

Step-by-step: disco

Great for: Children & families **Fun factor:** ★★★★★ **Effort:** ★★★★★ **£ potential:** ★★★★★

Whether you're planning an event purely for children or as some family fun, discos are a firm favourite with PTAs. Keep things simple or throw in a theme, some party games and a dance competition...

Step-by-step

1. **Six weeks before:** Agree a date and book a venue. If hiring a professional DJ, book early, especially at busy times such as the run up to Christmas or wedding season. If not, check that any equipment you need is available and in full working order. Giving your event a theme can help create a buzz of excitement! Popular ideas include crazy hair, shorts and shades, monsters bash (for Halloween). For older children, how about a roller disco? Start signing up volunteers to help set up the hall, supervise children, cover entrance and exits, staff refreshments, toilet areas and clean up after the event. Announce the date and time(s) to parents. Order/buy items such as glow accessories or snacks
2. **One month before:** Start publicising your event with posters and on social media. Create letters which parents can collect/download. Include a reply slip where parents can state the number of tickets required, the name, age and class of pupils, any permissions (i.e. if serving food) and a contact number. Good practice is to sell tickets in advance and adopt a ticket-only policy on the door. This helps control numbers and is a good security safeguard.
3. **One to two weeks before:** Process the reply slips and compile a list of those children who are attending, ideally by class group as this makes it easier on the day to register children when they arrive and leave. Once you know the ratio of adults required, contact everyone who has offered to help and confirm where and when you want them. Place a box in reception and invite children to submit song requests to be played at the event. Check that these are appropriate (especially for KS1 children) before passing them on to your DJ.
4. **On the day:** Set up your venue with decorations, refreshments and entertainment - face painting is always popular, and party games are a great way to keep younger dancers entertained. You might also be able to offer a karaoke element, with a list of available songs - check with your DJ. Younger children can sometimes find a loud, dark room a little overwhelming, so it might be worth starting off gently and having volunteers on hand for support and to encourage shy dancers to get started.

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Tips & advice

Music licences: If featuring any form of live or recorded music, a music licence is required. Many venues hold these licences, which will cover any events held there, so it's worth checking.

Boosting profits: Increase income on the day by selling glow products and by running a tuck shop. If your audience are too young to be trusted with cash, include a glow bracelet or finger torch in with the ticket price and charge slightly more for entry.

Safeguarding: If children are not being accompanied by their parents, check your adult:child ratios and start securing volunteers. Supervising adults may need DBS certificates, although this is not mandatory.

What to charge: This may vary depending on your costs and what you're including in the ticket price. Based on a poll conducted by PTA+, most PTAs charge between £1-£4 or £5 for a family of three or more. Include squash and a biscuit or a hot dog.

Regulated entertainment: A TEN is not needed for a disco (unless selling alcohol), as in 2015 recorded music was declassified as 'regulated entertainment' under the Licensing Act 2003 reforms.