



Skerries Sailing Club Junior Sailing Programs



Parent/Student Handbook

Summer 2021

Skerries Sailing Club
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[SSC JUNIORS INSTAGRAM](#)

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Welcome to Skerries Sailing Club!

We are very excited for another great summer/year of sailing! It is our hope that the skills learned in our classes will provide the foundation for a life-long hobby because sailing is one of the few sports where size, physical strength and gender are equalised on the water. Furthermore, many of the skills learned on the water are transferable to daily life: responsibility, seamanship, confidence, independence, problem solving, among others.

Our goal with this handbook is to provide a comprehensive resource for parents and students participating in our sailing programs. It is designed to help you understand what to expect, what to bring, where to be and when to be there!

On behalf of the staff, instructors and Junior Committee, we welcome you to Skerries Sailing Club and look forward to a future of sailing with you.

Kerri-Ann Boylan
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Skerries Sailing Club
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[More About Kerri-Ann Boylan](#)



Note: This 2021 Parent/Student Handbook does not contain our 2021 COVID Policies and Procedures, and because of that, is subject to change. Communication about our 2021 COVID Policies and Procedures will be sent directly to enrolled students. Also, please note that changing facilities will not be open this summer season.

Sailing Club's Junior Section

Our Junior Section is a branch of Skerries Sailing Club that takes care of the junior sailing activities in the club – bringing up the next generation of Skerries Sailing Club sailors. Sailing is not a 'drop and go' activity for parents. We are completely dependent on a high level of parental participation; in terms of launching and recovering RIBs (safety boats), helping to crew them, helping the children to rig and launch their boats, kitchen duties etc. therefore we encourage parents to help.

Our programs aim is to foster positive, lifelong fitness habits while continuing to strengthen Skerries historical connection to the ocean. Last year we instructed over 120 students by teaching water safety and sailing skills while improving the community's access to Skerries' waters. Please visit our website: <http://skerriessailingclub.com>

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to engage people of all ages in the joy of sailing, offering access to all Skerries youth, and teaching every participant in our program enduring life and leadership skills with a deep respect for the marine environment.

<http://skerriessailingclub.com/skerries-juniors-home-page/>

Who runs Skerries Sailing Clubs Juniors?

A volunteer committee of mainly parents oversee all the junior's policies and procedures. The committee is comprised of active members of the Skerries Sailing Club whose common interest is a commitment to increasing education and access to the sport of sailing. Day-to-day operations of our various programs are the shared responsibility of the full-time, part-time and volunteer staff.

Youth Programs

We offer a wide variety of classes for students aged 7 to 18 years. We have our busy summer courses but afterwards we encourage all sailors to continue with Autumn and Spring Training. We also host some advanced clinics throughout the Winter. We work with the local schools for *A Taste of Sailing* with transition year students and primary school 4th-6th classes. Some of these programs will be discussed in this handbook, but complete class descriptions can be found on the Juniors section of SSC's website: <http://skerriessailingclub.com/skerries-juniors-home-page/>

SSC Membership policy

As a membership-based organization, SSC requires that any student who participates in the sailing courses that are non-members, are provided with temporary membership of the Club for the duration of the course. The standard Cadet/Junior membership is €100 a year (parent/shoreside/non-member) or €55 (parent / full member Family / Ordinary). If you have multiple children, you may purchase a family membership for €200 which gives access to all club facilities for 2 Adults plus all children up to 18 yrs.

****Check out the discount rates for this year's Family Memberships. Please express your interest about memberships at the time of registration and we can help you.**

Included in your membership is free boat Rental for up to 2 seasons.

Where do youth Classes meet?

Summer Courses - meet *Infront of Skerries Sailing Club Clubhouse*, sailors will then make their way towards the SSC Boatyard to get boats ready to be rigged for sailing that day

Course times

10am – 4pm

Spring and Autumn Training – meet *in Skerries Sailing club Boat yard*

Boats should be Rigged and ready for the start of class as to ensure more time spent on water, sailors should arrive down earlier then start time to ensure boat is rigged and ready to go out on the water as they are half day sessions on the water.

Group times will be sent out via WhatsApp closer to time

Sailors' Daily Check list

- Check the weather forecast always, wind guru or windy for the wind
- Have a good breakfast, after a good night's sleep.
- Bring a water bottle. (No glass containers!)
- Apply sun block BEFORE class; bring extra just in case.
- Wear appropriate clothes for the weather. We suggest bathing suits under wetsuits (No cotton!)
- A windbreaker or other such jacket may be required on a cool or damp day.
- **Proper footwear is required.** Closed-toed shoes that can get wet are the best. No flip-flops!
- Bring a towel.
- Eyeglasses/sunglasses should be attached with "croakies" or similar string.
- Tie back long hair.
- Snug fitting hats with visors are encouraged.

SSC 2021 Juniors Committee members

Email: juniors.skerriessailingclub@gmail.com

Junior Convenor: Birthe Tonseth

Child Liaison Officer: Olive Parker

Treasurer: Anne Marie Hickey

Training Officer: Olive Parker

General Committee Members –

Will Hinsley,

Denise McQuillan,

Magnus Kelly,

Sarah Staunton

Daragh Kelleher,

Louise Carter,

Stephen Hannon,

Darragh Tolan.

Mark Kevitt,

Sean Ahearn,

Skerries Sailing Club: Junior Programs

Junior Program Goals for our students to:

- Develop sportsmanship, self-confidence, and interpersonal skills.
- Develop an interest and appreciation for the sport of sailing.
- Learn and demonstrate new boat-handling skills and improve on existing skills.
- Respect the sea and the environment.
- Learn and practice good safety skills and seamanship.
- Learn responsibility and appreciation for the boats and equipment.
- Have fun and participate in a positive and productive atmosphere whether in drills, races or sailing adventures.



Parents' Guide to Junior Programs

- **Keeping in touch:** We probably won't need to call you, but if we do, we must have your contact phone number. If you are difficult to reach, give us several numbers and label each number (work, home, mobile, etc.).
- We must know if your child has any **learning disabilities**, or **special needs**. We can work with many conditions as long as we know in advance. Please call or email the Training Officer (juniortraining@skerriessailingclub.com) to discuss in confidence any learning disabilities or special circumstances that we may need to know about.
- The most common of the few injuries we experience each summer are shell cuts due to inappropriate footwear. Your child **MUST** come to class wearing **closed-toe shoes** such as aqua socks, Crocs, old runners or booties. Flip-flops are not acceptable. Students without proper footwear will not be allowed to sail.
- Sailing is one of the few sports where size, physical strength, and gender are equalised on the water. **Anyone can sail** and the skills learned can be enjoyed for a lifetime! Sailing challenges both the mind and body; it can be competitive or recreational, on big boats or small, and can be an individual experience or a social one!
- **To help your child get the most out of SSC Juniors Programs** we strongly suggest that you talk to your children about what they are doing in class. The opportunity to share newly learned skills is invaluable for several reasons:
 - *It reinforces the skills learned.
 - *It increases a child's confidence and self-esteem through support and encouragement.
 - *It provides an opportunity to find out how classes are going generally, so that if there are problems or issues, they can be addressed sooner, rather than later.
- **Don't push your child.** Often a student will have to repeat the same level many times before advancing. The student may not be interested in competitive racing but may enjoy sailing recreationally. SSC offers both types of classes. Remember, sailing is about having fun!
- **Please respect the role of SSC instructors.** Once your child's class session begins, please don't interrupt programming. If you need to speak with your child, please approach the Senior Instructor first. If you choose to stay on the beach during programming, we ask that you please watch the class from a respectful distance and don't distract your child.
- Be sure to **attend the Skerries Sailing Clubs Junior Regatta** (more on this event later) and/or other sailing events, such as our **Parents end of Season BBQ** and **Parents Thursdays**, to show support and encourage interest in the sport.

Youth Sailing Progression Chart

The Sailing Progression Chart outlines the way in which SSC encourages Junior sailors of all ages and all ability levels to participate in our programs. As a result, the "track" that each student takes as she/he advances through our programs, at unique ages and ability levels, will differ. A parent, who is registering a student and has a question about which program their student should be placed into (if a new student) or has been placed into (a returning student). This of course is all in line with "Time on the Water" – a child who has not sailed since last summer will not be at the level of a student who has been competing in regattas or involved in our Spring and Autumn Training.

SSC instructors make a large effort to ensure they recommend students for the appropriate programs at the end of each summer season for the subsequent summer season. In addition, SSC instructors assess ability levels of students throughout the summer using the Irish Sailing [Check list](#) system; following up by approaching the Training Officer, who will approach the family, if we think a change in placement should be made during the season.

Please note, sailors from our Opti programs/track, who size or age out of the Opti, or who advance in ability, will be placed accordingly in our Toppers or our mirror Double-handed programs.



Note: We encourage ALL OF OUR STUDENTS to compete in the Skerries Sailing Club Regatta, hoping to foster a love for racing and possible progression into some regional events around Ireland in their boat of choice.

Behavioural Rules & Guidelines

Skerries Sailing Club Juniors has developed the following behavioural rules and guidelines to help ensure a safe, rewarding and cheerful learning environment. It is important that both you and your child review these rules and guidelines. Appropriate behaviour is expected at all times.

- Students should be dropped off at Skerries Sailing Club no more than 15 minutes before the start of class. Students **MUST check-in** with an instructor, to have their name marked on the roster. They must then follow proper intake procedures (washing hands, etc.).
- Students must be picked up promptly and **MUST check-out** – with a parent or guardian visible or by their side – with the instructor handling the roster, prior to leaving SSC for the day. The instructor handling the roster for the checkout period will mark that the student has been picked up. The Senior Instructor will be responsible for reviewing the roster at the end of each instructional session to ensure that all students who were checked in were also checked out. Any discrepancies will be resolved by calling the parent. If a student is walking or cycling home alone or going home with another parent for lunch or for the day, the student's parent must submit **written permission** to the Training Officer or must speak with the Senior Instructor at the beginning of the day or session (if applicable to every day) and a note will be made on the roster.
- Students will show respect for their peers, instructors and other individuals.
- The word of the instructors is absolute, and students are expected to always cooperate with the instructors.
- All students must take a short swim check on the first day of class. PFDs will be worn. Students may NOT swim without an instructor's permission. The intent is to evaluate students' comfort and ability to follow directions in the water. It is not a swim test.
- Lifejackets (PFDs) will be worn at all times whenever a student is on the SLIP, in the water, or in a boat (these can be provided by SSC, and if a student chooses to bring his/her own, it must be suitable and fit properly).
- Boundaries must be observed, both on the water and onshore, as established by the instructors (so we don't disturb our neighbours).
- No crossing the road without a SSC Instructor or Parent/Guardian.
- No running in the yard and no climbing on the boat racks.
- Students will pick up their own rubbish and are expected to keep their belongings in a neat and orderly fashion.
- At the end of class, students are expected to leave the clubs and their own boats and equipment ship-shape.
- Absolutely no roughhousing, bullying, fighting, hitting, profanity or throwing of

objects. No knives, drugs, alcohol or other harmful substances or weapons are at allowed at SSC.

- SSC cannot be responsible for lost or stolen personal items. Students are asked to leave items of value at home.
- Students may not bring an unregistered friend or sibling to class.

Consequences for failure to observe the above rules and guidelines vary according to the nature of the infraction but will follow the SSC Juniors Discipline Policy.

Discipline Policy

The Skerries Sailing Club discipline policy maintains that each sailor will have three chances to rectify any non-rule-following behaviour as follows. Skerries Sailing Club reserves the right to re-examine students' participation in programs, because of behaviour, at any time.

1. First "strike": The Senior Instructor will speak with the sailor about his/her behaviour and ask that he/she correct his/her behaviour moving forward.
2. Second "strike": The Senior Instructor will call the student's parent and the transgression will be reported to the Training Officer and Junior Convener. The Junior Convener will report the incident to the Junior Committee, and it will be recorded in the student's file in Active.
3. Third "strike": The student will be suspended from the remainder of the SSC program; The Program Director will contact the students' parents who will be required to immediately pick the student up from class. The student may participate in future SSC programs, under a probationary measure. There will refund for lost program days. The Junior Convener will notify the Junior Committee and the incident(s) will be recorded in the student's file within the program database.

Continued abuse of the rules in subsequent programs: the student will be completely expelled from SSC programs for the remainder of the Summer and may not participate or register for SSC programs or events until the following season.



Answers to Commonly Asked Questions

When can I sign up for classes?

SSC offers early class registration for SSC Members - registration goes live 25th April at 12pm Noon and will close, April 27th at 4pm.

A deposit of €50 is required to reserve each course booked, full payment is required 2 weeks before the start of the course. Payment can be made via cash, cheque or bank transfer. If using bank transfer, please include your name on the details section and send a copy of the transfer to the senior instructor.

Registration will then for all other registrants reopen on Monday, May 1st at 12noon.

What should my sailor bring with them?

- **Lunch and a bottle of water** - we don't supply lunch for the students so we advise them to bring their own, on occasion we will have lunch on the water or supply a BBQ, parents will be informed prior to each event. Students can leave for lunch if they have written consent from Parents.
- **Closed-toed shoes** with a back/strap and non-marking sole, that can get wet. ([Native Footwear](#), Crocs, old runners, booties or water shoes.)
- Sunscreen (apply to all exposed skin before coming to class and reapplied at lunch.)
- Bring or wear a bathing suit, wetsuit, shorts, t-shirt, hat, sunglasses and a fleece, rainjacket or cag for windy cooler days.
- Small bag/backpack for extra jacket/thermal, a towel and a water bottle.
- SSC can provide lifejackets! You are welcome to bring your own, provided it is appropriate.

What is the Program Cancellation Policy?

Cancellations made prior to June 15th will incur a €50 fee per week of enrolment, not to exceed €100 per sailor or €200 per family.

Cancellations made after June 28th are non-refundable.

Refunds will not be given for sick or absent days nor for bad weather days.

What is the Private Lesson Policy?

Private Lessons will be booked via the SSC Senior Instructor as all lessons will be held at Skerries Sailing Club for members only.

Cancellation can be made via email or by calling the Senior Instructor, during normal business hours, (insert Number). SSC instructors will confirm cancellation. If you do not receive confirmation, please call again. Please note that if you cancel within 24 hours or are a no-show there is no refund; if cancellation is within 48 hours, you will be issued a 50% refund and if cancellation is prior to 72 hours of lesson, you will receive a full refund.

As for Weather Cancellations -- Skerries is a "marine location" with a "marine forecast". This means the wind and weather can affect this lesson. If the wind or weather is not conducive to safe operation, Skerries Sailing Club will cancel the lesson. Members will receive a full refund for lessons cancelled by Skerries Sailing Club for any reason.

Members may reschedule any lesson in the future at no extra cost. Please remember, in a "marine forecast" the weather can change quickly. Please respect Skerries Sailing Club's wind and weather judgements for cancellation. SSC will use the mobile phone number on file at time of registration to contact you.

Boat Rental and Purchase

Skerries Sailing Club have a limited number of boats to rent to sailors. These boats will be reserved for new sailors coming into the club, after which, following 2 or 3 seasons they are expected to invest in their own equipment and boat, leading to a better learning experience and ultimately a more committed sailor. Sailing is a sport for life and investment is needed to continue.

We do ask each sailor who borrows these boats to treat them with respect and look after each boat with care, these boats are used by many and will help new sailors to the club obtain a skill that they can enjoy for life. Boats require maintenance and we depend on volunteers to maintain and keep them in good condition. Instructors will reference this but please ensure your child knows the value of being entrusted with one of these boats.

We encourage sailors to invest in their own boats after a minimum of 2 seasons, sailors can start with a boat from €200 Optimists and can upgrade if needed. There are plenty of second-hand boats available, the best place to find second-hand Optimists, Mirrors or Toppers would be sailing and Yacht Club websites. On their websites they will have a buy and sell option and here are some names of Dublin yacht clubs, but there are many other yacht clubs around Ireland so shop around:

Sutton dinghy club
Malahide Yacht Club
Rush Sailing club
Howth Yacht Club
The royal St. George Yacht Club
The national Yacht Club
The royal Irish Yacht Club

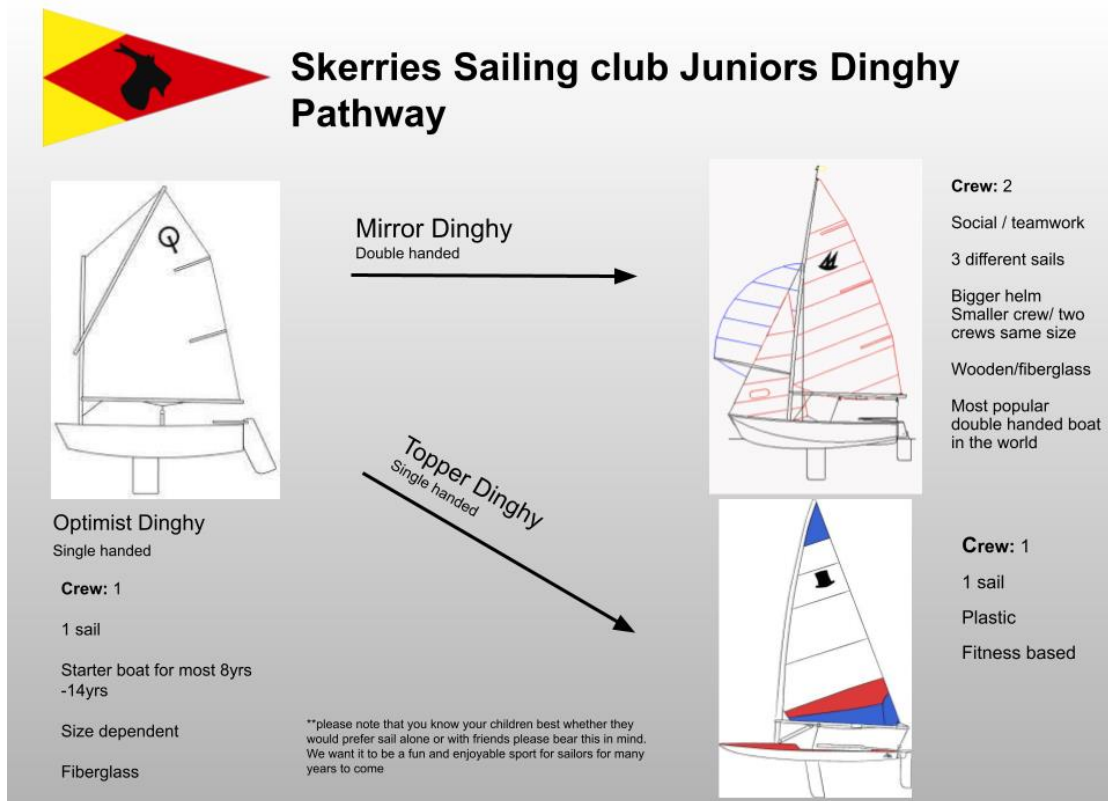


When Purchasing Sailors First Boat

Please ask the advice of one of the sailing instructors or class captain, there are many kinds of boats, wooden/ fiberglass / plastic, we will advise you of what might be best for your sailor and family, this might be maintenance wise or if it comes with the correct gear. If we know your sailor from our Opti programs/track, is about to size or age out of the Opti, or to advance in ability, we will advise accordingly also. We do always think of what would or could be most enjoyable for each individual sailor as some prefer to socialise or work best with teamwork and others might prefer to sail alone. A more advanced skill set will always be learnt in a double handed boat due to the more complexity of the 3 different sails.

When Purchasing the Next boat

Please have a look at our SSC Juniors dinghy Pathway, these dinghy's have been the chosen dinghy's for skill bases progression in the club once a sailor has aged or sized out of the Optimist. But also an options for our teens start sailors too



All boats must have insurance before being brought onto Club Property and proof by way of written declaration is required and completed on the application form.

*** Once a child has aged out or more than likely grown out of optimists, it is strongly suggested that the sailor moves to the more advanced dinghies as soon as possible. Optimists although great learning boats they can affect junior sailors like for the sport greatly for good or for worse. A sailor who has grown too tall for the optimist will struggle and get extremely frustrated and, in some cases, can actually progress backwards as they tend to start gaining bad habits to try fit in the boat.

What happens if it is raining/bad weather?

SSC makes every effort to hold class, even in high winds and light rain. When we cannot be on the water, we make use of our time on shore to review lessons, tie knots, review terminology, swimming and play a few sailing games! In the case of severe weather, we will cancel the class. (Spring and Autumn training only)

If we do need to delay the start of class (by 30 minutes or an hour, to let weather pass) or cancel class for the morning or afternoon session, you will receive a text message and an email to the primary phone number and primary email address listed on your registration account. We will *only* send a message if there is a *change* to the normal schedule. (Only for Spring and Autumn training)

What if my child is going to be late or cannot attend class?

Please call the Senior Instructor and let them know your child will be getting dropped off or being picked up late. If you know your child will not attend, please call the Training Officer so we can inform the instructor.

Will there be a swim test?

For many of our programs there will be a swim check on the first day of each new session. While life jackets are provided and required when on the water, each SSC student should be comfortable in and around the water; be able to follow instructions when in the water; and have basic swimming skills. PFDs will be worn during the swim check.

What if someone else is dropping my child off for class?

Parents are requested to inform the Senior Instructor if their child will be arriving and/or departing other than by car, or if someone other than the parent or guardian will be collecting a student from class.

What if my child is reluctant to attend class?

A student's unwillingness to come to sailing can be caused by any number of things: fear, nerves or simply being tired. SSC instructors will do their best to encourage all participants. If you can get them to class, in all but exceptionally rare cases, we can get them out sailing and enjoying it too.

I have a concern or issue to whom should I talk?

Serious concerns should be brought to the attention of the Training Officer. Otherwise, the Senior Instructor will be your first contact for resolving most issues. They are the hands-on day-to-day program facilitator and will usually have the answer; they are also empowered to make decisions and correct problems. The best time to talk to the Senior Instructor (and your child's individual instructor) is at the end of class. If this is not convenient, please call and leave a message with the Junior Convener asking the Senior Instructor to follow up with you.

My student has started sailing Opti/Toppers/Mirror. What kind of technical gear should they have?

We try to organize a SAILING GEAR SWAP SHOP every year before the start of summer, some Sailors grow quicker than others when they eat all their veg of course! Keep an eye out for this in our NEWSLETTER!

Check out [CH Marine junior sailing gear](#) who would have the widest selection online and consider the items below:

- **Life Jacket (PFD)** - SSC can provide these for most students. Check out [Marine Parts Direct](#) (sword), [Viking Marine](#) (Dun Laoghaire) or [Decathlon](#) for a more sleek PFD. PFDs must be appropriate for sailing.
- **Whistle** - All sailors should have a plastic whistle attached to their life jacket for safety.
- **Sailing gloves** - longer days on the water call for sailing gloves to prevent blisters. Marine Parts Direct and Viking Marine have great options. West Marine, Gill and Harken make great Junior Gloves with 3/4 fingers.
- **Wetsuit** – We would advise all sailors to wear wetsuits as summers in Ireland aren't as hot as you think they have long days on the water, options to wear shorty or long, but can always remove layers on water if too warm but very hard to heat up when cold out on the water for the day
- **Spray Top** - Spray tops keep sailors warm and dry from spray in windier conditions. Gill, Rooster and Henry Lloyd make junior dinghy/spray tops/smocks. The top should be a pullover, allowing for a seal at the neck. But Rain jacket will do.
- **Technical Shirt or Rash Guard** - wicking/synthetic/non-cotton apparel - *Sailors who are on the water all day should not be wearing cotton!* Any long-sleeve wicking top is great for sun protection, especially under a spray top; it dries quickly and doesn't chafe when wet.
- **Sunglasses (Polarised)** - Sailing on the water all day can damage eyes. All ~~the~~ should wear eye protection. Cheap pairs!! Check out [Decathlon](#).
- **Footwear** - Sailors in competitive boats may prefer a more technical shoe. Sailing shoes should always have a closed toe, dry quickly, and stay put. Keens are great, and particularly for sailors in the dinghy's, boots are great. Gill, Zhik and Rooster make boots, all of which can be found on the CH Marine website.
- **Spray Pants** – Big boat sailors, especially in the colder seasons, tend to wear spray pants along with spray tops on colder days. These aren't necessary for most of the summer although more advanced sailors may choose to buy a pair, for colder/rainy days on the water.

What if my child has a learning disability, IEP or medication?

Should your child have any learning disability, IEP or medication that might not be indicated on their application, or that needs further certification, please speak with the Senior Instructor. This will enable us to help your child have a positive and rewarding experience at Skerries Sailing Club.

What if my child gets hurt?

Any time an instructor is required to administer first aid for a cut, bruise or other, they will complete an injury report. In the event of a serious injury, we will notify the parent.

How can I volunteer?

As a members-run club we rely heavily on parent volunteer participation. Please [Click Here](#) to see our most up to date volunteer needs and how you can help!

TOKYO OLYMPICS 2021



We would like to wish Sean and Robert the best of luck in the 2021 Olympics please stay tuned for more events and information leading up the BIG Event this Summer!! Sean started Sailing Optimists in skerries, and his first coach was a volunteer parent Alan Collins! Just shows how much we can do for the future generations of the Club as parents!

Follow the Boys social media for more Updates

[On Instagram](#)

[On Facebook](#)

I feel like my student is ready for the next level, what should I do?

Our instructors regularly, but informally, evaluate the skill sets of our students and promote them to the next level when they are ready. We are always looking to help our student's progress. If a student is ready for the next level, and this level has space in it, the move is easy. We will speak with the student, ask them if they feel comfortable trying the next level, and if so, they will join the next level class that day. The student will either remain in that upper-level class if they are comfortable and succeeding, or they may opt to finish their session in the class they originally started in. We try very hard to encourage our students, but not push them too hard.

If your student is moved up a level, mid-session, this will be noted in their file as their placement for the next season. If we feel a student is ready to move up a class, the instructor will first speak with the Senior Instructor, who will check with the SSC Training Officer to see if there is space in the next level class. If so, the SSC Training Officer will call the parent to see if a mid-session move to a class is feasible. If not, or if there is no room in the class, the student will be marked to move-up to that next level for the following Summer.

Every student is given a placement for the next Summer with us at the end of their session. If you feel like your student is ready for the next level, you should have him or her inquire with their Senior Instructor. She/he will be able to let the student – or you – know what other skills may be necessary for the move including more sailing after Summer and through the Winter.

How do you evaluate students' abilities?

Each of our classes has a curriculum that the instructors follow according to [Irish Sailing Small Boat Sailing scheme](#) using the Irish Sailing *Check lick* to keep track of this. These curricula contain detailed skill sets that our instructors both teach, as well as look to, when evaluating a student for a promotion. We also consider the student's attitude, behaviour, maturity, size and age, in addition to their sailing abilities. We recommend that sailors sail for at least 4 weeks each Summer to build on their skills sufficiently; this will help them progress. Spring and Autumn Training will be more skills based and assessing the current level of the student with the current weather conditions that day.

What is Irish sailings Checklick?

In order for you to be able to see how they are progressing on the Summer courses, Irish Sailing operates an online system called [Checklick](#). This allows you to see skills based progression rather than just a cert. Whether your child is returning this week or not, I advise you to log on and see what has been accomplished last week, what is left to be done if there is more and read notes and tips from their instructor.

Please note that after each week, our instructors will update check lick over the following days so it may take a day or two to be updated after each course.

More information below

[Checklick Instructions](#)

I anticipate there will be differences between accounts depending on whether your child has just begun sailing or has been here before, and as such please do not hesitate to Contact us if you have any difficulties logging in.

What is Skerries Sailing Club Junior Racing and how can we be involved?

Junior Racing is Skerries Sailing Club's biggest and greatest Junior event **Every Wednesday during the summer!** Skerries Junior Racing is a great opportunity for our young sailors to see some sailing action! Some of our Opti, Topper and Mirror race team students compete in the summer series weekly, adding to their "**more time on the water**". Even if your student doesn't participate in other events on the water, you should take them down to the beach or club at some point during the Summer to check out our racing up close and maybe they will want to join the following week. This is a summer activity not to be missed! It is run by the parents, and they have fun doing it too! If you – and your student – are interested in volunteering to help or watch the competitors from the water, please let us know

Many Junior dinghy sailors from Skerries Sailing club have competed and placed in some big international dinghy Regattas throughout the years, with all of them starting off racing once a week on Wednesday nights either against the adults or on the Optimist course!



Mirror Worlds 2011- Princess Royal Yacht Club, Albany, Australia

I'd like to check out my student's class - am I allowed to watch?

We always encourage parents to support their students, but we ask that it is from a distance. Parents are welcome to sit on the beach or Sailing Club balcony to watch class, but they may not interrupt a class or sit near or stand over a class that is having a shore lesson. If you have a concern, please wait until class is over to speak to the Head Instructor. Another way to check out classes is to sign up for our seasonal "*Parent Evening*" every Thursday during the Summer. Check out our online registration to learn more!

I want to learn to sail! Do you have any programs for Parents?

We do! If you're female, we recommend our Adult (18+) [Women's Sailing Tuesday Nights!](#) on Tuesday evening. This is a class for the ladies of the club who have a little bit of sailing experience who wants to get out and learn to race in a comfortable all-female environment, held on our j24 Keelboat and it's lots of fun! Or, if you're male – or a couple – and want to have a taste of sailing, you can sign up for our [Parents night here!](#) (Offered by our Senior Instructor). These are great ways to get involved and if you enjoy it, you might consider a Family Membership to Skerries Sailing Club in the future.

My child is nearing the age and size of moving from opti's, but is nervous about this move – what should I do and what boat should they move into?

Our senior Instructor and instructors will advise you with this, there is a variety of reasons you should move out of optimists promptly and into a boat that suits the individual child and family. We have set a pathway for Skerries sailing club Sailors which include double- and single-handed boats so that each sailor grows up with a Variety of all-round sailing skills, as they progress in the sport and move on to more Adult Sailing.

[Read more About Double handed Sailing](#)



Sailing, after Junior Sailing... What comes next?

For SSC Junior sailors who have aged out of our programs or no longer have the time to commit to a full program during the Summer, there are still many ways to get out on the water. Below you will find just a few examples on how to stay involved in the sport of sailing, after sailing in an SSC program.

Sail in college/ university

Many college sailing teams rely heavily on club sailors; even with minimal experience, you will be an asset. And if you are a more experienced/advanced sailor, most colleges would love to have you on their team! Email the captain or coach of the team at your school to get involved. The level of commitment and participation varies at every school, so check it out and see if it fits your needs.

Crew on a big boat

Boat owners sometimes look for crew for weekend race series. Whether you're a beginner or more advanced, if you're interested in gaining some experience crewing, you'll be a welcomed addition on any boat. To find crewing opportunities throughout the summer you may also visit our website if you desire to get out on the water during the summer. This is a really fun way to stay involved in sailing.

Become an SSC instructor



Give back! Every year, SSC hires instructors for their Spring and Autumn Training, plus our summer courses; many of whom have learned to sail within our SSC programs. You must be 15+ years to apply to be an Assistant Instructor, and then to be a Fully Qualified Irish Sailing Instructor you must take the Pre-entry first, which requires you to have a certain level of sailing ability. With this we encourage Junior Sailors from SSC to continue with sailing courses and after Summer Training to ensure they have the “time on the water” and abilities to pass and become an Irish Sailing instructor which is

regarded around the sailing world at an extremely high standard.

Check out: [Irish Sailings requirements to become a Small Boat Sailing instructor](#)

Pease read this Document for more info: [Assistant instructor pathway](#)

Get a SSC Student Membership

A great way to have regular access to the water is through being a Skerries Sailing Club member. Student, Adult and Family membership pricing can be found on the [Join Us](#) page of our website. If you're looking for a refresher, you can take sailing lessons at a discounted rate, and once you pass an open sailing checkout, you can take one of our sailboats out on your own! This is a great way to stay involved with the sport in a more casual manner.

Buy a boat

Used boats are always for sale in SSC and in other clubs in the local Fingal area or around Ireland. Keep your eyes peeled for classified ads - a Mirror or a GP14 is an example of an affordable, accessible boat to keep in the yard or at home. In fact, SSC occasionally advertises boats for sale in our newsletter, so keep an eye out for that. Other clubs' websites might have a buy and sell section on them also.



GP14 WORLDS CHAMPIONSHIPS ARE DUE TO BE HELD IN SKERRIES SAILING CLUB IN 2022!

OPTI and Topper, Mirror Race Teams

Skerries Sailing Club offers three different racing classes for sailors: The Opti race team, the Topper race team and the Mirror race team. Students of these classes are considered members of the Opti, Topper and Mirror race teams and they are both encouraged and expected to travel to local regattas with the team.

Local regattas for the various Race Teams may include

Sutton dinghy club REGATTA

Malahide Yacht Club REGATTA

Rush Sailing club REGATTA

Howth Yacht Club REGATTA

Some tend to be multi-day, weekend events. To be part of the SSC race team you must participate in at least away event.

Sailors may participate on the Opti Race Team through to the age of 15, and on the Topper Race team until 17 and the Mirror Race Team through to the age of 19. But size comes into play also!

At the beginning of every season, the SSC Program Training Officer works with the SSC coaches to determine the best events for each team to attend. This list is often fine-tuned once the coaches begin practicing with the teams and can evaluate individual team member's skill sets. It is the intention of the Training Officer and SSC coaches that traveling to events will be a positive experience, even though it is one that often presents new challenges for the sailor. The SSC Race Team Coach's will work with sailors to determine which event is best suited for each individual sailor. As a parent, we ask that you please trust the coach's recommendation for travel to an event but we do say the more events the better. Outside of Skerries regattas provide an incredible opportunity to gain skill, experience, to represent SSC and have fun!

Details (travel itineraries, Registration etc.) are emailed out to the regatta attendees before each event from the host club.

Class Captains

There are elected **Boat captains** each year, these will encourage other sailors in the clubs to join their race team and help with the organisation. There will also be a fleet parent elected, they will help with the logistics of each event, arrange the club rib, help with the transport of other team members' boats or help to arrange so. Parents play a huge role in the traveling to events, and it can become really great family experience whether it's the camping at the events club where parents get to socialise with the other families that travel to that event or the kids getting to make many friends from around Ireland and the world.

The SSC Regatta Travel Guidelines are as follows: In an effort to keep costs down for our race team members and parents, SSC relies heavily on the generosity some of the parents that help out getting as much as our SSC sailors to different events as possible.

How a regatta Works

When the launching signal sounds, team members launch their boats and head out onto the water for the day. Usually several races are sailed, lunch is either provided by host club or brought by a family boat or coach boat, and the day is completed with several more races sailed in the afternoon. If it is a two-day event, the team will stow their boats on shore for the evening in the host club. If it is a one-day event, the team will attend awards, load up the trailer and head back to Skerries.

Winter Sailing Gear

As students' progress through our classes (and on to our Opti, Topper and Mirror racing teams), they often choose to acquire sailing gear designed specifically for longer days on the water and racing. Below is a list of recommended gear for students sailing more competitively:

- **Life jacket** – racers tend to like a more sleek-fitting PFD. Many styles are available, but the PFD must be suitable.
- **Watch** – You can't be on time if you don't know the time; a waterproof watch with a timer for the starts is all that is needed.
- **Whistle** – All sailors - especially those sailing more independently at regattas - should have a whistle attached to their life jacket for safety.
- **Sailing gloves** – Sailors who are spending longer days on the water, and in windier conditions, often need sailing gloves to prevent blisters. Even a pair of garden gloves with a rubber palm work great!
- **Spray Top** – Sailing in windier conditions can mean getting hit with a lot of spray. Spray tops are great for keeping sailors warm and dry. Gill and Henry Lloyd make great junior dinghy/spray tops/smocks. These can be found online by searching for "Foul Weather Gear" or "Apparel" on a sailing gear website. The top should be a pullover, allowing for a seal at the neck.
- **Wetsuit/Hiking pants** – As a child progresses in the sport the wetsuits advance too, armless or hiking pants are what most dinghy sailors wear for less restricted movement and more comfort during the long days on the water.
- **Wicking/Synthetic/Non-cotton Apparel** – Sailors who are on the water all day should not be wearing cotton! Any long-sleeve (for sun protection) wicking top is great, especially under a spray top; it dries quickly and doesn't chafe when wet.
- **Sunglasses** – Sailing on the water all day can damage eyes. All sailors - especially those competing in regattas - should wear eye protection. Sunglasses should always be polarised to reduce glare.
- **Footwear** – Some sailors prefer to wear a more technical shoe as they become more competitive in the boat. Sailing shoes should always have a closed toe, dry quickly, and stay put. At the more advanced level, old runners and Crocs fail to meet these latter two requirements. Dinghy boots are great. Gill, Zhik and Rooster make boots, all of which can be found on the CH Marine Sailing website.
- **Spray Pants** – sailors, especially those sailing in the colder seasons, tend to wear spray pants along with their spray tops on colder days. These aren't really necessary for most of the summer sailing done in Ireland, although more advanced Mirror sailors may choose to buy a pair, for colder/rainy days on the water

ANNUAL SKERRIES SAILING CLUB JUNIOR

REGATTA

The “**SSC JUNIOR REGATTA**” is a mini regatta for our junior program participants and is held in Skerries Harbour. Races are held all morning long with an emphasis on sportsmanship and fun. We even get some neighbouring clubs over to visit and race against us!



Check-in begins at 8:30am (weather permitting). Parents, guardians, siblings and friends are encouraged to come down and observe the students sailing and demonstrating the sailing skills they have learned. We will have some spectator boats available on a first come, first serve basis to enable you to get close to the action. More details will be provided in the NOTICE OF RACE .

Afterwards, trophies and awards are given out. SSC provides drinks and treats for the sailors to enjoy plus a BBQ at the end of the day for all the families to enjoy.

SKERRIES SAILING CLUB JUNIOR REGATTA Registration is €20 for single handed and €30 for double handed Boats per. Keep an eye out for our announcement early this summer. There will be a limit of 60 participants.

Author: Kerri-Ann Boylan

Senior Instructor 2021