

Becoming a Chaperone

A guide on how to become a chaperone and what it involves

Chaperones

Children taking part in performances and entertainment must be in the care of either, their parent (the child's legal guardian) or an approved chaperone at all times.

Note: grandparents, uncles, child minders and the like are NOT legal guardians (unless they are recognised as such by the courts), therefore, they need to be approved as a chaperone by the local authority where they live, in order to chaperone a child. Parents, unless they are also licensed chaperones, cannot chaperone children other than their own.

A Suitable Person

The holder of the licence is responsible for ensuring that, during the period beginning with the first performance and ending with the last performance which is covered by the licence, the child is in the charge of a person approved by the licensing authority. The regulations describe this person as a chaperone. This does not apply when the child is in the charge of their parent or tutor e.g., on a film set.

'In Loco Parentis'

The chaperone's first duty is to the children in their care; a chaperone must not undertake any other duties whilst they are looking after a child except when a child is in the care of a tutor (e.g., on a Film set) the matron is *in loco parentis* and should exercise the care, which a good parent, might be reasonably expected to give that child.

What is Proper Supervision?

The chaperone's duties will be to ensure that, when the child is not actually performing, they are properly always supervised, and have adequate meals, rest and recreation.

The Child's Welfare is Paramount

You are required to say **no** if you feel something is happening that is not in the child's best interest. You may need to support the child or parent if they are unhappy with what they are being asked to do. If the production continues despite your reservations, you must inform the LA Child Employment Officer ASAP.

Exercising Proper Care and Control

The licensing authority may make such enquiries as they consider necessary to enable them to be satisfied that they should grant the requested licence. This will include a Disclosure and Barring Service check, an interview and safeguarding training.

The licensing authority shall not approve a chaperone unless they are satisfied that they are suitable and competent to exercise proper care and control of a child.

Numbers of Children

The maximum number of children in the care of a chaperone at any one time may not exceed 12. There may be occasions when the chaperone could only perform their duties satisfactorily if the numbers were smaller.

Child's Health

No child should be allowed to perform when unwell. If a child falls ill or is injured while in the charge of a chaperone, a doctor should be called (if necessary) and the licence holder must immediately notify the parent and the Local Authority.

Travel Arrangements

It is the responsibility of the licence holder to see that suitable arrangements are made for the child to get home or to their lodgings after the performance, taking into consideration the child's age.

Does anyone inspect the venue or location?

Yes, to check that regulations are adhered to, however as a chaperone you have a responsibility to contact your Child Employment Officer if you have any concerns.

- ✓ Have you seen a copy of the child's licence?
- ✓ Have you got emergency contact numbers for the parents?
- ✓ Have the parents mentioned anything that might be a concern?
- ✓ Do you know the schedule for the day and how these fit with the child's licence requirements?
- ✓ Who should you talk to if there is a problem in the first instance or in the LA if it is not resolved?
- ✓ Arrive early
- ✓ Do inspection of venue/location
- ✓ Where are the toilets, fire exits, green room etc.

The application process involves an enhanced Disclosure Barring Service check; to complete Harrow SCB online safeguarding training and an informal assessment meeting . You will be required to produce identification documents to enable a DBS check.

The licence will be valid for 3 years if issued.

There is a non-refundable fee of £70 which should be submitted with the completed online application form.

Contact Us

A license is granted by the Local Authority where the chaperone lives.

Application should be made online for applicants residing in Harrow at:
www.harrow.gov.uk/chaperones

Business Support Officers
Child Licensing Team
Education Services
Harrow Council
Station Road
HA1 2XY
Telephone: 020 8736 6906
Email: childperformance@harrow.gov.uk

For further information log onto the Harrow SCB's safeguarding policies and procedures:
http://www.harrowlscb.co.uk/guidance_and_procedures.aspx