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Chaperone Guide



Chaperones

- What skills do I need?
- What are my safeguarding responsibilities?
- What are my responsibilities?
- Which parts of the regulations must I know?
- What are the responsibilities of the license holder?

Useful addresses:

[Chaperones - NNCEE - National Network for Children in Employment & Entertainment](#)

[Protecting children in entertainment training for chaperones | NSPCC Learning](#)

[Child performance and activities: licensing legislation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**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.22)	5 hours	8 hours	9.5 hours
Earliest and latest permitted times at place of performance or rehearsal (Reg.21)	7am to 10pm	7am to 11pm	7am to 11pm
Maximum period of continuous performance or rehearsal (Reg.22)	30 minutes	2.5 hours	2.5 hours
Maximum total hours of performance or rehearsal (Reg.22)	2 hours	3 hours	5 hours
Minimum intervals for meals and rest (Reg.23)	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.13)	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.23)	1 hour 30 minutes	1 hour 30 minutes	1 hour 30 minutes
Maximum consecutive days to take part in performance or rehearsal (Reg.26)	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.

Chaperoning Skills/Safeguarding of children

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

You will need to consider the following points:

- 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, considering their age and experience. You need to take account of a child’s concentration span, their exposure to adult conversations and expectations and peer pressure.
- Health and safety issues on stage or on set, i.e., 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 does not mean the hours they are tutored are less important than those spent at school.
- You need to be able to tell when the child is ill, tired or upset. Do not ignore them 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 nonperformance 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 is not always quite so easy to spot the odd word or joke directed periodically towards one particular child. Bullying behaviours should be addressed immediately.
- Finally, 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 a production are vital.

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR CHAPERONES

DO

- check the child is comfortable – you are the person to whom the child looks to guidance, protection, clarification and protection.
- stand up for the child above production pressures – one of a chaperone's greatest strengths is their ability to negotiate with the production company 'on site' and be able to say no when what is being requested of the child is contrary or detrimental to the child's health, well-being and/or education.
- be the child's champion
- report any concerns and know who to report them to and know what to do in each case – chaperones should keep a note of important contacts e.g., the child's licensing authority, the local authority in whose area the child is performing, the child's agent and the child's parent/legal guardian
- ask to see a copy of the licence.
- exercise discretion (only when regulation allows) where that is in the best interests of the child
- be alert to all possible risks to the child
- challenge people and/or behaviours

DO NOT

- let the child perform if they are unwell
- leave the child alone with another adult (unless it's their parent or teacher)
- ignore or downplay questionable behaviour from adults or other children
- allow the child to be pushed into things that they don't want to do
- take photos of the child
- seek autographs from performers or become star struck
- use inappropriate language or smoke whilst on duty
- consume alcohol/be under the influence of alcohol whilst on duty
- wear inappropriate clothing

Responsibilities of the Licence Holder:

- Ensure adequate protection against inclement weather is provided.
- A Health and Safety “risk assessment” has been undertaken at the place of the performance by the production company. Other areas, for example: fire regulations satisfactory; a first aider present at all times; staff, chaperones and children made fully aware of evacuation procedures in case of emergencies such as fire. Contact the relevant Environmental Health Department for further details on *Health and Safety - Management of Health and Safety at Work Act 1999*.
- PLUS - Any other conditions or provisos placed on the child's Licence by the issuing LA together with the Legal Requirements under the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014 are met.
- In the case of Open Licences, a child does not perform unless
 - I. A licence has been received by the applicant.
 - II. An add-on sheet applicable to the particular performance has been agreed and is attached to the original licence and held at the place of performance during a child's performance.
- Each child's Licence and Chaperone/Tutor records are available at the place(s) of performance, and held by the Licence Holder for a minimum period of six 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 LA.
- Suitable travel arrangements are provided.

- Suitable arrangements for meals are provided.
- Suitable accommodation and sanitary provision is provided.
- Suitable meal, rest, recreational and educational facilities are provided.

Note: 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 is taking place and to which a s.37 applies and may make enquiries about any child taking part in a performance.

Responsibilities

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

It is your responsibility, together with the Performance Licence Holder, to ensure that the regulations (and any additional requirements issued by the child's Licencing Authority) are upheld at all times. You may find yourself under pressure, by the production company from time to time, to relax the regulations due to rescheduling but you must remember that your first duty is towards the care of the child. Therefore, having a good knowledge of the regulations, knowing where to go for additional advice, coupled with firm negotiating skills, are all crucial elements to good chaperoning.

- 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 producer. Children are not “add ons” to a production, their care is paramount.
- You can obtain additional support from: your licencing Local Authority, the child's licencing Local Authority or the Local Authority in whose area the performance is taking place.

- The law states that the maximum number of children in your care should not exceed 12. In a lot of instances, 12 may be far too high if there are several very young children and several adolescents and, especially, if the children are living way from home (they would need more individual attention). These factors should be taken into account when deciding on the number of children you agree to chaperone. We would strongly recommend, for all types of performances, a maximum of six children per chaperone, providing you with a higher standard of care to the children.
- Although a maximum length of time for travelling is not laid down in the regulations, due consideration should be given to the child's: age, the length of time at the place of performance, and the duration of the production. 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.*
- Illness or injury—at no time should a child perform when unwell. If a child falls ill or is injured while in the Chaperone or teacher's care, medical assistance must be gained and the parent or guardian and the licencing LA informed immediately.

Night work continued - if the child does night work on two consecutive nights, he/she CANNOT do any further night work for AT LEAST another week (seven days).

- Night work MUST be agreed in advance and the LA is NOT BOUND to allow night work even if they are satisfied that the child's appearance is necessary if it may cause ANY harm to the child.

Licence Holder Responsibilities

Section 37(1) “ a child shall not take part in a performance to which this section applies except under the authority of a licence.”

Section 58 Education Act 1944. child— a person who is not over compulsory school age. Performances to which Act applies sees.37 subsection (2). Performances for which a Licence is not required see s.37(3). Offences - contraventions to s.37 summary conviction Level 3 (Children & Young Person Act 1963, s.40 as amended by the Criminal Justice Act 1982, ss 38 and 46.)

It is the responsibility of the Licence Applicant/Holder to ensure that:

- They have submitted a completed Licence Application form (Schedule I & II, plus all the attachments) to Hertfordshire County Council, or if the child does not live in Herts, the LA responsible for the area which the child lives, at least 21 days (Regulation 1 Schedule 1) before the first performance date.
- A child does not perform unless the applicant who applied for the Licence, i.e., producer, agent and so forth is in receipt of the child's Licence.

- Exceptions - 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/her age. When ANY extension is authorised, the Chaperone must notify the LA in whose area the child is working, either on the same day or the following day.
- Education aggregating hours - educational hours may be aggregated during each complete period of four weeks (or performance periods exceeding one week) as long as the child receives not less than six hours tuition per week and for not more than five hours per day during the permitted time allowed for a child of that age to be present at a place of performance, e.g. five days performing: *3 hours x 5 days = 15 hours x 4 weeks = 60 hours tuition required over four week period.* Children should not be allowed to lose educational hours due to long productions and heavy scheduling. Agreement should be sought from the child's LA/School prior to aggregating hours.
- Night work (indoors or out) - LAs may also allow working after midnight ONLY if they are satisfied that it is impractical to complete the work before then. 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/she returns to the place of performance.

Living away from home—the Chaperone is responsible for the child. This includes seeing that their lodgings are satisfactory in every way and that they are properly occupied during their spare time. Generally, you may need to exercise a greater amount of supervision than if the child was living at home. If there are problems here which cannot be resolved, contact the child's licencing LA or the LA in whose area the performance is taking place.

- **Dangerous performances** - NO child under the age of 16 may take part in dangerous performances. But from the age of 12, children may be trained to take part in dangerous performances only under a licence. This should be authorised by the LA in advance of the performance and extra vigilance maintained by you throughout.
- Records, by law should be available to a visiting officer of the LA by Producers. Chaperones are often designated to keep these in respect of the child:
 1. Times child is at the place of performance.
 2. Times child performs and/or rehearses.
 3. Times child has breaks and meals.
 4. Times child is waiting between performances, i.e., rescheduling.

If you feel pressured to accommodate a production's schedules and you are unsure of the legalities of what they may be asking of the child - Stop! Think! And check the regulations before agreeing to anything. If in doubt, phone the LA either at the time or as soon as possible after for further advice or support.

Regulations

The law has changed and now all types of performances have been amalgamated in terms of the time and place of performance that the child may take part in:

For all Performances:

- Rehearsals: - The LAs, in deciding to grant a licence, and if so, for how many days, will take into account any other work the child does in the 28 days preceding the first performance, and the amount of rehearsing the child is to do in the 14 days preceding the performance.
- Education: - A child must be taught on all school days (in the area in which he/she performs) for periods totalling not less than three hours per day (minimum 30 minutes) between the hours at which the child is permitted at the place of performance. Teaching must be within these hours and not added on to the time at the place of performance. (See *exceptions aggregating education hours*.)
- Tutors: - A tutor may only teach a maximum of six 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 parents in liaison with the child's LA (LA's 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 their studies. Remember the child's education is paramount and conditions may be placed on a licence.
- There must be a minimum interval of 1 hour 30 minutes between performances if there are two performances on the same day.
- A child may only perform and be at the place of performance on six consecutive days in any seven-day period.
- Maximum consecutive weeks must not exceed eight without an interval of at least two weeks.
- Age 0-5 years of age times at place of performance:
 - = Earliest time 7am
 - = Latest time 10pm
- Aged 5 and over times at place of performance:
 - = Earliest time 7am
 - = Latest time 11pm
- An interval of 12 hours must elapse between a child leaving and arriving at a place of performance.
- Maximum performance time for 0-5 years is 2 hours.
- Maximum performance time for 5-9 years is 3 hours.
- Maximum performance time for 9 years & up is 5 hours.
- Breaks must be factored into these times too.