

PREPARING FOR STAGE SHOWS SAFEGUARDING ADVICE TO DANCE/THEATRE SCHOOLS

ABOUT THIS ADVICE DOCUMENT

As the producer of a show you are responsible for ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of the children taking part. You are also responsible for ensuring you apply for performance licences or exemptions in accordance with Section 37 of the Children & Young Persons Act 1963 and that you are fully conversant with, and adhere to, The Children (Performances & Activities) (England) Regulations 2014.

Pre-planning is vital for ensuring the smooth running of your show or event and to make sure that the children taking part are properly safeguarded. This document is intended to provide advice on what you need to consider when organising a show. If you require any further advice please feel free to contact us.

1. THE VENUE

- Familiarise yourself with the layout of the venue
- Carry out a risk assessment
- Ensure the dressing rooms are suitable and can accommodate the number of children. Don't forget boys and girls aged over 5 years must have separate dressing rooms.
- Ensure the toilets are suitable – do adults have access to the toilets? If so, what arrangements will there be for the children?
- Fire exits and evacuation procedures – think about how you would manage an evacuation of the building.
- First aid facilities – ensure these are easily accessible at the venue. For larger venues with dressing rooms on different floors, you may want to consider taking extra first aid kits to ensure they are easily to hand for chaperones.

2. NEXT STEPS

- Apply for licences or exemptions. Discuss with the Local Authority in whose area the child resides and the Authority in whose area the performance is taking place.
- Chaperones - taking into account the number of boys/girls, the layout of the changing rooms and when the children are on and off stage, calculate how many chaperones you will need to employ. Are there children who will benefit from the '4 day rule' exemption? Will you be employing chaperones to look after these exempted children? If not, ensure you employ a sufficient number of suitable appropriate adults. Remember that the children must be supervised at all times.
- Medical – do any of the children have any medical or special needs, such as allergies? You should obtain fitness statements from parents if you don't already have these in place.
- Forms – prepare relevant forms such as signing in/out sheets, daily record sheets, parent contact form, incident form, parent medical form. Examples can be provided if requested.
- What if there is a fire drill or evacuation? Think about how you would manage this and ensure all children would be accounted for. Make sure there is a list of all children and that chaperones have a separate list of children they are looking after.

3. COMMUNICATION – Parents and chaperones

- **Parents** – ensure parents are informed about the arrangements for the children such as:
 - Where and at what time the children are to be dropped off and collected
 - Children must be signed in and out by their parent/guardian and inform you if there is a change to the named person collecting the child. Parents must remain with their child until they are signed in and allocated to their chaperone.
 - Arrangements for refreshments for the child, i.e. should they bring a drink, food or snacks?
 - Parents to inform you of any medical or special needs of their child
 - Parents to provide at least two emergency contact numbers
 - Inform parent who the named chaperone is for their child.

- **Chaperones/helpers** – it is good practice to hold a meeting prior to rehearsal/performance with chaperones and helpers so everyone knows their role and what is expected of them, e.g.
 - Which children they will be responsible for (ensure all licensed children have an allocated licensed chaperone)
 - Dressing room allocations
 - Do any of the children have any special / medical needs, such as allergies?
 - Arrangements for signing the children in/out and what has been confirmed with parents.
 - Discuss the risk assessment and fire and evacuation procedures. Explain the procedure in the event of a building evacuation.
 - Location of first aid and named first aiders – will additional kits be required?
 - What to do if a child falls ill or has an accident.
 - Record keeping – what records will you want chaperones to keep on your behalf – e.g. daily record sheet, incident form to record illnesses/injuries (whether minor or otherwise), parent contact form etc.
 - Arrangements for meals and/or refreshments
 - Check chaperone licences, ensuring in date and also DBS Certificates of helpers
 - Remind chaperones to have their licences with them while chaperoning
 - Let chaperones see child's licences as they will need to be aware of any additional conditions or restrictions.
 - If the performance is at an unfamiliar venue, consider giving a tour of venue prior to the performance (or rehearsal) day, pointing out fire exits, changing rooms, toilets etc. Alternatively they would need to arrive early enough at the venue on the day to ensure this is carried out.
 - You might consider giving them a mini information pack including information discussed, forms they will be required to complete and list of children they will be looking after.
 - You might find it useful to highlight and discuss relevant sections of the chaperone guidance document, particularly for helpers who are not licensed chaperones. Helpers may view this document on our webpage at www.blackpool.gov.uk (search child performance).
 - Reminder about your social media, child protection and behaviour policies.
 - Any other information you think relevant

4. ON THE DAY

- Final check of venue
- Ensure daily record sheets are completed and record any illnesses or injuries on incident form
- Ensure you have licences / exemptions at the place of performance and chaperones have their licences with them
- Chaperones (and helpers) have their 'mini packs' with them (if applicable)
- Chaperones and helpers have their list of children. Some groups find it useful to put this list on the dressing room door together with the names of allocated chaperones/helpers
- See attached checklist, which you may find useful – this is included in our Blackpool Guidance for Chaperones booklet and all Blackpool chaperones will have a copy.

5. BLACKPOOL COUNCIL, CHILD LICENSING CONTACT DETAILS

Tel: 01253 476578

Email: childemployment@blackpool.gov.uk

VENUE CHECKLIST

Name of Production	
Main Contact	
1. Changing rooms/dressing rooms/other (eg trailers and green rooms)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are they clean? • Are they safe? • Are boys and girls over 5 using different dressing rooms? If not what are the arrangements? • Are they too hot or too cold? • Is there enough room? • Are they used by adults at the same time as children? • Are there free standing heaters/fans/cables etc that may be a trip hazard? • Is clothing suitable for climate child is performing in? • If filming in inclement weather are there sufficient towels/warm clothing/change of clothes etc.? • What are the arrangements for moving around the venue/location? 	
2. Toilets/showers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are they clean? • Are they separate to adults where possible? Are they used by adults as well as children? If so, what are the arrangements for the child? 	
3. Signing in/out	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a signing in/out sheet at the stage door? • Who is responsible for this? • Are children allowed to go out/off set on their own? If so who agreed this and is there a signed permission slip? 	
4. Around the venue?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the hallways/landings/stairs safe and free from obstruction? If not, what can be done? (move items/change route etc) • Do you need to remind the child of any hazards? • Who and where is the first aider/nurse/medic? • Where is the first aid box? • Have there been any injuries/illnesses you need to be aware of? Any allergies? • Where is the child's emergency contact number held? Is it easily accessible? • Where is the nearest fire exit? • Where is the fire assembly point? 	
5. Other checks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the arrangements for meals/refreshments for the child? • Have you seen the child's licence? Are they are additional conditions imposed by the Licensing Authority? • Have you got your chaperone approval certificate with you? 	