

Safeguarding Young People and Vulnerable Adults - Code of Good Practice

Morris dancing is traditionally seen as an adult activity. However, young people also take part and it is sensible that sides put measures in place to ensure the safety of those young people when they are practising or out with the side. The idea of this is not to inhibit enjoyment of the activity but to make sure that all members, adult or juniors, are free to play an active part in all aspects of the side. This also applies to vulnerable adults (VA).

There are 3 main groups of Morris sides within Open Morris – adult sides with one or a few young people; youth sides spanning the teenage years upwards, both of these possibly with some VAs; and junior sides composed entirely of under 18's.

For all sides, parents, carers and young people should be made aware that Morris dancing involves physical contact with other dancers. They should also be made aware that most sides dance at pubs or other venues where alcohol is available.

For adult and youth sides it may be sensible to nominate someone to be the designated adult responsible for making sure that safeguarding is an ordinary part of the side's activities. This person should be willing to have an enhanced DBS check carried out. The DBS check is a commonplace feature of modern life and it is likely that most sides will have at least one member who has been checked through their work or voluntary activities. This person may agree to be the designated person for your side. Everyone should be made aware who this person is.

For junior sides it is reasonable that the lead tutor and the assistant tutor will be required to hold a current enhanced DBS document and that other roles are assessed as they arise to see whether they fall under legislation.

In general terms for all sides:

- Always be publicly open when working with children or vulnerable adults. Minimise situations where supervising adults/leaders and individual children/ VAs are completely unobserved, unknown to others including giving transport to a child or VA with no other person in the vehicle.

Adults should also be aware that it is not acceptable to:

1. Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
2. Allow or engage in any inappropriate touching
3. Allow children or VAs to use inappropriate language unchallenged
4. Make sexually suggestive comments to a child or VA, even in fun
5. Allow allegations of a child/ VA to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

Sides should have regard to the Government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>. The police also run regular, local, free events which are well worth attending.

ADULTS HAVE A DUTY TO REPORT ANY CONCERNS IMMEDIATELY AND SHOULD DO SO TO THEIR LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT WITHOUT DELAY.