



Administrated by
BINGLEY LITTLE THEATRE
Bingley Arts Centre Child Performance Policy

Named Roles

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Josh Breeze

BLT Productions: David Ayres (Artistic Director)

Young People's Theatre: Debbie Linton (*Kaleidoscope* Director and Deputy DSO)

Deputy DSO: David Ayres, Debbie Linton

Safeguarding Trustee: Jonathan Rookes

Approved by Trustees Dec 2025

1. Introduction

Bingley Arts Centre is committed to ensuring the welfare, safety, and protection of all children involved in performances, in compliance with UK legislation and best practices. This policy applies to all child performers (under 18) participating in productions hosted or produced at Bingley Arts Centre, including those organised by Bingley Little Theatre, Kaleidoscope, BLT Studio, and external hirers.

This policy aligns with Bingley Little Theatre's (BLT) Safeguarding Policy, ensuring that children, young people, and vulnerable adults are protected from harm and that those responsible for their care understand their legal and ethical obligations.

2. Legal Framework

This policy aligns with the following UK laws and guidance:

- Children and Young Persons Act 1963 – Governs child performance licensing.
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014 – Covers hours, education, supervision, and welfare.
- Education Act 1996 – Regulates school attendance for child performers.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 – Statutory guidance on safeguarding.
- Theatres Act 1968 – Ensures theatre safety.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 – Provides guidance for working with children.

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 – Establishes DBS check requirements.

3. Licensing of Child Performers

A child performance licence is required under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 if a child under 16 participates in:

- A performance where admission is charged.
- A performance in a licensed premises (e.g., theatres, pubs).
- A broadcast or recorded performance intended for public distribution.
- Paid modelling or sporting activities.

3.1 Exemptions from Licensing

A licence is not required if:

- The child has not performed more than 3 times in the past 6 months.
- The performance is organised by a school.
- The performance is covered under a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA).

3.2 The **stage manager** for any BLT production will take responsibility for applying for child performance licences.

3.3 The manager of the TIE (Kaleidoscope) shall apply for and maintain an annual BOPA to remove the need to licence individual children for TIE productions.

4. Chaperone Requirements

- Children must be supervised at all times by a licensed chaperone or their parent/guardian.
- Kaleidoscope teachers must all register as volunteer chaperones to ensure TIE productions comply with local authority policies and procedures.
- Chaperones must be approved by the local authority and undergo an Enhanced DBS Check.
- Chaperones must follow child protection procedures and report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or named person responsible for production safeguarding (this is likely the stage manager or director).
- Chaperone-to-child ratio:
 - Ages 4-8: 1 adult per 6 children.
 - Ages 9-12: 1 adult per 8 children.
 - Ages 13-16: 1 adult per 10 young people.

5. Safeguarding and Welfare

5.1. Child Protection Measures (see separate safeguarding policy for lower level details)

- No child will be left unsupervised.
- Dressing rooms must be age-appropriate and gender-appropriate where necessary.
- Parental consent is required for all photography, filming, and social media use using the photography consent form.
- Any accidents, injuries, or safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the DSO as per safeguarding policies and processes.

5.2. First Aid and Health & Safety

- A qualified first aider must be present at all rehearsals and performances.
- Risk assessments must be conducted before each production involving children by the stage manager.

- Fire exits, emergency procedures, and venue safety measures must be communicated to child performers and guardians.

6. Performance Hours & Breaks

The following restrictions apply:

Age Group	Max Performance Hours (School Day)	Max Performance Hours (Non-School Day)	Max Total Hours (Incl. Breaks)	Earliest Start	Latest Finish
Under 5	2 hours	2 hours	5 hours	7:00 am	10:00 pm
5-8 years	3 hours	5 hours	8 hours	7:00 am	11:00 pm
9+ years	4 hours	8 hours	9 hours	7:00 am	11:00 pm

- Breaks: Children must have a 15-minute break every 45 minutes and a minimum 1-hour meal break after 4 hours.
- No child can perform more than 6 consecutive days.

7. Education and School Attendance

- A child's education must not suffer due to performance commitments.
- If a child needs to miss school, a letter from the headteacher is required.

8. Responsibilities of External Hirers

External hirers must provide:

- Evidence of licences where required.
- Chaperone arrangements that meet legal requirements.
- Risk assessments and safeguarding measures before the event.

9. Selection and Approval of Productions Involving Children

9.1 Choosing Productions

- Productions involving children must be age-appropriate and comply with safeguarding standards.
- Scripts must be reviewed for risks such as inappropriate themes or excessive working hours.
- The Artistic Director approves all productions involving children following recommendation from Reading & Casting committee

9.2 Appointment of a Responsible Person for Each Production

- Each production with children must have a Designated Responsible Person – this would likely be the Stage Manager.
- They ensure licensing compliance, risk assessments, and safeguarding procedures.
- They act as the point of contact for parents/guardians.
- Must undergo an Enhanced DBS Check if working directly with children.

10. Policy Compliance & Enforcement

- Bingley Arts Centre reserves the right to halt a performance if safeguarding policies are breached.
- Local authorities may conduct unannounced inspections.

11. Safeguarding Policy Integration

This policy integrates Bingley Little Theatre's Safeguarding Policy, ensuring:

- All employees and volunteers adhere to safe conduct guidelines.
- Safeguarding incidents are reported immediately to the DSO or Deputy DSO.
- Staff and volunteers receive regular safeguarding training.
- Chaperones and responsible persons understand their duty of care.

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in UK legislation.

For more information, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer at Bingley Arts Centre.

Appendix 1: Chaperone Procedure

To ensure the safety and well-being of all child performers at **Bingley Arts Centre**, the following chaperone procedures must be followed for all productions involving children.

1. Chaperone Arrangements for Performances with a Single Child Performer

- Where a production includes only **one child performer per performance**, their **parent or legal guardian** should act as the designated chaperone wherever appropriate.
- If the parent or guardian is unavailable or unsuitable, a **licensed volunteer chaperone** must be assigned.

2. Chaperone Rota for Productions with Multiple Child Performers

- For productions involving **two or more children**, a **chaperone rota** will be arranged and a lead chaperone assigned to manage this rota.
- The **Chief Operating Officer (COO)** will centrally manage the pool of **volunteer chaperones**.
- Stage Managers for each production may request a **volunteer chaperone list** from the COO as required.

3. Volunteer Chaperone Registration and Management

- Parents of children **selected for performances** will be **encouraged to register** as volunteer chaperones to help share the responsibility.
- All chaperones, including volunteers, must undergo an **Enhanced DBS Check** and complete any required **safeguarding training**.
- A **chaperone training session** will be provided for new volunteers.
- **Bingley Little Theatre** will be responsible for any charges for registering volunteer chaperones with the local authority.

4. Requesting Chaperones for Productions

- The **Stage Manager** will be provided with the parents contact details by the **casting liaison** for the show and this must be done **at least four months before the start of the production rehearsals**.
- The **Stage Manager** will contact the parents from the show who are already on the chaperone list to ask for one of them to be the **chaperone co-ordinator** (held by the coo) and set up a WhatsApp group. If no parent in on a list a WhatsApp group should still be created asking for someone to take that role for the show.
- One parent should volunteer to be the **chaperone co-ordinator** for this show who will then support all parents in securing a chaperon licence if needed and create a chaperone rota for rehearsals and performances.
- Any last-minute chaperone gaps should be escalated to a **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)** or the **COO** for resolution.

5. Chaperone Duties & Expectations

- Chaperones are responsible for **supervising children at all times**, including backstage, during breaks, and while traveling to and from the performance area.
- Chaperones must **follow all safeguarding procedures** and report any concerns to the **DSO**.
- Chaperones must **arrive at least 30 minutes before the child performers** and remain until all children have been safely collected.

6. Compliance & Oversight

- The **COO** will maintain a register of all approved chaperones, which will be reviewed and updated annually.
- The **Trustees** will monitor compliance with the chaperone policy to ensure best practices in child safeguarding.

This **chaperone procedure ensures fair distribution of responsibility**, compliance with **child performance regulations**, and provides a **structured support system** for productions featuring child performers.

Appendix - Applying for a Chaperone License with Bradford Council

Fill Out The Online Form

The online form can be found on the [Bradford Chaperones Page](#) - have all the information and documents you need to hand.

Documents you need:

- Two referees - their full names, postal and email addresses.
- Three ID documents - One of which must be a proof of address and they won't accept a driving license photo card. E.g Passport, Birth Certificate and Annual Council Tax Statement. If you upload an incorrect document they will email you.

Council will Email Both Referees

The Council will then email both of your referees with a form for them to complete. You will most likely need to provide your referees with supporting information, for example dates of experience working with children. The reference form is not a 'tick box' exercise and will take your referees some time to write and they are expected to provide examples.

It's worth noting that the Council will not necessarily tell you if your referees haven't sent their forms back and they will only remind them once. It's up to the applicant to ensure the referees send back the form.

Make An Appointment To Present Your ID

Once your completed online form has been received and the council is happy with your three forms of ID and your 2 references, they will email you with a number to ring to make an in-person appointment. This is where you take and present your ID in Bradford near St George's Hall. The meeting has to be in-person not a video call.

Council HR Team Send Information to DBS

The Council Chaperone team then sends your Form, References and ID uploads to their HR department. HR does a final legal sign off for the information and sends it to DBS. The HR team can take a few days to a couple of weeks to do this. Once the application has been sent it can take up to 12 weeks before you receive your certificate through the post.

Complete the Online Safety Course

When you receive your DBS Certificate through the post you need to ring the Council again and ask for the link and password to the online safety course. This course takes 1 to 2 hours to complete. You can only receive the link once your DBS has arrived. On completion of the course you must then email a copy of your training certificate to the Council.

Make An Appointment To Present Your DBS Certificate

Whilst asking for the Online Safety Course link also make another in-person appointment to present your DBS Certificate. The second in-person appointment does not have to be you. Once the Council have seen your DBS Certificate they will issue a Chaperone License.

Renewing Your Chaperone License And DBS

DBS Update Service

You will receive an annual email that letting you know what action you need to take for your DBS to remain registered. If you do not take the required action your DBS will be de-registered and you will need to apply for a new one if you wish to remain registered as a Chaperone.

Chaperone License's need to be renewed every 3 years.

If your license has been issued by **Bradford Council** it will expire after 3 years at which point you will need to apply for a new license following the process outlined above.