makes her uniquely qualified to lead The Conlan College.

## **Emma-Jane Morton**

### **Senior Teacher**

Emma-Jane Morton started her training with Janece Graham and Tanya Pearson in Sydney and completed her Full-Time studies with Marie Walton-Mahon Dance Academy in Newcastle. After receiving her RAD Advanced with honours she then gained her Solo Seal in 1989, and her RAD Teachers Certificate in 2009.

Her professional career started with the London City Ballet, before moving to Germany in 1992 where she joined the Komische Oper Berlin, being promoted to Soloist after 3 years. In 1998 she then joined Anhaltisches Theatre as Principal Artist, before moving to the State Theatre in Hannover in 2004, during this time she worked with numerous European Choreographers of note including Nacho Duato, William Forsythe, Mauro Bigonzetti, Nils Christie and her last Artistic Director of 10 years Jörg Mannes. Guest appearances took her to International Galas in Cuba, Italy, Spain, Norway, Israel, Denmark and throughout Germany.

After 22 years of performing she retired in June 2012 and took up the position of Company Teacher and Productions Assistant in Hannover. Throughout this period, she also taught RAD and Open Classes, Workshops and Premiere Classes throughout the region of Hanover.

Emma-Jane returned to Australia at the beginning of 2016 and has taught at The Conlan College since then. She is married to the fabulous Manu and they have a son, Lias, who plays soccer!

## **Courtney McKeown**

### **Senior Teacher**

Courtney began her ballet training at the age of four under Simone Conlan at the Conlan College where she completed all her RAD examinations up to and including Advanced 2.

Courtney competed in a variety of Eisteddfods including the McDonalds Challenge where she had tremendous success. She was the winner of the Robert & Elizabeth Albert Junior Classical Ballet Scholarship in 2007. She won first place for Classical Ballet in 2007 & 2008 along with first place for Demi-character in 2005, 2006, 2007 & 2008. Courtney also competed in the Society of Dance Arts Ballet Scholarship (SODA) which she won in 2008 and was runner up in 2007.

She commenced training at the Australian Ballet School at the age of 11 in Level 1 as an Interstate Associate in 2005. Courtney received a four year full Scholarship to the Australian Ballet School and began her fulltime training in 2009 commencing in Level 5. Courtney received the Award for Excellence in Classical Ballet and Character Dance in 2010.

Courtney represented the Australian Ballet School at the Prix De Lausanne, Switzerland in 2011. She danced with the Australian Ballet Dancers Company in 2011 and 2012; Ai Gul Gaisina's Don Quixote where she performed Queen of the Dryads. While at the school, Courtney was chosen for the Student Exchange Program to the Canadian National Ballet School in Toronto where she spent a term in early 2012. In 2012 she was contracted to the Australian Ballet Company for the season of Swan Lake as a Swan.

Courtney completed Certificate III in Dance in 2009 and her Diploma in Dance in 2011. In 2012 she completed her Vocational Graduate Certificate in Classical Ballet. She completed her Certificate in Ballet Teaching Studies through the RAD in 2019 and is an RAD Registered Teacher.

Courtney married Michael Fitzgerald in November of 2019 and we welcome Michael to our Conlan family!

## **Alfred Taahi**

### **Head of Vocational Learning**

Alfred started his dance education in New Zealand at age 8, before moving to England to study at the Hammond school, Cheshire (under Alan Hooper), followed by the Royal Ballet School (under Ronald Emblem). At the age of 16 years, Alfred started his professional dance career at the Frankfurt Ballet Company, Germany.

In 1980 Alfred returned to New Zealand, joining Limbs Dance Company. In 1983, after being spotted by Graeme Murphy and Janet Vernon, he was invited to join Sydney Dance Company where he danced over forty works between 1983-1995, rising to Principal Dancer. As a guest dancer, Alfred has performed with Australian Dance Theatre, Sydney Dance Company, and The Seed.

As a choreographer, Alfred's commissioned works include Singapore Dance Theatre, Australian Dance Theatre, Australian Dancers Company, Sydney Dance Company, Opera Australia (Graeme Murphy collaboration), and Independent Artists Showcase. Alfred has taught company class for Sydney Dance Company, Bangarra, Australian Dance Theatre, Opera Australia Ballet and Australian Dancers Company.

After a long career as a dance professional, Alfred began his second career, as a dance teacher. He has instructed classes in Classical Ballet technique, Contemporary, Pas de Deux, Choreography and Repertoire, at schools throughout Sydney, Wollongong, and Newcastle, including The Conlan College from 2005-2010. He is a nationally accredited Assessor and Trainer, having taught the Diploma of Dance Performance and Certificate IV in Dance, with many of his former students now professional dancers throughout Europe, Asia, and USA.

Alfred began teaching our full-time vocational courses in 2018 and we are thrilled to have him as part of our team.

**Lorena Otes**  
**Senior Contemporary Teacher**

Lorena began her dance training with Janece Graham, Tanya Pearson and Hassan Sheta. She later headed overseas to complete her professional training at London Contemporary Dance School, gaining a BA (Hons) in Contemporary Dance and Choreography. She worked as a freelance performer and choreographer for ten years in the UK, before returning to Australia in 2003 to pursue a teaching career in contemporary dance and classical ballet.

Most recently, Lorena's teaching/choreography credits include having medallists and finalists in Youth America Grand Prix 2012, 2013, 2017 and 2018, Genee 2013, 2014 and 2018, Alana Haines, and Sydney Eisteddfod Junior and Senior Scholarships 2011-18. Many of her former students have gone on to have successful dance careers in companies, both at home and abroad.

Lorena has continued her ongoing passion for choreography. Recent professional credits include "Battlefield" for the 2011 season of Short, Sweet and Dance (she performed in, and choreographed this piece). She has also spent some time choreographing, performing and teaching competition Ballroom Dance across Australia.

Lorena has just given birth to her daughter, Bonnie, and we welcome her to our Conlan family! We look forward to Miss Lorena's return once her maternity leave finishes.

**Kim Traynor**  
**Senior Vaganova Classical and Character Teacher**

Kim trained at Scully-Borovansky, completing her RAD exams and attaining her RAD Solo Seal award. She continued her studies at The Royal Ballet School in London and then joined the Deutsche Opera Am Rhein in Dusseldorf.

Upon her return to Australia, she joined the Australian Ballet Company and toured extensively through China, the Middle East and Europe.

Together with Mr Kelvin Coe OBE and Miss Donna Traynor, Kim founded the NSW College of Dance, servicing the professional dance community with their junior school in Sydney. She has lectured at the Victorian College of the Arts in classical dance and currently freelances throughout Sydney, Newcastle, Victoria and New Zealand. She also adjudicates senior eisteddfods.

Kim has taught at The Conlan College for 16 years and is a valued member of our professional faculty, teaching the Russian Vaganova method.

**Stephanie Hancox**  
**Senior Classical Teacher**

Born in Sydney, Stephanie took her first ballet class at The Dance Class with Julie Wells. Over the following years Stephanie was also taught by Kim Traynor, Rita Dubovsky, and Shane Carroll. In 1999 Stephanie commenced full time training with Tanya Pearson at her Classical Coaching Academy.

In 2000, Stephanie won the City of Sydney McDonald Performing Arts Ballet Scholarship outright and later that year was awarded Honours in her RAD Advanced Examination, and her RAD Solo Seal

Award. After competing in the Prix de Lausanne ballet competition in Switzerland Stephanie was awarded a full scholarship to study under Professor Konstanze Vernon in Munich, Germany, and graduated with a Diploma in Classical Ballet and Dance from the University for Theatre and Music in Munich, Germany, in 2003.

Stephanie's performance career progressed from the Junior Company in Munich through to the main Company, eventually being promoted to soloist. She has worked personally with many of the world's leading choreographers, their assistants and specialists in the dance world.

Stephanie graduated with a Diploma of Dance and Ballet Pedagogy from the University for Theatre and Music, Munich, Germany in 2011 and has been teaching and coaching students and professionals since 2012, in Munich, Sydney and Monte Carlo.

Stephanie is also a fully certified GYROTONIC® and GYROKINESIS® Instructor, and has been instructing this exercise method since 2012 in Munich, London, Monte Carlo and since 2019 in Sydney.

Stephanie has a daughter, Ashley, and is happy sharing her knowledge and experience with the students at The Conlan College.

### **Mitchell Turnbull** **Senior RAD Teacher**

Mitchell began dancing at the tender age of 6 taking classes in Jazz, Tap, Ballet and Modern and trained at The Conlan College in our full-time program in 2008 and 2009.

After graduating from Newtown High School Of The Performing Arts in 2004, Mitchell embarked on an International/National Career in commercial dance; performing in Europe, South America and the USA; which included contracts with Royal Caribbean Cruises, appearing in CBS 'America's Next Top Model' alongside Tyra Banks, The Australian Club Entertainment Awards and MO Awards.

In 2009 Mitchell was awarded a full scholarship with Ajkun Ballet Theatre, in New York, as a company trainee. Mitchell was given the opportunity to perform as a featured artist, performing all over New York at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, New York City Centre and Riverfront Recapture in Hartford. This then led to a position with Connecticut Ballet Company, USA. Mitchell was contracted with MOD Dance Company in 2011 for their first national tour of Graeme Murphy's 'Suite Synergy' as a featured artist. In the same year, he took part in a secondment with The Australian Dance Theatre in Adelaide.

2020 will be Mitchell's third year of working for The Conlan College and he has been a wonderful addition to our team.

### **Karina Pobereznic** **Senior Classical Teacher**

Karina joined The Australian Ballet in 1992 upon completion of her training at The Australian Ballet School. During her time in the Company she was fortunate to work with Maina Gielgud AO who was Director of The Australian Ballet. Maina staged her highly acclaimed 'Giselle' and 'The Sleeping Beauty' for the company which Karina thoroughly enjoyed performing, both in Australia and

overseas. She also worked with many leading choreographers and guest teachers during that time, including Gelsey Kirkland and Jiri Kylian when he came to Australia to stage one of his famous ballets 'Forgotten Land'.

In 1996, Karina joined Birmingham Royal Ballet as a First Artist. She danced many leading roles with the Company and worked with leading choreographers and coaches from England, Europe and America. She toured with the Company, both nationally and internationally, during this time.

Karina retired in 2002, after the birth of her first child. She holds a Bachelor of Philosophy in "Applied Studies in Dance".

Karina returned to Australia in 2005 and has been part of The Conlan Family since that time.

## **Millie Garrick Ballet Teacher**

Millie began her training at The Conlan College at the age of 5 in our night school. At the age of 13 she commenced vocational training in our day school going on to perform the lead role of Alice in our production of "Down the Rabbit Hole" in her graduating year.

She has passed all of her RAD exams, including Advanced 2, with Distinction and has achieved many successes in Eisteddfods and competitions both locally and internationally. She was selected to be a part of The Australian Ballet Schools interstate training program from 2009-2013 and also attended the Royal Ballet Summer School in 2015.

In 2016, after graduating from The Conlan College, she was offered a place in the Bachelor program at Ballett Akademie Hochschule fur Music und Theatre in Munich, Germany. Whilst there she performed many classical and contemporary pieces at the National and Prinzregenten Theatres. She was also invited to perform at a gala performance in Krakow, Poland. Millie is delighted to return to Australia and her Conlan family as part of our faculty of amazing teachers. To compliment her teaching, she has now completed her Certificate IV in Fitness and she is a qualified nutrition coach.

2020 will be Millie's second year of teaching at The Conlan College and we are loving having her back with us.

## **Jess Howley Contemporary Teacher**

Dancing since the age of 3, Jessica is a classically trained dancer, with Distinctions in all completed Royal Academy of Dance examinations. Attending a selective performing arts school, and performing in numerous dance productions, Jessica has a strong performance background and a love for the stage.

Jessica started her full-time dance studies in 2015 and in 2016 completed her Certificate IV in Dance, and Diploma of Dance [Elite Performance] the following year; majoring in classical ballet, contemporary dance, jazz and choreography. In 2017, Jessica continued her full-time training at The Conlan College.

With a passion for teaching contemporary dance, Jessica is honoured to be a member of staff at The Conlan College.

**Nici Humphries**  
**Jazz Teacher**

Nicola began her dance training at age 9 and has trained in jazz, contemporary, lyrical, Latin and ballet. She has achieved her Certificates I-III in Dance through ADV Jazz examinations and then completed her Certificate IV in Dance Teaching and Management in 2018, also through ADV. Nicola has been student teaching since 2015 and commenced senior teaching in 2019. Nicola's passion for dance has continued to develop as a teacher, as she sees her students cultivate their own love for movement and performance. She is thrilled to be joining the faculty of The Conlan College in 2020, taking over responsibility for the Jazz program.

**AND NOT TO MENTION OUR FABULOUS ADMIN TEAM....**

**Paul Anderssen**  
**Executive Director - Finance**

Paul has over 25 years of experience in the accounting, banking and finance industries. He began his career with the world's largest accounting firm, qualifying as a chartered accountant in 1994. Since then, he has worked for two global banks in senior finance positions, eventually leaving State Street in the role of CFO Australia, in early 2016. He now dedicates his time to helping to make The Conlan College a brilliant place to be.

Paul's interests include golf and swimming, but he is also an A1 ballet dad, and is happy to answer any "dad" questions about having a child who dances! Paul has never danced (unless you count "Dad Dancing") but is quite simply, the best ballet Dad around!

**Katherine Garrick**  
**Administrative Assistant**

Katherine is a Conlan mum and has been since her daughter, Millie, was 5 years old. Having been a ballerina herself (taught by our very own Miss Traynor!), a ballet mum and part of the Conlan family for so long, there's not much Katherine doesn't know about ballet.

Please feel free to have a chat with Katherine if you have any questions at all.

**AND LAST BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY....**

**Fiona Batten**  
**Café Manager**

Fiona is probably the most important person at The Conlan College as she makes sure we are all fed and watered on a regular basis!!! Fiona has previously run the Abbotsleigh Junior School canteen and, as the mother of two elite athletes, is the perfect person to make sure our dancers are well fuelled. Of course, she's always on hand for parents, siblings, friends and relatives, all of whom are welcome to come and enjoy our wonderful café facilities, including our new alfresco area!

Fiona can provide snacks, drinks, lunches, dinners and is always happy to do whatever she can in the way of special requests.

**And FINALLY!**

We hope you've found this handbook helpful. We welcome any comments or suggestions for improvement. We hope you and your families enjoy being part of the amazing Conlan community and that the study of dance is something that carries our students through the rest of their lives....whether they make a career out of it, become an enthusiastic audience member, or simply look back one day at their time with us at The Conlan College with joy in their heart!