

Key Stage 1: The Place of Folk Dance in the Primary Physical Education Curriculum

This document gives an indication of how English folk dance can help teachers enhance and deliver aspects of the National Curriculum for PE in England at Key Stage 1 (ages 5 – 7) and suggests a range of supporting resources created by folk artist-educators.

This document refers to English folk dance which comprises social folk dancing: (ceilidh / country / barn dancing); and performance dance: (morris dancing; clog / step dance; maypole dancing; sword dancing - rapper sword and longsword).

There are many similarities with folk dancing from the rest of Britain and around the world.

Key Stage 1 PE Subject Content	Links to folk dance	
	Social folk dance <i>ceilidh / country / barn dance</i>	Performance dance <i>Morris dancing; clog / step dance; maypole dancing, sword dancing</i>
Master Basic Moves (Running, jumping, balance, agility, co-ordination)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social folk dances use various combinations of skipping, hopping and a running step (gentle, rhythmical jog) as ways of travelling and changing direction. A gallop step can be used to travel sideways and requires the co-ordination of jumping (usually face to face holding hands with a partner) whilst travelling sideways in time with the music. Hand movements – Hand movements add an additional layer of co-ordination skills to the dances. For example, right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most performance styles of folk dance use combinations of a running step, skipping, hopping and jumping as ways of travelling and changing direction. Clog dance requires balance and co-ordination due to the rounded sole of the clog. Developing the ability to transfer the weight from one foot to the other also supports these elements. Morris dance requires co-ordination of the hands and feet simultaneously

	and left hand turns with a partner, clapping sequences, holding hands in the air to create arches for others to dance under.	(cross lateral movement)
Team Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social folk dancing is non-competitive but requires elements of working together in pairs and larger groups or 'sets'. These sets take place in a variety of forms such as circles, squares and long lines. • Team working is essential to ensure the dances are executed correctly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance styles of folk dance require teamwork and collaboration. • Morris dances are generally performed in groups ('sides') • Clog dance can be performed as a team with simple directional choreography. • Maypole dancing requires team working skills such as turn taking to achieve patterns with the ribbons. • Longsword and rapper sword dances are performed in teams of 5 or 6. Teamwork is vital as the dancers are connected by holding the 'swords', letting go of the swords would mean the 'figure' could not work.
Dances Using Simple Movement Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social folk dances are composed of simple building blocks of movements and patterns. These patterns can be combined with increasing complexity as children progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance styles usually comprise a series of steps which can be ordered/developed into a routine. • There is opportunity for simple choreography in all performance folk dance styles.

Learning Resources

EFDSS' award-winning Resource Bank provides freely downloadable materials (teachers' notes, audio files, and some video files) for using English folk song, music, dance, drama and other arts in your teaching and learning. **www.efdss.org/resourcebank**

The following resources support aspects of the primary PE / Dance curriculum at Key Stage 1:

A Song and a Dance: using folk arts in inclusive settings (simple songs and adapted dances for use with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/a-z/11979-a-song-and-a-dance-inclusive-folk>

An Acre of Land KS1 & KS2 (a song and accompanying dance) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/2528-efdss-resource-bank-an-acre-of-land>

An Introduction to Maypole Dances (sample dances, audio files, lesson plans for Years 1 – 6) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/55-resources/learning-resources/10497-maypole-manual>

Beginners' Guide to English Folk Dance (video, accompanying PDF document) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/beginners-guides/37-english-folk-dance>

Ceilidh Band Project: five tunes & dances (audio files with tunes at practice speed and dance speed, PDF document containing instructions for five dances) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/5278-ceilidh-band-project>

Creative Folk Dance for Primary Schools by Barry Goodman (simple dances suitable for introducing figures and formations with musical notation) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/55-resources/learning-resources/3013-creative-folk-dance-primary>

I Love English Folk Dance - youth folk dance showcase performance from U.Dance 2012 (10-minute film showing various folk dance styles) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/55-resources/learning-resources/3324-i-love-english-folk-dance>

Make a Morris Dancer's Hat <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/55-resources/learning-resources/10158-make-a-morris-dancers-hat>

Swords and Stars: Rapper Sword Dance for Primary Schools (written notes, audio files, in depth teaching manual from the Full English project) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/55-resources/learning-resources/4869-swords-and-stars>

Using Folk Arts in Key Stage 1: Street Cries, Green Men and Morris Dancing (documentation of a cross curricular project exploring English traditions) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/3390-using-folk-arts-key-stage-1>

Using Folk Song and Dance in Primary Schools (examples of traditional folk songs, dances and music, with examples of how they have been used to develop creative skills and engage with students) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/55-resources/learning-resources/3278-using-folk-song-and-dance-in-primary-liam-robinson>



At the English Folk Dance and Song Society, we champion the folk arts at the heart of England's rich and diverse cultural landscape.

Our award-winning Resource Bank contains over 100 resources – incorporating hundreds of audio files, videos and supporting documents, all free to download. They offer endless practical ways to use folk song, music, dance, drama and more in all sorts of community settings, as well as in formal education.

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