

Morris Federation talk: workshops and primary schools tip sheet 21.1.24 11.00-12.30

Before the workshop

- Make sure you are insured- Morris Fed insures you as part of your team insurance usually.
- Decide what you hope to achieve and why. NB we prefer yr 3 and older.
- Aims- ours, publicity, fun exercise, knowledge, re morris, skills teamwork, physical co-ordination, performance skills. NB National Curriculum links on Morris Fed St Stephen's Case study.
- Recruit people- team members and musicians though it is possible to run a workshop on your own. Can do it solo but much more fun with backup.
- Brief team and musicians tactfully about not interrupting, working with a group, not being perfect, being fun. Same for musicians. Ideally a spread of men and women also different ethnicities, someone from another team as well if possible- and get them to explain or talk or take a group.
- Making contacts: ask your team for schools- get them to enquire. Parents, children, church friends, mates in the pub... Get schools to mention it around. Do a local radio interview, newspaper, put details on social media. Feedback ones you have done. Do you charge? We ask for expenses only in our case as we have the wider picture in mind and are not skint!
- Decide on equipment and collect it up. We can lend local teams smaller sticks.
- Offer to get the school team/dance class to perform for school fairs, Christmas concerts, collective worship etc.
- Make a possibly reusable plan: all details on one A4 sheet- personnel and mobile contacts/emails, for school and team, with any special roles mentioned eg PE teacher, class teacher, support staff if possible, aims, outcomes, intended plan of session (not necessarily to be kept to) followup, what to do with nondancers, preparation? (eg use TAs alongside any child with mobility/visual/other impairment who wants to join in the dance. Be aware of any child with noise-sensitivity/shyness/behavioural issues etc, by asking teacher beforehand if possible and devise ways to circumvent these where possible). PE kit good but not essential for NW Processional, warmups, visual aids (we have posters) remember the sticks etc.
- Have screens/visual aids- small maypole, clogs, bells, drum, sashes, whatever
- Give details sheet to everyone, if possible, a week in advance.
- Turn up early in enough time to set up and discuss the session in advance- 20mins? Wear kit
- Ask children who has seen morris dancing- where, what?
- Brief children what we shall be able to do by the end- a local dance?
- Warmups- physical and intellectual, focussing attention.
- Teach chorus, feet first, then hands, NB any not dancing recruit to the band- percussion- or squires for a team.
- Involve staff if possible.
- Teach figures. Make it fun! Simplify if necessary.
- Encourage throughout- notice what works and who makes a special effort. Can children who do well be awarded merit marks by their teacher.
- Get a child to call each figure if possible.
- Get children to demonstrate to each other- What Went Well/Even Better If.
- After 20 mins or so have a sit down- brief history of morris - and ask team members why they do morris, what are they playing and why. Look at instruments and kit. Which children play already?
- Revise what they have done so far, teach another couple of figures (simplify as appropriate but use the name of the dance often)
- Do a grand performance of each team, dragging in anyone who can watch. Applaud!
- Is it possible to perform at a school event?
- Is it possible to leave resources eg dance notes, recording of music, sticks?
- Final review: Q/A and what have we learned NB always be positive throughout.
- After the event write up a brief review WWW/EBI and send out to everyone together with thanks .
- Always ready to help- ask us. We are also always ready to learn new tips!

Education and outreach about morris is very important to Malkin! We are always happy to help.

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