**Dungeons and Dragons – A Guide for Orkney Library** Frances Sinclair (Dungeon Master)



*Frances has run and played D&D since the early 2000s. Mostly running games for teenagers at a localsecondary school, where there are two to three sessions a week, ranging from 25 mins to 1hr 10 minutes. She has some experience of working with pupils with Additional Support Needs (ASD – Asperger’s Syndrome, Dyslexia, etc.) She has also played outside school and regularly plays in and runs games online using a virtual tabletop and video conferencing.*

*Dungeons & Dragons is a Tabletop Roleplaying Game (TTRPG) where a group of people, ideally 4-6 players, play as adventurers (Player Characters – PCs) in a fantasy setting. It can be described as ‘collaborative storytelling’ where a Dungeon Master runs an adventure by providing detail of the setting, play the creatures and NPCs (non-player characters), describe events, actions, places, and landscapes, and provide possible options and outcomes player could choose from. The player plays an imaginary hero, be it, elf, dwarf, human, etc. It is the players, through role-playing and dice rolls, who determine the outcome of the story.*

**\*The COVID Stuff\***

* **Check In in the foyer using the Check In Scotland QR code or by filling in a paper slip. This must be done again when you are leaving.**
* **Wear face coverings at all times.**
* **Follow all signage and instructions and continue to give people space when moving around the building.**
* **Sanitise hands regularly, especially in between touching equipment or books.**
* **Sit 1 metre apart.**
* **Only handle dice and miniatures you are using.**
* **Avoid sharing equipment with each other.**
* **Open to all** - D&D games at Orkney Library & Archive are open to all aged 12 and above – beginners and more experienced alike. Experienced players should help those who are less experienced. Participants with additional support needs are welcome, but it would be helpful if this could be made known to the DM prior to the game, if the participant wishes, so adjustments can be made if necessary. It the participant requires more support, please could parent/carer/companion remain nearby. If coloured paper is required for character sheets, this needs to be made known in advance.
* **Publicity** - Sessions are advertised via Social Media. Participants should sign up by phoning the library on 873166. There will be 6 places available, up to a maximum of 8 if it is appropriate to the session. Orkney Library staff might take photographs for use on their Twitter and Facebook feeds. ***During COVID mitigations, there will only be 5 places available.*** A waiting list will be kept.
* **Timing** - Sessions will be 3-3.5 hours, with a 10-15 minute break in the middle.
* **DM Style** – The DM is a fairly traditional player who aims to get a balance of role-playing social encounters, combat, and exploration although this does not always go to plan in a D&D session. Shorter sessions mean the games will be goal driven (with limited choices built in) (eg. Find the stolen item; Rescue the child) rather than wholly open world (sand box). Creativity is welcome as anything is possible within the bounds of dice rolls.
* **Character Creation** - Character sheets of an appropriate level are provided. However, experienced players may create their own PCs using the following guidelines (please arrive 15 mins earlier so they can be quickly reviewed by the DM). DnD Beyond may be used for character creation, but a paper sheet should be downloaded and printed out.
  + Ability scores – standard array (15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8) or Point buy. List of point buy stats here: <https://tinyurl.com/DnDPointBuy>
  + Race, class and background from ***The Player’s Handbook*** (Wizards of the Coast. 2014)
  + No evil aligned characters. No murderhobos. (see ‘Family Friendly’ above)
* **Roleplaying** – Don’t feel compelled to use a different voice or accent. If you are not comfortable with roleplaying (acting) describe what your character does or says.
* **Family friendly** - Games are, in the main will be family friendly (assume videogame PEGI 12/ BBFC 12/12A or PG), however, it has to be noted fantasy violence in D&D is inherent, using swords, bows, magic, etc. Keep it clean and suitable for all as the sessions are in a public venue. Where there are participants under the age of 12, any roleplaying descriptions of attacks /hits / kills should be toned right down. Avoid gender, political and racial stereotypes.
* **Consent / Emotional Bleed**

D&D is a fantasy game that can contain many elements which might reflect things going on in the real world and the fears, phobias, and emotions of a player. These include, but not limited to: relationships, social / cultural issues (eg. racism, gender, sexism), mental health, disabilities, and horror. It is recognised that players’ emotions and feelings may impact.  
  
Please let the DM/GM know if there is anything that is a complete ‘no’ for you before the game or if anything comes up during game that you didn’t realise was going to be an issue for you. Remember, this is a fantasy game, but we can become really immersed in it. If there are any themes or content which has left you worried or emotions you have felt, please discuss them with Mrs Sinclair or the other players if you feel able to do so. Beware of ‘bleed’ where emotions within game can overflow to real life, and vice versa. Please be aware of this.

**House Rules**

House rules are those the DM has adapted from the Rules as Written (RAW). They are usually slight alterations.

* Communication in combat – speak on own turn, but another PC can respond briefly.
* Potions – can be taken as a bonus action or given to another PC as an action.
* Good roleplaying / creative ideas (without the need for RP) may give advantage on some skill checks.
* On level up when gaining hit points, player can choose to take the average value after you have rolled.
* Attunement to magic items (for short sessions) – No need to meditate for one hour (in game) to identify a magic item prior to attunement. 1-hour attunement will also allow you to know the properties of the item.

**Table Rules**

* **Dice**
  + Don’t touch other people’s equipment, dice, pens, etc., without permission. Roll dice on the table in full view of the DM. Dice which roll off the table must be re-rolled OR (depending on DM) count as a Natural 1 (Critical fail).
  + Dice that land cocked against a book or paper should be re-rolled.
  + Dice that bounce off something will count.
  + Roll both attack (d20) and damage dice at the same time. It makes the action move a bit faster.
  + Use dice that have clear numbers.
* **Limit out of character chat** and avoid talking over another player’s turn in an encounter. Don’t talk over the DM either.
* **Be prepared for your turn** - Pay attention to the action. Plan your next actions before your turn. Take too long, you will only be allowed a basic attack action and movement, OR take the dodge action, OR you will be dropped down in the initiative order OR even miss your turn (DM’s choice).
* **Spell casters** - have spell information to hand. The DM needs to know range and saving throws.
* Keep personal conflict or disagreement away from the table.
* **Character sheet** - Keep accurate track of XP, hit points, spell slot usage, conditions, money, equipment, etc. Use pencil on your sheet.
* **Mobile phones** – Not on the table unless you are using an appropriate app with prior arrangement with the DM. eg. DnDBeyond.
* **Rules discussions** - The DM may quickly clarify a rule where possible, but further discussion should wait until the game session is finished.
* **Avoid numbers** – You are roleplaying! Don’t say “I have 2 hit points left.” (Unless you are asked by the DM.) Do say something like “I am / my character is really struggling here”, “I drop to my knees”, for example.
* Have a **spare back-up character** in case the one you are playing dies. If you don’t have one, you will be given a pre-generated one.
* **Help each other**. Experienced players keep inexperienced ones right.

Full **Guidelines and Expectations**, house rules, and other information about playing the game are available from:

<https://tinyurl.com/SALibraryDnD>

**Basic Rules –** Key sections: Part 2 ‘*Playing the Game*’ & Part 3 ‘*The Rules of Magic*’

<https://media.wizards.com/2018/dnd/downloads/DnD_BasicRules_2018.pdf>

**BBFC Rating Guide**

<https://bbfc.co.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/BBFC-Classification-Guidelines.pdf>