



Move up a level

PSSI Homepage



Folk Dance

The folk dances presented here have been selected to give guidelines as to the type of dances which the non-specialist dance teacher could undertake with a class. It is hoped that each year children would revise the dances from the previous year and learn two or three new dances, building up their repertoire of both Irish folk dances and dances from other countries. The main emphasis is on enjoyment and movement rather than perfection of the steps.

Tips for Folk Dance

- Before introducing a new dance, allow the children to research its origin – looking at pictures showing gesture and costume.
- Initially choose a dance where the children are organised in circles or lines.
- Where children are in pairs encourage the boys and girls from the beginning to dance with each other, girls on the boys' right .
- Choose dances where the steps are simple i.e. walking steps or skipping steps.
- Try to have a demonstration of the dance, using a video, DVD or perhaps from another class.
- It is a good idea to video classes performing a variety of dances as a resource for future years.
- Identify the steps contained in the dance and teach each one before you start. Include some of the steps or movements in your warm up.
- Use the dance music for your warm up, if it is suitable, to familiarise the children with the rhythm.
- If possible begin by demonstrating the step with music as some children will pick it up automatically.
- If children are having difficulty, walk through the steps without music, dance without music and then dance with the music.
- Teach the dance section by section following the steps outlined above .
- If it is a long dance teach a section or two each week, revising the sections known and building the dance week by week.