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RISK ASSESSMENT

Marian Street Theatre for Young People at Knox Cultural Centre

Thank you for arranging to see a Marian Street Theatre for Young People performance at The Knox Cultural Centre.

Specific elements based on risk:

- 1) Access to the venue – parking and entrances
- 2) Auditorium
- 3) Foyer
- 4) Bathrooms
- 5) Child safety policy

Other Information

- 1) Accessibility information
- 2) First aid and emergency procedures
- 3) Evacuation procedure
- 4) Public liability insurance
- 5) Audience conduct and supervision of children

Contact Details

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For all urgent enquiries (needing attention within 24 hours), please contact Jessica Blaxland Ashby, Business Manager, on 0438241126



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Access to the Venue

Traffic

Low risk of physical injury

To minimize children and families being in the same vicinity as moving vehicles, we have a designated drop-off zone for buses and those with accessibility needs, while cars and small people movers are encouraged to park in the underground carpark area next to the theatre. To further minimize risk, access to the venue from the Pacific Highway is no longer permitted as that entrance is too close to the Pacific Highway.

If an incident occurs at either the drop-off zone or the car park, staff members from MSTYP are able to assist with contacting emergency services. It is the responsibility of carers and group organizers to manage their own (and their children's) safety. No liability for traffic or vehicular incidents will be taken by MSTYP.

Bus and Accessible Drop Zone

Low risk of physical injury

The drop-off zone is located at the Chapel Gate at Borambil Street, which is away from traffic, allowing children and carers to access buses directly from the Knox grounds. As there are no roads to cross, vehicles and audience members are not in a shared zone. The Drop Off zone is next to a path that leads directly to the theatre entrance (approx. 50 metres) with no stairs, and at a gentle slope.

Car Park

Low risk of physical injury

Car park access is via Borambil Avenue and suitable for cars and small people movers. Within the car park it is the duty of both drivers and carers to use appropriate caution, as this is a shared space, and is used at patrons own risk. Cars are limited to low speeds. MSTYP is not liable for incidents in this zone.

The theatre foyer is accessed from the car park by a set of stairs, with the directions clearly signposted.

Those with accessible needs should drop-off at the Chapel Gate. For enquiries regarding accessibility, please contact Jessica@mstyp.org.au or call the office on 9411 1800.

Theatre Auditorium

Low level lighting

Low risk of physical injury due to tripping

During the performance the lights in the audience are dimmed. This creates the potential for physical injury due to tripping. To mitigate this risk, an usher is placed next to the door to the foyer with a torch and assists to seat patrons while the performance is in session. All stairs have individual lights, further assisting in making audience members aware of these as trip hazards and therefore mitigating the risk of physical injury.

Stairs

Low risk of physical injury due to tripping

The stairs are a low risk trip hazard. They are small in height with a hand rail. In the event a trip does occur member of staff is always within the auditorium while audience members are present to assist. For large groups of children, we recommend carers bring first aid equipment on site for additional risk mitigation.

Accessible seating is provided in the back rows of the auditorium. Specific seating requests for accessible needs (for instance vision and hearing impairment) can be accommodated. Please contact the office to make arrangements 9411 1800 or email Jessica@mstyp.org.au.

Chairs

Low risk of minimal physical injury

The auditorium chairs are stationary (they do not lift up) and are installed into the auditorium securely on the floor with bolts. As the auditorium also doubles as a lecture hall during term time by Knox Grammar, there are arm rests that flip up. We advise patrons to use caution with the arm rests to avoid minor injuries like bruises.

Stage and audience participation

Low risk of physical injury

The stage is approximately 50cm tall. To mitigate the risk of performers falling off the stage, the productions are extensively rehearsed with professional directors and movement coaches.

The plays use audience participation, which primarily focuses on actions that audience members do in their seats, for instance, clapping or making vocal noises. Occasionally this involves children standing up or being invited onto the stage. When children are invited onto the stage, they are always accompanied by at least one actor who positions them in a safe place away from identified risk elements. Activities the audience are invited to participate in are always age appropriate and are deemed low risk. Actors additionally demonstrate the appropriate and safe way to participate and invite audience members to copy in this way. For instance, miming climbing the rigging on a pirate ship, or barking like a dog. Therefore the risk of injury to audience members through participation in the production is low.

Floor seating at front

Low risk of physical injury

There is a small area in front of the stage on the ground which children are invited to sit on, to get closer to the performers. To minimise the risk of children getting too close to the stage and therefore coming into contact with performers (physical injuries), a line is placed on the floor in front of the stage and audience members are requested to stay behind this line. Additionally, if children get too close to the stage they cannot see the performance, as the stage is raised. This therefore encourages audience members to leave the space in front of the stage clear.

Foyer

Low risk of minimal physical injury

There is a low risk of minimal physical injury in the foyer of the theatre. Identified risk elements are:

- Pins from the display boards falling off, and therefore being trodden on and causing physical injury
- Cups of tea and coffee spilling on small children, therefore causing burns
- Prams in the foyer creating congestion

The foyer is maintained constantly during the performance season by staff. If pins are found on the floor, these are picked up and put out of reach from children. Adults are able to purchase tea and coffee from the candy bar and are advised to maintain caution within the foyer with these. Hot drinks are not permitted within the auditorium to mitigate the risk of burns from hot liquids.

Prams are parked in designated areas, away from egress areas, therefore minimising the risk of congestion within the foyer, particularly in the event of an evacuation.

Bathrooms

Boys Bathrooms

These are located down the corridor from the foyer, with appropriate signage provided. Children must be accompanied by a carer at all times, including going to the bathroom.

Girls Bathrooms

Girls bathrooms are located down the stairs next to the foyer, with appropriate signage provided. Children must be accompanied by a carer at all times, including going to the bathroom.

Accessible Bathrooms

These are located down the corridor from the foyer (no stairs), with appropriate signage provided. Children must be accompanied by a carer at all times, including going to the bathroom.

Child Safe Environment

MSTYP prides itself on maintaining a children safe environment which nurtures children and young people's creativity through participation in theatre. Management of MSTYP work to implement strategies as suggested by the NSW office of the Children's Guardian.

Working with children checks

All MSTYP staff engaged in child-related employment hold current Working With Children Checks, as per NSW legislation. The Department of Education and Training has registered MSTYP as a child-related employer for the purposes of employment screening.

Government school teachers who have questions about excursion policy should contact the DET Schools Operational Coordinator on (02) 9561 8514. For information on employment screening, teachers should contact the Manager, Employment Screening Unit at DET on (02) 9836 9200.



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Groups arranged by professional organisations such as Vacation Care and OSHC are responsible for maintaining that their staff have current, valid Working with Children Checks and maintaining a child safe environment – this is not the responsibility of MSTYP.

Accessibility Information

The Knox Cultural Centre aims to be an accessible and welcoming venue for all. The accessible drop-off zone is located at the Chapel Gate, on Borambil Avenue. The entrance to the foyer has no stairs and an accessible bathroom is provided a short distance (approx. 10m) from the theatre foyer.

For all accessibility enquiries, please contact the office on 9411 1800 or email Jessica@mstyp.org.au.

First Aid and Emergency Procedures

In the event that first aid is required at a performance, this will be administered by MSTYP staff. However for Vacation Care and other large groups, first aid should be administered by a trained member of their staff in the first instance. For more serious medical emergencies, a member of the MSTYP staff will contact emergency services.

All incidents are reported via an Incident Report Form that is submitted to management by a responsible staff member on site.

Evacuation Procedure

In the event of evacuation, we ask that audience members follow the direction of staff on site. The Front of House manager is responsible for managing the evacuation, including checking that there are no patrons left in the foyer, auditorium or bathrooms.

The first evacuation point is on the open grassy area next to the venue between the Cultural Centre and the Knox Chapel. This is the quickest way to access open air and therefore the safest avenue for an evacuation.

The secondary evacuation point is down the corridor to the outside courtyard.

It is the responsibility of large groups to check all members of their party are present during an evacuation, therefore assisting the Front of House Manager in accounting for all attendees.

Public Liability Insurance

MSTYP has the appropriate Public Liability Insurance. MSTYP can supply a Certificate of Currency of Insurance upon request.

Audience Conduct and Supervision of Children

Carers should maintain direct supervision of their groups at all times during their visit to the theatre. All carers (or adult carers) are admitted free and for vacation care groups, there is one free adult carer for



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every eight children. Note: every adult accompanying children in their care, is required to be in a supervisory role and must have adequate authority and experience (as determined by the organization) to handle groups alone for risk assessment purposes. Please ensure that carer supervision is evenly spread throughout your group while at the centre.

At all times, carers are to remain in direct supervision of their groups while on the excursion.

Our performances are interactive and we encourage active and vocal participation, however MSTYP reserves the right to remove any children from a session if their behaviour is deliberately and consistently disruptive. A carer is required to supervise the children outside the auditorium until the session has ended. As such, we ask that carers outline the following Code of Conduct and monitor the children's behaviour on the day.

Children are expected to:

- behave in a courteous and responsible manner at all times
- keep their pace to a walk inside and outside the centre
- refrain from inappropriate behaviour in the theatre during the performance
- not disrupt the viewing of other audience members in any way

There may be other groups and members of the public at the theatre during your visit. We expect carers to ensure that the above code of conduct is followed. If other groups disrupt your experience, please notify MSTYP staff immediately.

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