

Can licences be withdrawn?

Yes, if we are worried about the welfare of your child in any way. Our starting point is that your child's welfare is paramount. Given this, we try to work in partnership with licence applicants and parents so that children can maximise their opportunities.

Licensing authority visits

We do have a duty to inspect places where children are performing or taking part in an activity to check that (a) they are suitable and (b) that the children are being looked after appropriately.

Whilst we cannot visit every venue, we do make random calls.

Chaperones

This department also licenses chaperones who live in North Somerset. We would always urge you to check who is chaperoning your child, and whether s/he has a valid licence. If you have any doubts, check with us.

How to apply to be a chaperone

Please contact the child licensing officer who will arrange for all information to be sent to you. Chaperones can be men or women.

Security check

All chaperone applicants are security checked through the Disclosing and Barring Service (DBS). There is a charge for this service.

Interview

There is also an informal interview lasting about twenty minutes covering health and safety and other child-related matters.

Photograph

If your Chaperone application is approved you will be given an approved chaperone identity card.

Chaperone authorisation

Once approved, each chaperone has a letter of authorisation from this authority, which is valid for three years.

Can a chaperone authorisation be withdrawn?

Yes; if we are concerned about a chaperone in any way.

Responsibilities of a chaperone

The chaperone is in loco parentis, for example, acts as a good parent and must have the welfare of the children s/he is chaperoning as her/his paramount concern.

Child protection

All Chaperones who are licensed with this authority receive child protection guidelines on whom to contact with any worries or concerns. Equally, any person who is concerned about a chaperone should contact the child licensing officer

People and Communities Vulnerable Learners Service

The Education Welfare Service
Children in Entertainment

Information for parents



The Relevant Law

Children and Young Persons Act 1933
Children and Young Persons Act, 1963, s.37.
The Children (Performances and Activities) (England)
Regulations 2014.

Introduction

Many children enjoy performing or taking part in a paid activity such as modelling or sport, and parents enjoy supporting them. However, laws exist (as detailed above) which are designed to protect children and ensure that suitable and sufficient arrangements have been made to safeguard them.

The law has always covered children taking part in performances and it now also applies to children who model or take part in sport for profit (other than expenses).

In North Somerset, the Education Welfare Service, has responsibility for licensing children in entertainment, and for authorising chaperones.

If you need any further information after reading this leaflet, and/or wish to apply to be a chaperone, please contact:

The Child Licensing Officer
North Somerset Council
People and Communities
Town Hall
Weston-super-Mare BS23 1UJO
Tel: 01934 426 755
email: cshub@n-somerset.gov.uk

Does my child need a licence?

Most of the time, the answer is 'yes'. There are exemptions, for example the Scouts' Annual "Gang Show" has been granted a national exemption, and other charities can also apply to us for exemption.

However, the absence from school rule always applies; so, if your child will miss school for rehearsals and/or performances, s/he must have a licence and if s/he has performed for more than four days in any six months.

Please contact us for advice on whether a licence is required.

How do I apply for a licence?

If your child is involved with a dancing school, a local show or a paid modelling or sporting activity, the appropriate person should have applied to us for application forms. S/he fills in part one of the form and then passes it to you for completion.

If your child is registered with an agent, you need to check whether your agent or the relevant company is applying for the licence.

Whether your child is performing in North Somerset or in another authority, the licence has to be authorised by this department if you live within the North Somerset area.

Once you have filled in part two of the application, you need to give it back to the appropriate person, together with two photographs and a copy of your child's birth certificate (unless supplied to us previously). You will also have to complete a parental declaration for your child's fitness to perform is for non-broadcast performances such as theatre and modelling, unless your child is performing for six consecutive days and for more than one week, then a medical certificate is required either from the child's GP, school nurse or other suitably qualified medical professional.

If your child is taking part in a broadcast performance, a medical certificate or note from the child's GP is always required. This is valid for six months.

The form is then sent to us for authorisation

Time limits?

We need to have your form in plenty of time, especially for a big show or activity. Therefore, we ask for the licence to be sent to us three weeks before the date required. We always try our best but, if the application is very late, we may not be able to authorise your child's performance

How many days can my child take part in a performance or activity?

There are no longer any fixed limits, but we have power of discretion to license or not.

Your child does not need a licence once s/he is over official school-leaving age. That is the last Friday in June of Year 11.

What happens next?

Database of children

Your child's details are added to a specialised database.

This information may be shared with other education professionals.

Chaperones

All licensed shows must have authorised chaperones. These have to be stated on the application form and we always check that they are currently authorised. Parents can chaperone their own children, but we would always recommend that, for your child's safety, approved chaperones are used.

The licence

If approved, the licence, together with a copy for you, is sent to the person whose name is on the front of the form.

If the performance involves absence from school, a copy of the licence is sent to your child's school, together with a letter asking the Headteacher to contact us if s/he has any worries about your child missing school.

If your child is performing outside the North Somerset area, a copy of the licence is also sent to the appropriate education authority.

School performances

Schools are exempt from having to apply for licences, except where your child may be involved in commercial work outside normal school activities.