

## Code of Conduct for Chaperones

The chaperone's first duty is to the children and young people in their care. They must ensure their safety and welfare at all times.

While they are engaged as the chaperone on a production, they may not undertake any other activity that would interfere with their duties.

The chaperone is 'in loco parentis' except when the child/young person is being taught by an approved teacher, and should exercise the care, which a good parent might reasonably be expected to give.

Chaperones are the key person who the children/young people (who will be referred to as young person/young people throughout this Code of Conduct) look to for guidance, protection, clarification, and support. Chaperones are responsible for the welfare of the young people in their care at all times during the period, beginning with the first and ending with the last performance to which the licence relates, except where the young person is in the care of their own parent or teacher.

In order to carry out their role effectively a Chaperone must:

- be aware of and understand the conditions of the performance licence of the child who is in their care
- make themselves aware of any medical needs or disabilities of the young person in their care and be clear about any arrangements relating to medicines e.g. inhalers, care of young person with an allergy or diabetes or any assistance the young person may need
- know where the young people in their care are at all times
- not permit young people under statutory school age (last Friday in June in the school year in which they are 16) to leave the performance/rehearsal venue unescorted, unless in the company of their parents
- always be aware of the fire/safety/major incident arrangements of the venue
- be aware of the First Aid procedures at the venue
- ensure that all accidents/incidents are reported and recorded
- ensure that the young people are comfortable
- ensure that the young people have sufficient access to food and drink, be aware of any allergies they have, and that they have the appropriate mealtimes and rest/comfort breaks
- ensure all the young people have adequate and appropriate supervision during changing and toilet arrangements (where possible young people should be allocated separate toilets from the adults)

A Chaperone can be in charge of a maximum of 12 young people at any one time. However, this may be dependent upon the ages and the needs of the young people. If the Chaperone considers they cannot look after the number of young people in their care safely, they must advise the person in charge of the production to change the arrangement.

A Chaperone should always keep a register of all the young people in their care and keep the daily record sheets up to date. Head counts alone are not acceptable. Chaperones should be familiar with the productions social media policies. In addition, Chaperones must:

- stand up for the young person above production pressures
- keep a confidential list of all important contacts, such as the young person's licencing authority, the local authority in whose area the young person is performing, the young person's parent/legal guardian, contact details, any medical details
- work within the agreed parameters of confidentiality. For example, the sharing of personal information/details must only be disclosed on a need to know basis, to the appropriate people
- safeguard the sharing of information to ensure that it is not accessed by third parties and must not release any young person's details to any members of the public, press or media

## **Behaviour of Chaperones**

A Chaperone must:

- be the young person's champion
- conduct themselves in an appropriate manner on set. They should be visible to the young people, but not get in the way of the crew or set
- be alert to potential hazards and ensure that their focus always remains on the young person
- always pay attention to the welfare of the children and not be distracted in any way such as by being 'star struck', reading, or using social media
- always report to the Head Chaperone or other identified appropriate person if any problems or queries arise
- report any concerns immediately, know who to report them to and what to do in each case
- be aware that some young people may be in the care of their parent whilst on set. Chaperones should intervene if a parent agrees to something that may contravene child performance regulations or may endanger a young person
- ensure their DBS Certificate is renewed either annually via the update service or every three years
- ensure that they comply with any conditions to ensure their Chaperone Approval is renewed
- attend training to complete their Chaperone Registration and undertake a Child Protection/Safeguarding Refresher Course every three years in order to keep their chaperone registration up to date

- wear their Chaperone ID Badge and to carry a copy of their chaperone approval when they are on a production, so this can be shown to any inspecting officer from a local authority

Chaperones should notify the local authority at the earliest opportunity if:

- there are any changes to their circumstances, including health issues, arrests, bail conditions and or safeguarding concerns relating to them or their immediate family members
- they have been dismissed from a production because of concerns about their practice

A Chaperone must not:

- leave the young people alone with another adult (unless it is another licenced Chaperone, the young person's parent, or teacher)
- release young people to an adult they are not expecting at the end of the production unless this has been confirmed by the parent / production
- engage in an inappropriate relationship with a young person. This includes communication via social media, text messaging (unless agreed in advance with parents), websites and social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. This means that Chaperones should ensure that their personal social networking sites are set to private and young people are not listed as approved contacts. Equally, chaperones should not accept 'friend requests' from young people they are looking after.
- take photos of the young people
- use mobile phones whilst looking after the young people
- give gifts or show favouritism to the young people
- drink alcohol and/or take drugs whilst working. Chaperone's capacity to perform their duties as a Chaperone must not be impaired by alcohol or drugs
- possess, take, or supply illegal drugs, including cigarettes
- swear or use inappropriate language
- enter conversations of an inappropriate or sexual nature
- disclose or provide your personal details or information to the young people
- permit young people to use inappropriate language. If this does happen it is important to discuss with the parents
- discipline the young people. It is not the role of the chaperone to discipline a child and they must never hit, shout, or otherwise punish a child. Any behaviour issues should be discussed with a parent, person in charge and a suitable resolution found
- approach cast members for autographs or photos during working hours
- let children perform if they are unwell

## **Physical Touch**

Always check that it is ok with the young person before offering to help them.

Touch should always be conducted in an open manner. It should never be 'secret' or in a surreptitious manner.

## Response to Disclosures

If a young person confides in their Chaperone, that abuse has taken place:

- remain calm and in control, but do not delay in taking action
- listen carefully to what is being said. Allow the young person to tell at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification
- don't ask leading questions, use the following strategy:
  - T – Tell me
  - E – Explain that to me
  - D – Describe that to me
- do not promise to keep it a secret or confidential, reassure the young person that they did the right thing telling someone and explain what will happen next

Chaperones should use the first opportunity available to share the information received with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (the person responsible for child protection). Each production company should have a nominated Child Protection Person.

If that person is not available, contact Children's Social Care or the Police. Advice can also be sought from the Child Employment Officer in the home local authority of the chaperone, during working hours or from the Emergency Out of Hours Safeguarding Duty Team.

As soon as possible, make some notes (using the child's own words). Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned and who the information was given to.

Parents should not routinely be informed at this point if they are the subject of the disclosure as this may compromise the safety of the young person.

Where another registered Chaperone is the alleged abuser, the matter must also be referred immediately to the Safeguarding Lead on the production who can make a referral to the appropriate licencing authority. The Chaperone can prompt the production company to ensure this is done.

Information/evidence gathering is not the responsibility of the Chaperone. This is a matter solely for the investigating authorities.

If there are any **concerns relating to the safeguarding and welfare** of the young person – for example, neglect, engaging in inappropriate contact with adults, child sexual exploitation – it is the Chaperone's responsibility to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the local authority (who granted approval) of any concerns.

## Confirmation of Receipt and Understanding of the Chaperone Code of Conduct

As an Approved Chaperone with Birmingham City Council, you are expected to read, understand, accept and abide by this Code of Conduct. Failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct could lead to your approval being suspended and or revoked in line with our Chaperone Approval Policy.

Please sign and date this document below to confirm your understanding and acceptance and send a scanned copy to [childemployment@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:childemployment@birmingham.gov.uk).

Once signed, this will be held on your chaperone file to confirm that you have read, understood, and agreed to abide by the chaperone code of conduct.

Signed: .....

Print Name: ..... Date: .....

