



Tramshed Volunteer Handbook

TramShed Theatre Company

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Registered Business Number: 05392620

Welcome to Tramshed

The aim of this handbook is to give all volunteers a point of reference when any queries should arise. We welcome all new volunteers and hope you will enjoy working at TramShed. Everyone at our organisation works together as a team and we will do all we can to support in your new role. If any other questions you may have are not answered in this guide, please speak to the TramShed Arts Practitioner Team, who will be happy to help.

Our Company

Since our launch TramShed has delivered inclusive workshops in many schools and community settings in Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre. We have worked on projects for 'Great Places', Blackpool Council, Arts Council England, The Heritage Lottery and were featured on the BBC's Children in Need. Our work in the community is fundamental to TramShed as it allows us to access many people who have previously been excluded from the performing arts. We also run weekly performing arts classes which unite people from all areas of our community. It is our belief that methodology in the workshops and skills learnt through inclusive practice can have a positive impact on our society.

Our Aims

-  To offer inclusive workshops to anyone who is interested in performing arts throughout Blackpool, Wyre, Fylde and surrounding areas.
-  To create theatre which inspires and celebrates everyone and offers an environment in which all involved feel at ease, un-judged and able to offer their ideas freely.
-  To offer thought provoking theatre to all children, young people and adults, no matter what their background or ability.
-  To work within the local community, offering our facilities to all areas of society.

TramShed Mission Statement

“To bring individuals together to create outstanding, original and beautiful theatre which inspires and celebrates everyone”.

Our Organisation

TramShed Theatre Company is split into 5 groups:

Mini Children's Theatre 4-6 Years

Children's Theatre 7-12 Years

Youth Theatre 12-17 Years

Adult Company 18+

Tram Stop 18+

Our Mini Children's Theatre was the last group to launch and began in September 2012. The session is run with volunteers working along side the practitioner team to support the members. Many of the volunteers are members of our Youth Theatre and therefore have had first hand experience of inclusive theatre and the way in which TramShed operates.

When a child reaches the age of 12 years old they are able to join the Youth Theatre. The official age for the Youth Theatre however is 13 years old and it would be at the practitioner's team discretion as to when each individual is ready to make this transition. We feel that when a child moves on to High School the Children's Theatre may then be inappropriate for them and the older group more suitable.

Our Adult Company not only provides a facility to excel in the arts but also a place for friendship, socialisation and communication for people from all walks of life. When a young person reaches the age of 18 years they are offered the opportunity to move into the Adult Company group depending on each individual. If the Adult Company group is full, places will be offered in the Tram Stop group.

Meetings

Volunteer Meetings are carried out on a weekly basis. A nominated practitioner will lead a meeting with the volunteer team after each workshop they are involved in. The meeting will inform them of any arising issues and set each volunteer targets for future sessions. It will also give volunteers chance to voice any concerns.

Practitioner Meetings are held on a weekly basis to ensure that all practitioners are kept informed of all aspects of TramShed including the main sessions, funding information and also outreach projects.

Practitioner Reviews are held termly initially for any new team member. This provides an opportunity for both staff member and management to ask questions relating to the role and voice any concerns or worries that may have cropped up. After the first term in role the reviews then take place every six months.

Committee Meetings are held once a term and provide the opportunity to review finances, talk about any forthcoming events and also provides an opportunity for the Practitioner team to ask any questions they are unsure of and feedback on any TramShed news.

AGM Meetings take place once a year in order to elect a Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and other committee members. The AGM also provides an opportunity for the Practitioner team to present the achievements of TramShed and discuss how the company is progressing. The AGM is an open meeting in which anyone can attend, parents of members are encouraged to come along and find out more about the groundbreaking work that goes on at TramShed.

Communication at TramShed

- TramShed Theatre Company has a mobile phone in use daily, operated by the Artistic Director. If the mobile cannot be answered, all messages received are answered as soon as possible.
- TramShed's email address is checked **on a daily basis** and is the often the most common point of contact for members.
- Letters to members are sent out frequently to update them with news and events at TramShed. Term dates and members fees are sent out on a termly basis.
- Any letters, applications or information is sent to TramShed's PO Box address.
- TramShed have a detailed website with up to date event information. Supporters are encouraged to sign up to our E-Bulletin mailing list. We have a focused Member's Zone on the website with the latest term dates and information.

Volunteer Hours

The TramShed our working week is broken down into sections. Volunteers work some or all of these sections which consist of the following:

Workshops: The groups at TramShed all run on a Monday and Tuesday evening at the following times.

Monday

Mini Children's Theatre 4.30pm-5.15pm

Tram Stop 7.15pm-8.30pm

Children's Theatre 4.30pm-5.45pm

Youth Theatre 6.00pm-7.15pm

Adult Company 7.30pm-8.45pm

Each Volunteer is expected to be in the workshop space at least 5 minutes before the session commences to go over the plans for the session and ask any questions they may have. During this time they will often be assigned a member to work with one to one. A designated Practitioner will also meet with the Volunteer team and talk over any issues which they feel may arise during the session, then evaluate with the volunteer team at the end of the session.

Due to the sessions being quite close together it is important to be organised at the beginning of the evening so that the workshops run smoothly.

Outreach Projects

TramShed have launched a new Outreach scheme in 2017 which offers workshops in a variety of settings covering topics including PSHE, British Values, Memories Through Music, MML and Hate Crime. The workshops cover varied areas including KS1, KS2, SEAL, Safeguarding and many more. We work with people of all ages and can fit in with most topics and themes. Each Outreach project is paid for by the individuals per workshop, the Outreach programmes vary from one week to a year.

Training Weeks: Training may be provided at Chickenshed (funding permitting) in which those involved will be required to go to London for 5 days (Mon - Fri). All accommodation and expenses will be paid for. TramShed will always try and secure funding for the Summer School at Chickenshed, this would enable TramShed's Volunteers to also benefit from the training available at Chickenshed.

Volunteer Responsibilities

- To always be punctual when attending workshops and training.
- To provide a stimulating atmosphere at TramShed through all areas of performing arts and to ensure all members are encouraged to reach their full potential and develop their skills.
- To guide and support members within the workshops.
- To deliver warm up elements within workshop sessions.
- To manage group work and support individual members.
- To assist in the identification of child abuse or neglect and be constantly aware of members at risk.
- To care for the safety of members, including the familiarisation of fire drills, safety and evacuation procedures.
- To assist in the preparation of the workshop space, making sure all resources required are present.
- To participate in volunteer meetings.
- Ensure your knowledge of health and safety, child protection and inclusion is up to date.
- To be a role model for other members.
- To communicate fully with all members of the TramShed team and ensure you contact the Artistic Director if you are unable to attend a session for any reason.

Volunteer Role

We believe that a placement for a volunteer within our Company is a valuable opportunity to build experience while learning about working within a theatre setting. Equally, we appreciate the positive contribution that such committed and enthusiastic people can bring to our Company.

However, at all times the needs and welfare of our members are paramount and therefore we need to restrict the number of volunteers admitted at any particular time, in order to minimise disruption to the Company's core activities.

All individuals working in the Youth Volunteer Team must be 13 years old or over. All individuals working in the Adult Volunteer Team must be 21 years old or over. Anyone over the age of 17 years must complete an enhanced DBS check (Disclosure Barring Service), before they begin placement in the Company.

Each of the TramShed groups has volunteers who support and encourage the members to achieve and enjoy the session. Meetings for the volunteers take place on a weekly basis to keep up to date with any important information they may need. The Practitioner

team try and set each volunteer targets for the session they are supporting in, this we feel helps them develop their skills further and increase their knowledge on inclusive theatre and the performing arts.

All volunteers are required to complete our Inclusive Training Programme within their first term at TramShed and then attend a refresher session at the start of every new term (as per CIN guidelines). We feel this gives you support and knowledge for the role you are delivering and enables you to develop your skills at TramShed.

TramShed may offer a volunteer the chance to attend the Summer School at Chickenshed (funding permitting). This will in our opinion help the volunteer to experience inclusive theatre on a deeper level and develop their skills for use within the workshops.

Other areas within TramShed are also available when volunteering including administration roles and TramShed's Committee. Please speak to one of the team if you are interested.

Working with Other Professionals

From time to time guest workshop leaders will be employed to lead specialist sessions. These leaders will be supported by the practitioner team at all times. Any visitor working in the workshop space will be DBS checked. When working in other spaces for performance based activities, the members should remain supervised at all times by the practitioner team and be made aware of other professionals working in the space and their role. Consult the risk assessment document for further detailed instructions.

Expectations

What is really frowned upon?

- ❖ Arriving late without an explanation
- ❖ Giving less than 4 hours notice if unable to attend a workshop
- ❖ Shouting
- ❖ Leaving the workshop area untidy and not as you found it
- ❖ Leaving workshops early without speaking to a member of staff
- ❖ Talking about members in their presence
- ❖ Inappropriate dress
- ❖ Swearing/using offensive language in the workshop
- ❖ Breaking confidentiality

Always remember

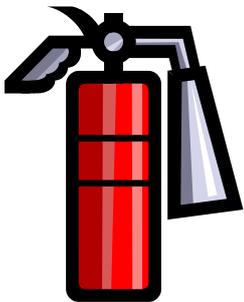
- ◆ We work as a team and value and respect everyone
- ◆ We provide an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- ◆ We demonstrate respect for each other
- ◆ We work with parents/carers
- ◆ We celebrate achievements and encourage good focus within the workshops
- ◆ We expect a high quality of work from each other and support one another in role
- ◆ We always work inclusively and make sure all our members are included in all that we do
- ◆ Maintain confidentiality within all areas of TramShed

Safety

Registration At the beginning of each session the Arts Team take a register of all who enter the workshop space. This time is also used to liaise with the parents and carers. The volunteers are also signed in for fire safety reasons.

Signing in/out Each member attending the workshop cannot enter the space until they have signed in with the Practitioner. As they leave the workshop they must also sign out before they leave the space. An additional Arts Practitioner is often needed on the door to maintain a controlled exit by the members. Please support our members in this process.

In Case of Fire



If an alarm within the workshop space sounds or a fire is spotted all members should be escorted off the premises by the practitioner team. The group should join up on the car park situated at the front of the building and a register will be taken. No one should re-enter the building under any circumstances and the emergency services should be contacted. Members who are supported one to one in session must be assisted out of the building.

Incident and Emergency Procedures

At least one of the Practitioner team is first aid trained and responsible for any incidents that occur at within the sessions. A first aid kit is available at any session and the TramShed mobile is always available should an emergency call need to be made. Emergency contact details for all of the members is kept in the registration file should they be needed. An incident book is also kept in the registration file and any incidents that occur within the workshops should be noted and signed immediately by the Arts Team. A medication list can also be found in the TramShed folder.



Child Protection

At least one member of the Practitioner team is Child Protection trained and has gained further knowledge and skills to be able to deal with any incidents that occur. A child Protection policy can be found on the TramShed website, located online. This policy will give full details on what to do if you notice an incident which you feel needs reporting.

As well as the Artistic Director being a port of call in these instances, you can also contact the TramShed Trustees and speak to them in confidence. Always remember the confidentiality of the TramShed member is of utmost importance.

Whistleblowing Policy

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong at work. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the Company. They may also fear bullying, harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice. At any stage the TramShed Trustees are available to discuss any problems though with any member of the Practitioner or Volunteer team. On a daily basis, Toni Fairholm can be located at Woodlands School and further Trustees can be contacted via email/phone.

Meet the Team!

Staff:

Zac Hackett – Artistic Director
Tina Murray – Senior Arts Practitioner
Vicky Spencer - Arts Practitioner
Angela Murphy - Outreach Arts Practitioner
Natalie Duymun - Outreach Arts Practitioner
Kitty Murray - Outreach Arts Practitioner
Hollie Wimpenny – Outreach Arts Practitioner

Trustees:

Marge Ainsley - Acting Head of the Board
Toni Fairholm
Leanne Hackett

Committee Members:

Karen Allison
Tina Heaney
Kathleen Paintin
Daniel Paintin
Anthony King
Tina Murray
Jackie Hamilton
Berni Ashworth
Shelley Nicholson
Jack Taylor
Latrisha Humphreys