



PARENT/GUARDIAN GUIDANCE

Hello and welcome to Duckegg! We have created this document to briefly explain our teaching methods. Our performance training platform is likely to be a little different to your experiences elsewhere, so we do ask you to read this document carefully before filling in your booking form and committing to the term. We have over a decade of experience of training young people as artists and are a national voice in acting education.

ETHOS

To promote initiative in young people.
To build confidence and self belief in our students.
To train students to industry level.

- * We are not recreating the school show. They do that at school :-)
- * Nor are the Acting School shows going to be full of high end production values. Our performances serve to help our members develop and practice their interpretation and technique in a friendly setting with friends and family. As teachers we use them as an evaluation tool. We give our students (of all ages) room to make mistakes and experiment in their performances. If they choose to move into professional work this room to make mistakes with no repercussions will no longer be an option - it is imperative for their creative development that we prioritise this over trying to impress an audience. **This is not a place of judgement, it is a safe place to hone their craft.**
- * In our shows, students will never use radio mics unless microphones are a key part of the action (in a rock musical where mics are part of the aesthetic, for example). This may mean that some students are a quiet in performance at times. We do this because part of learning to perform well on stage is training the muscle memory of the voice. The ear needs to hear when you are too quiet in performance in order to fully learn adequate projection. If you put a mic on a very small voice you are removing the point of any previous learning of projection technique. You can tell the Duckeggs who have moved through from minis, to juniors, to seniors - they are the ones with the awesome projection who have had the opportunity to train their ears in a performance environment. That being said, if we are in a very large venue where it would be impossible to project into even for a professional, we will mic the stage.
- * Your child may find Duckegg hard at first. They do not get gratification instantly from our classes; we feel this is important in a time where you get everything NOW. If they stick through a term with us the results speak for themselves; they'll become part of the family, get the buzz of performance and really see the difference in their interpretation and technique. Where possible, we ask that you encourage your child to stick with us for **a full term** even if they find it difficult to maintain focus at first.
- * We plan our sessions to develop skills in three key areas:
 - technique (for example diction, audibility, vocal control, characterisation)
 - interpretation (for example character moods/thoughts, objectives, fluency and focus, place and period)
 - knowledge (for example reasons for staging, texts, different practitioners, explaining creative decisions, conversational skills)This means that although we may be working on one piece for a number of weeks, the focus of the session is different each week.

- * All our planning feeds into the syllabi developed by LAMDA - even if your child chooses not to take solo LAMDA examinations with us, they will work towards the same criteria and create group pieces based on these objectives.
- * Each member is set targets per project. These are set between the teacher and student in class and evaluated at the end of the project. If you would like input into this process do contact your class teacher via email.
- * Please discourage 'line counting' at home. The importance of a role in the context of the production cannot be judged in terms of the amount of lines a character has. As actors, we play silence as much as dialogue. In a professional production when a role is gained, the actors would not sit counting their lines; they would start work on developing a strong and memorable character.
- * When rehearsing a show, the process is split into a number of aspects:
 - Class audition. We learn to audition in a supportive environment and learn how to manage nerves.
 - Casting. We DO NOT cast on the basis of raw talent. We ensure we give the role that is going to help them meet their target that term. Roles that will challenge, not necessarily the role they want. We believe one of the most important skills is learning how to be a member of the ensemble; there is no developmental benefit in playing leading roles over and over again.
 - Research. This is where we work on characterisation, interactions, the questions the text asks, exploring the themes within the pieces and looking at what theories we can use to tackle the piece.
 - Blocking. This means working on the actions of the show and getting it up on it's feet.
 - Full runs. Running the whole show with director notes.
 - Technical rehearsal. To set the technical aspects of the performance. This rehearsal isn't necessarily for the students and they should not expect to get a full run through with director notes.
 - Performance. The show!
- * So important it's worth saying again - a large aspect of our company ethos is creating performers with initiative. We reward acts of high motivation and initiative. Our teachers will never 'spoon feed' your child; we give your child the tools to succeed, we don't do it for them. **INITIATIVE - the ability to use your judgment to make decisions and do things without needing to be told what to do.**
- * We realise that students are with us for different reasons; confidence building, training into industry, friendship building, to develop a hobby. All we ask is a commitment to developing as a performer.
- * All young people develop creatively at different rates and not all members will be at the same level. This is ok! Everybody is on a different journey; this is not a competition.
- * They get out what they put in to Duckegg. You can help encourage your child by keeping up to date with current Duckegg opportunities, offering to help learning lines, listen to their songs through the week, encourage practice! There is only so much we can do in their relatively short session.
- * If your child only has time in their week schedule for the class, and no practice time, this will significantly hinder your child's development.
- * All our classes have acting at their heart - we are developing storytellers. Our Musical Theatre classes place acting and voice at the centre of their practice - if you do a Musical Theatre dance class this will compliment our work but will not be the same.
- * Sometimes content in senior productions will be suitable for older audiences. We make no apologies for this; it is important for actors to learn how to deal with adult themes in a mature fashion and explore how these can be presented to an audience. It is also important that our students have access to higher

level texts, and inevitably higher level texts will have older content. If you feel this is going to be an issue perhaps consider a term in a junior class instead.

- * Sometimes we will ask you to travel to other towns for performances and joint rehearsals. This is to give students the experience of performing in many different types of theatre, building their CV and getting experience of 'touring', which currently makes up a large proportion of work in industry.
- * Last but potentially the most important - our whole company is built on creating a family of like minded young people and their parents/guardians. We develop long lasting relationships with our families and your teacher is always there to discuss progress and steps forwards. All class communications are sent via email, and usually backed up with a paper copy in class.