

# **A GUIDE FOR CHAPERONES**

The following information is given by the NNCEE to help chaperones in dealing with children in their charge appearing in performances. **It is not a definitive guide to the law.**

## **BASIC REQUIREMENTS**

1. “The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations, 2014” lays down the Regulations for chaperones. The following are the most important:
  - 1.1. The chaperone shall be in charge of the child at all times, except when the child is in the charge of his parent or a tutor.
  - 1.2. The local authority shall not approve a chaperone unless satisfied that they can exercise proper care and control of the child(ren), and that they will not be prevented from carrying out her duties as a chaperone by other duties.
  - 1.3. A chaperone shall not be in charge of more than twelve children at any one time.
  - 1.4. A chaperone shall be responsible for the proper care and control of the child, including, his/her health, comfort, kind treatment and moral welfare.
  - 1.5. In certain conditions, the chaperone may allow a child to perform for up to one hour beyond the latest permitted time or have a meal break reduced to half an hour, if the total number of hours does not exceed the maximum number of hours permitted, if the chaperone thinks the welfare of the child will not suffer, and if the circumstances are outside the control of the licence holder (for example, serious dislocation of film production schedules).
2. A chaperone is expected to exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give. Except while they are in the charge of an approved tutor, children must be under the supervision of the chaperone all the time they are at the place of performance.
  - 2.1. The chaperone must keep a record of the times the child is at the place of performance, when he/she rehearses, and when he/she performs. They must see he/she has the right breaks for rest and meals. Children should be provided with nutritional food and not have take-away snacks. Any special diets required for medical reasons, or on moral or religious grounds, must be provided for.
  - 2.2. The chaperone acts in *loco parentis*, and must, for instance, escort the child(ren) from the performance area to the dressing rooms and remain always with them except when they are performing or receiving tuition. The arrangements for the journey from and the return to the home must be satisfactory for the child's safety. The chaperone must safeguard the child's safety. The chaperone must safeguard the child's welfare, and not do anything which could jeopardise the child's welfare, or cause them any harm. The child(ren) must be guarded against exposure to possible harm, including abuse or discrimination.
  - 2.3. The chaperone must ensure that any children in his or her supervision has suitable opportunities for recreation, and that the child is protected from stress, strain, bad weather and any other conditions likely to harm him.

- 2.4. The chaperone must be satisfied with the agreements for the dressing rooms, toilets etc, and know the procedure for the evacuation of the building in case of fire.
- 2.5. If a child is unwell, they must not perform, and arrangements made for them to be escorted home, or medical attention given as necessary.
- 2.6. In the event of any contravention of the licence, or incident affecting the wellbeing of the child(ren), the chaperone must inform the local authority that issued the licence at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.7. Additionally, the Local Authority requires that any chaperone authorised by it ensure that no child is discriminated against on grounds of race, gender, age, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.

### **CHILDREN ON TOUR**

3. If the child is living away from home the chaperone is responsible for him throughout the currency of licence. This includes seeing that his lodgings are satisfactory and that he is properly occupied in his spare time. In general, a chaperone needs to exercise a greater amount of supervision than if the child were living at home during the period of the licence.
  - 3.1. The chaperone must see that there are suitable arrangements for meals. Food should normally be provided at the lodgings. The children must be in the constant charge of the chaperone, who must accompany them at all times.
  - 3.2. The chaperone must arrange to sleep in the accommodation which the children sleep near to the rooms occupied by the children.
  - 3.3. It is a special responsibility of the chaperone to see that adequate comfortable and clean lodgings are found for the children. These lodgings have to be approved by the local authority in whose area they are, but if for any reason they think them unsatisfactory, the chaperone should insist on a change of accommodation.
  - 3.4. The chaperone must see that, if necessary, there is transport to and from the place of entertainment. No child should normally have more than 3 hours journey. The children should have plenty of exercise.
  - 3.5. A child must not perform when unwell and in the event of the child being too ill to perform, the chaperone must make arrangements for the child to be sent home under proper escort. In the case of serious illness/accident the child should be sent to hospital and the child's parents informed immediately. The Authority who issued the licence should also be informed as soon as possible.

### **GENERAL**

4. The chaperone should be thoroughly familiar with the terms of the licence granted by the local education authority and see that, as far as it lies within their power, the conditions are properly fulfilled. The chaperone should also familiarise themselves with first aid, and the basics of health and safety legislation.
5. The Local Authority will not approve a chaperone unless satisfied that they can exercise proper care and control of the child(ren), and that they will not be prevented from carrying out any duties by other activities. For some chaperone there may be only limited approval as being suitable, for instance, supervise children of a particular age and/or gender.

- 5.1. Chaperones are approved for up to three years and must apply for renewal at the expiration. Any approval is granted subject to certain conditions; any breach of these conditions could lead to the Approval being withdrawn.
- 5.2. When approved, chaperones are required to notify their licensing authority in writing within seven days of:
- Any arrest for any offence triable in a Court of Law, or any conviction in such a Court, whether in the United Kingdom or not.
  - Any serious or notifiable illness or debility.
  - Any change of address or name.
- 5.3. The chaperone should keep the certificate of approval in a safe place, and ensure that they have their ID with them each day that they are employed as a chaperone, and have it available for inspection, should the need arise.
- 5.4. Local authorities do not find employment for chaperones, and will not recommend chaperones to employers.
- 5.5. Chaperone hired for work will be sent copies of the licences (usually via the applicant) and should study the conditions to ensure that the conditions are complied with, including rest periods, arrangements for tuition, meals etc. A timetable should be kept of the various periods during the hours of the licence.

## INSPECTION

It is a Local Authority's practice that regular inspections without prior notice are carried out at places of entertainment within their area. Most Local Authorities have similar policies. Inspections are normally undertaken by the Child Employment & Licensing officer or any other authorised officer of the Council, but it could include a Fire Officer or Health and Safety Inspector. The Officer would make his or herself known to the chaperone on arrival and will have proper identity cards.

Chaperones should under no circumstances hand any child over to, or let the child be examined by, any other person. The only exceptions to this are unless with the prior approval of the child's parent, or emergencies, and then under the supervision of a doctor, police officer in uniform, or other suitable persons.

Any further information may be obtained from:

Child Employment & Licensing Officer  
ACE Team, 3rd Floor,  
145 King Street  
London W6 9XY

Email: [childlicensing@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:childlicensing@lbhf.gov.uk)