

CHAPERONES GUIDANCE

What Skills do I Need?
How and Where do I Register?
What are My Responsibilities?
Which Parts of the Regulations Must I Know?
What are the Responsibilities of the Licence Holder?

This brief guide was designed to answer some basic questions, but there will be occasions where further clarity and depth, especially with regard to the Regulations, will be required and for this you should contact either: your chaperone licensing authority (Local Authority), the child's licensing authority (Local Authority) or the authority where a performance is taking place (Local Authority).

CHAPERONING SKILLS & CHILD PROTECTION

The law states that 'the Chaperone is acting *in loco parentis* and should exercise the care "*which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give that child*".

The child will be working in a very 'adult' environment and you need to be able to ensure that they understand what is expected of them, taking into account their age and experience.

You also need to take account, and be aware, of a child's concentration span, their exposure to adult conversations, expectations, peer pressure and relationships with other adults in the production.

Health & Safety issues on stage or on set i.e. smoking policy, electrical equipment such as: leads, sound equipment and cameras can all be very dangerous. Children should not be allowed to 'fool around'.

The child may not be 'in school' but that doesn't mean the hours they are tutored are less important than those spent at school (3 hours minimum tutoring required on a school day).

You need to be able to tell when the child is ill, tired or upset. Don't disregard a child in order to meet the production's schedule. Remember, children are not 'little adults'. It can often be difficult for children to communicate their feelings in a way in which adults understand, therefore, you will be the intermediary between them and the production company.

The concentration span of children is far shorter than that of adults (depending on age) therefore you need the skills to be able to occupy, or enable them to occupy, their non performance / non tutoring time which is especially important during filming and when on location. This may include physical activities or it may be that the child should just rest and quietly read a book.

Different skills will be required when chaperoning in a theatre as opposed to a film set or on location. There is much more 'hanging about' time during filming and the weather may lead to the child being confined in a caravan for quite long periods – remember their energy level is far higher than ours and the children may need more individual attention.

Bullying – you must always be aware of bullying as it can be very subtle. It may be easy to spot a physical fight or sideways kick but it's not always quite so easy to spot the odd word or joke directed,

albeit innocently, towards one particular child. This sort of behaviour should be 'nipped in the bud' immediately otherwise it could affect both the child and the production.

☐☐ Has the company got a Child Protection Policy? And a Nominated Contact Person with child protection training or experience as a point of reference for both staff and chaperones? Ask them, make enquiries.....

☐☐ Safe Practice. All production staff, actors, cast, crew and chaperones (including dressers and makeup) should be mindful of their conduct around children. Any unnecessary physical contact should be avoided, as it could be misconstrued, either by the child themselves or by others. Be sensible, do not leave a child alone with other adults or put yourself in a vulnerable position.

☐☐ Any unusual or disturbing behaviour or comments by a child regarding an adult member of the production or a peer should be reported to a senior member of the production (or nominated child protection person) and where appropriate referred on to Social Services. In serious situations, where contact is difficult, call the Police!

☐ If an allegation is made against a member of the production, chaperone, cast or helper, full cooperation will be sought from those in charge, the individual member of staff and the licensing authority. In the case of serious allegations it will be necessary to suspend the member of staff immediately until the investigation is concluded. It may be necessary to exclude from the theatre/rehearsal rooms/location/film set etc. the person against whom the allegation has been made or ensure that they do not have unsupervised contact with any child.

☐☐ Finally, remember performing should be an enjoyable experience for the child and for you. Good communication and negotiating skills be they with the child or with the variety of adults involved in the production, is vital.

REGISTRATION

Application for a Chaperone Licence must be made to the LA in whose area YOU live.

Application forms are available on request. Once the application form is received a date will be arranged for an interview, reference checks and DBS check will be undertaken, additionally Chaperone training must be attended which includes Basic Child Protection awareness rising, and the roles and responsibilities of a Chaperone. There is a rolling programme of training dates throughout the year. There is a cost to Professional Chaperones for their DBS check but no charge to individuals looking to Chaperone children as Volunteers.

NOTE: *DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks will need to be undertaken which are sent to DBS (Gov't Agency) so the LA have no control over the processing time of such checks. If your disclosure check is satisfactory, DBS will issue you with a certificate which you will then need to show the LA.*

Once issued a licence is valid for 3 years. KEEP YOUR LICENCE WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES WHEN WORKING. YOU MAY HAVE TO PROVE YOU ARE ACTUALLY LICENSED.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Your FIRST responsibility is to the child in your care. While you are chaperoning you should not be performing any other duties. Remember, you are *in loco parentis* (except when the child is in the care of a tutor).

It is your responsibility, together with the Licence Holder, to ensure that the Regulations (and any additional requirements/proviso placed on the licence by the child's Licensing Authority or inspecting

Local Authority) are upheld at all times. You may find yourself under pressure, by the production company to relax the Regulations due to re-scheduling; but you must remember that your first duty is to the **care of the child**. Having a good knowledge of the Regulations, knowing where to go for help and advice, coupled with firm negotiating skills, are all crucial elements to good chaperoning.

Remember if 'things aren't right' and you object, you are not 'creating a fuss'. The reason and expectation behind your LA issuing you with a chaperone licence is in order to care and protect the child. You may fear that if you object the 'company' will not employ you again? We are aware that this can be a real fear but it should not override your main responsibility, which is to the child/children in your care. Please report any incidents to your licensing authority to enable them to follow-up with the company concerned. We will back you up, but we need you to let us know what's going on out there.

1. You should be with the child at all times whether: on set/stage area, dressing rooms, recreation, meal and break areas etc. You are the KEY PERSON to whom the child looks for protection, clarification and support – you are the KEY to a happy performing experience. If the facilities are '*wanting*' YOU should negotiate better facilities with the production. Children are not 'add ons' to a production their care is paramount at all times. You can obtain additional support from: your licensing LA, child's licensing LA or the LA in whose area the performance is taking place.
2. Chaperones can only be responsible for a maximum of 12 children (if the person is the private teacher of the child in question this is reduced to 3), this will be reduced significantly depending on the children's age, gender or special needs etc, other factors which are taken into account are the venue/location and facilities such as dressing rooms and individual children's performance times etc. Whilst the LA will consider appropriate ratio's during the application process a Chaperone should also ensure they consider these ratio's appropriate prior to their engagement.
3. Children may be required to travel considerable distances to take part in a performance and the organisers should allow for that in setting the timetable for each day of the performance. The LA will take travel time into account and, if necessary, set out different start and finish times for a child to allow for travel as a condition of a licence. However, a Chaperone should monitor this as additional arrangements may need to be agreed if it is felt the wellbeing child is compromised under current arrangements.

Therefore, taking into account the child's welfare, it may be more sensible for a production company to schedule each child's performance days in blocks per week (rather than an odd day here and there throughout a week) or provide accommodation nearer to where the performance is taking place rather than travelling several hours each day or every other day and attending school in between. *Remember, schedules can be amended if they are not working satisfactorily. If the travelling is proving a problem for the child you could raise this with production and agree accommodation in a hotel?*

4. Living away from home – the Chaperone is responsible for the child. This includes seeing that the child's lodgings are satisfactory in every way; and that the child is properly occupied during his/her spare time. Generally, you may need to exercise a greater amount of supervision than if the child was living at home. Again, if there are problems here which cannot be resolved, contact the child's licensing LA, or the LA in whose area the performance is taking place.
5. Illness or injury – at no time should a child perform when unwell. If a child falls ill or is injured while in the Chaperone's or Tutor's charge, medical assistance must be gained and the parent/guardian and licensing LA informed immediately. **Always** have a contact number for parents.
6. Dangerous Performances - These must be authorised **before** a licence is issued.

SEE LICENCE HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES. If you think a performance is dangerous and not authorised STOP, THINK, CONSULT with production and their Health and Safety officer. If you believe what is being asked of the child is still unacceptable **STOP** the performance until you are satisfied. It may help to talk to the LA in whose area the performance is taking place, the local Environmental Health or the theatre/studio Health and Safety officer. The production will know who these people are and will have their contact numbers.

7. Records should be available to a visiting officer of the LA by the production. Chaperones are often designated, by the production company, to keep these records in respect of the child:-

See table B Records to be kept by licence holder

REGULATIONS

☐☐ **Rehearsals** - The Act applies to performances, but not to rehearsals. Rehearsals are however affected by the Regulations. If they take place during the currency of a licence (between first and last performing day) they are subject to the same restrictions and conditions applicable to that licence i.e. time at place of performance, performing times, and so forth. Rehearsals also count as a performance when calculating length of working the week i.e. 6 days.

☐☐ **Education** - Children who receive private teaching as part of their licence must have at least the minimum amount of teaching – equivalent to three hours a day for each normal school day missed. However, this can be aggregated over four weeks (or the total period of the licence if that is less than four weeks) to allow some flexibility from day to day, with a minimum of six hours in any one week and a maximum of five hours in any one day.

e.g. 5 days performing: 3 hrs x 5

days = 15 hrs x 4 wks = 60 hours tuition required over 4 week period.

☐☐ **Tutors** - a tutor may only teach a maximum of 5 children of differing levels at the same time. If the children are at the same level they may teach up to a maximum of 12. Tutor, school and parent, in liaison with the child's LA (*LAs discretion*), may stipulate a reduced number of children be taught at any one time. Tutors should liaise closely with the child's school, especially where long absences from school are scheduled to ensure that the curriculum is adhered to in order to avoid the child falling behind in his or her studies. Remember the child's education is important and conditions may be placed on the child's Licence, by the child's LA, in order to accommodate the child's educational requirements.

☐☐ **Chaperones Discretion** If the Chaperone is satisfied that serious dislocation of schedules resulted in the child being requested to work beyond the allotted time and the Chaperone is also satisfied that the child's welfare would not suffer, the Chaperone may permit the child to continue for a further 60 minutes. This is providing that the total work done in that day does not exceed that allowed for a child of his age (**See TABLE B – Performances & Activities Table**). When ANY such extension is authorised the Producer/Chaperone should notify the LA in whose area the child is working, either on the same day or the following day.

☐☐ **Nightwork** Although there is an earliest starting time and a latest finishing time (**See TABLE B – Performances & Activities Table**) a child is allowed to work at night (that is, after the latest finishing time and before the earliest starting time) if a request is made to the child's local authority. As the child's well-being is paramount, such work is subject to restrictions. Any performing which takes place after midnight counts as part of the performing time allowed on the previous day. The child **MUST** also have a break of at least 16 hours before he returns to the place of performance after night work and if he/she does night work on **2 consecutive nights** he/she **CANNOT** do any further night work for AT LEAST another week (7 days).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Does the company, as the employer, have a Child Protection Policy and nominated person with child protection training or experience as a point of reference for chaperones, and who can assist in making a referral to the relevant social services department for the area the performance is located in?

An authorised officer of the LA in whose area a performance takes place may at any time enter any place where a performance, licensed or unlicensed, to which S.37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 applies and may make enquiries about any child they suspect of taking part in a performance.

The LA may request whatever information they feel appropriate for the purpose of deciding whether to grant a licence. An LA may also, in particular, make enquiries they think necessary to enable them to decide whether the licence should be granted subject to a condition to protect the child's earnings.

Dangerous Performances. No person under 12 may be trained to take part in 'performances of a dangerous nature'. A person aged 12 to 16 (child over compulsory school age) may be trained to take part in dangerous performances under certain circumstances. Any performance which may be considered as dangerous should be discussed with the LA prior to issuing a licence. Checks may be required / arranged between the LA and LA prior to agreement that a performance of this nature may take place. This may also involve Environmental Health and Health & Safety departments' inspections.

Conditions or provisos may be placed on the child's Licence by the issuing LA (times, night work, tutoring etc.) together with the legal requirements under the legislation.

Non-UK children working in this country. Applications should be made to the LA in whose area the applicant lives or has his business (if there is no UK base then application can be made to the LA where the first performance takes place) or where the child is resident during the period of a performance. All non-UK children are required to be licensed to perform in the UK.

UK children performing abroad must be licensed to do so through the Magistrates Court.

Unlicensed Performances. A child of any age may take part in unlicensed performances on 4 days in any period of 6 months, subject to compliance with the hours of work, rest and meals prescribed in the Regulations. This exemption **does not apply** if any absence from school is required to enable the child to take part in a performance or activity, nor if the child is receiving payment for the performance.

LICENCE HOLDER (APPLICANT) RESPONSIBILITIES

The application must be made by the person or organisation responsible for organising, producing or running the activity or performance in which the child will be involved. The application must be made in writing to the relevant local authority at least 21 days before the licence is needed. If less notice is given, the authority has the right to refuse to grant a licence on the grounds that there is too little time to carry out their responsibilities; it is **most unlikely** that a licence will be granted if the application is received less than five working days before the date on which the licence is required. If the licence is granted, the applicant will be legally responsible for ensuring that all the conditions are met and that the child is properly safeguarded.

Note: A copy of the child's licence is issued to the applicant, the LA in whose area the performance or activity takes place and the child's parents/legal guardian.

Productions **MUST** ensure that each child's Licence and Chaperone/Tutor records are available at each place of performance when the child is working. Once the production is complete these records are to be held by the Licence Holder (applicant) for a minimum period of 6 months at the address given on the Licence application (which needs to be the Head (main) Office and NOT the location address i.e. temporary residence of a production at a studio or location) if requested for inspection by an officer of the LEA/LA at a later date. **See TABLE A - 'Records to be kept by licence holder'**

☐ Productions MUST ensure that a Health & Safety 'risk assessment' has been undertaken at a place of the performance:- smoking policy on and off the set; fire regulations / certificate; first aider contact person. All staff, chaperones and children should be made fully aware of evacuation procedures. If you are not advised of these – ASK You can contact the relevant Environmental Health Department for further details on Health & Safety - Management of Health & Safety at Work Act 1999.

TABLE A Records To Be Kept By The Licence Holder

1. The licence.
2. The following particulars in respect of each day on which the child is present at the place of performance or place of rehearsal—
 - a) the date;
 - b) the time of arrival at the place of performance or rehearsal;
 - c) the time of departure from the place of performance or rehearsal;
 - d) the times of each period during which the child took part in a performance or rehearsal;
 - e) the time of each rest interval;
 - f) the time of each meal interval; and
 - g) the times of any night-work authorised by the licensing authority
3. Where arrangements are made for the education of the child by a private teacher, the date and duration of each lesson and subject taught.
4. Details of injuries and illnesses (if any) suffered by the child at the place of performance or place of rehearsal, including the dates on which such injuries occurred and stating whether such injuries or illnesses prevented the child from being present at the place of performance or place of rehearsal.
5. The dates of the breaks in performances required under regulation 29(1).
6. The amount of all monies earned by the child by reason of taking part in the performance and the names, addresses and description of the persons to whom such sums were paid.
7. Where the licensing authority grants a licence subject to the condition that sums earned by the child must be dealt with in a manner approved by it, the amount of the sums and the manner in which they have been dealt with.

TABLE B**Performances & Activities Table****CHILDREN IN ENTERTAINMENT
RESTRICTIONS IN RELATION TO ALL PERFORMANCES**

Topic	Age 0 to 4	Age 5 to 8	Age 9 and over
Maximum number of hours at place of performance or rehearsal (Reg.24)	5 hours	8 hours	9.5 hours
Earliest and latest permitted times at place of performance or rehearsal (Reg.23)	7am to 10pm	7am to 11pm	7am to 11pm
Maximum period of continuous performance or rehearsal (Reg.24)	30 minutes	2.5 hours	2.5 hours
Maximum total hours of performance or rehearsal (Reg.24)	2 hours	3 hours	5 hours
Minimum intervals for meals and rest (Reg.25)	Any breaks must be for a minimum of 15 minutes. If at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 4 hours, breaks must include at least one 45 minute meal break.	If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 4 hours but less than 8 hours, they must have one meal break of 45 minutes and at least one break of 15 minutes If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for 8 hours or more, they must have the breaks stated above plus another break of 15 minutes.	If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 4 hours but less than 8 hours, they must have one meal break of 45 minutes and at least one break of 15 minutes If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for 8 hours or more, they must have the breaks stated above plus another break of 15 minutes.
Education (Reg.15)	N/A	3 hours per day (maximum of 5 hours per day). 15 hours per week, taught only on school days. Minimum of 6 hours in a week if aggregating over 4 week period or less.	3 hours per day (maximum of 5 hours per day). 15 hours per week, taught only on school days. Minimum of 6 hours in a week if aggregating over 4 week period or less.
Minimum break between performances (Reg.25)	1 hour 30 minutes	1 hour 30 minutes	1 hour 30 minutes
Maximum consecutive days to take part in performance or rehearsal (Reg.28)	6 days	6 days	6 days

Note: Local authorities should take note of Regulation 5 that allows the licensing authority to further restrict these permitted hours, breaks etc. and place additional conditions on the licence if this would be in the best interests of the individual child.

ARRIVAL AT THE VENUE

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrive before the children, especially if the venue is not known to you. This will give time to have a look around and meet other people involved in the event.• Make yourself known to the Licence Holder or their deputy and any other relevant person (i.e. stage/floor manager, dressers, etc.).• Check all areas to be visited by the children for any hazards.• Check fire exits for ease of passage.• Find out what the fire alarm sounds like and arrange a fire drill involving the children.• Check the first aid facilities and if there is a qualified First Aider on the premises.• Check that dressing rooms, toilets, school room, rest room, meal arrangements and any other facilities are suitable.• When checking dressing rooms, remember children aged 5 years or over must only dress with other children of the same sex.• Liaise with any other Chaperones who have been employed, and work as a team.• Have a list of the names of the children you will be caring for. If there are more than 12 children each Chaperone must be sure who is looking after which children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check each child's performance licence and note any conditions endorsed on it. The Licence Holder's copy must be available at the place where the event takes place.• Ensure there is a list of the children's home and emergency contact details which you can get access to at all times in case you need to contact the parent/guardian.• Check with the Licence Holder to ascertain whether any child has medical problems or requirements. This information is strictly confidential but, as a Chaperone, you need to know. If a child becomes ill there may be something in the notes that will give you some indication of the problem. If the child is taken to hospital or is seen by a doctor, the fact that a child is taking medication may have an effect on the treatment. You may need to remind a child to take their medication at a specific time.• If you are unhappy with any of the facilities or arrangements you should voice your concerns to the Licence Holder and negotiate better conditions. If these negotiations are not successful you must consider whether you are going to allow the children to take part in the event. In these circumstances you must inform the appropriate Local Authority as soon as possible with the details of the problem/s and the action you took.
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CHECK LIST - ARRIVAL AT THE VENUE

You may find it useful to photocopy this page to use at each job you attend.

	TICK
Familiarise yourself with the venue's layout	
Identify all hazard areas	
Locate all fire exits	
Ask to hear sound of fire alarm	
Arrange fire drill (with alarm) for children	
Locate first aid facilities	
Inspect dressing rooms (separate for age 5 years and over)	
Locate and inspect toilets	
Locate and inspect rest rooms	
Locate and inspect school room (if applicable)	
Check on meal arrangements	
Check total number of children	
Check total number of chaperones	
Acquire list of children's name	
Check each child's performance licence	
Ensure you have emergency home contacts for each child	
Where relevant, ensure you have details of each child's medical problems and/or medication.	
Ensure each child is signed in and out by an authorised adult.	

Checked by: _____

Date: _____