



# Young People's Handbook

All you need to know – plus a little bit  
more

# WELCOME TO MT4UTH

Whether this is your first Music Theatre 4 Youth (MT4Uth) project, or you're an old hand, welcome to the company! This handbook will take you through what you can expect from the company and, of course what we expect from you.

Any questions you currently have going around in your head should hopefully be answered over the next few pages.

Remember, if this is your first project with us, don't be scared, lots of people will be feeling the same way - and we'll be around to give you a hand. Check out the discussion forum of the MT4UTH website [www.mt4uth.com](http://www.mt4uth.com) to see how quickly firm friendships are made. The forum is also a useful place to discover that other young people might be feeling the same anxieties as you.

So keep turning the pages and we'll try to answer your questions!

## WHAT WILL I BE REQUIRED TO DO?

This bit may sound like a bit of a dream to you. It is your responsibility to turn up to rehearsals (on time), as and when called by your director, and sing/dance/act your socks off! The artistic team will then, with your input, endeavour to provide you with a music theatre experience never to be forgotten.

As you will be working with a professional artistic team you will be expected to behave in a professional manner at all times. The artistic and pastoral team will make you

aware of meal times/breaks etc during the introductory session. Just to be warned though the usual rehearsal time is 9am to 8pm, with two one hour meal breaks during the day.

You will have two adult teams looking after you.

### **1. The Artistic Team**

Usually consisting of a director, musical director, choreographer and their assistants. They are responsible for all things creative in the project.

### **2.The Pastoral Team**

They are responsible for your welfare whilst on the project.

Although their roles are very different, both teams will work together to make your time with MT4Uth as enjoyable as possible.

## **WHAT WILL I NEED TO BRING?**

As you can imagine most of your time will be spent working, so make sure you wear clothes and shoes that you can sensibly work in, such as tracksuit bottoms, loose fitting tops and soft soled trainers or jazz shoes. Please do not wear Jeans.

It's also useful to have a notebook, pencil and rubber with you. Also, very important is a WATER BOTTLE/CONTAINER. You will be expending a lot of energy and it is important to drink lots of water. Please put your name on your bottle clearly and then you can refill daily from the drinking taps at the venue.

It is important to note that we do not have insurance for your personal items. So, in a nutshell, if you don't need it -

don't bring it. It's worth mentioning here that you won't be allowed to wear jewellery in any dance/movement based rehearsal for safety reasons, so save the worry and leave it at home.

## WHO ARE THE PASTORAL TEAM?

Chaperones come from all walks of life and are experienced in working with young people. All our chaperones have been given special clearance to work with young people taking part in MT4Uth projects. They act in 'loco parentis' to all participants under the age of 18. In case your Latin isn't up to scratch, this means that they will have the same rights as your parents whilst you are under our care.

Whatever the problem - be it personal, medical or emotional they are the people to talk to. They are there to ensure that your time with us is as carefree as possible.

A member of the pastoral team will be in the rehearsal room at all times, checking up on your welfare and, more importantly, with the first aid kit at the ready for the blistered feet caused by too much dancing!

MT4Uth Chaperones will be on duty between the hours of 4pm – 9pm (Friday); 9am-8pm (Saturday & Sunday) and 9am – end of performance (Monday). We do not take responsibility for any young person outside these hours.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ARRIVE?

After registration, you will be introduced to the artistic and pastoral teams. The pastoral team will then make you familiar with the venue, showing you where all the relevant rooms are, including social areas. You will also be told the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency

evacuation. You will be issued with name badges and scripts - these must be returned to your chaperone at the end of each day. On arrival each morning your chaperone will issue you with your name badge and script. Please ensure that you wear your badge and that you look after your script – it is your responsibility and any lost or damaged scripts will have to be paid for by you.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION (FAQs)

We have some MT4Uth rules which enable us all to work in harmony. Remember your words or actions can make it uncomfortable for another young person to perform to the best of their ability. So, what are the rules?

Hopefully the following few pages will answer most of your questions.

### 1. Can I smoke?

It is company policy that under 16s are not permitted to smoke. There is no smoking permitted inside any of the theatre venues at any time.

### 2. Can I drink alcohol?

No young person (especially under the age of 18) participating in an MT4Uth project is permitted to drink, or have in their possession, alcohol at any time during the project.

### 3. What's the deal on mobile phones?

You will be required to turn off your mobile during all rehearsals. Any exceptions to this have to be negotiated with the artistic team prior to the start of a rehearsal. Only during break times and at the end of the day are mobiles to be switched on again.

The emergency number, should you need to contact MT4Uth urgently for any reason is: 07879 077 800 (Sorcha Mc Veigh - Manager).

#### 4. Can I Leave The Venue?

If you are under 16 you will only be allowed to leave the venue if accompanied by your parent, or a member of the pastoral team. 16 & 17 year olds need to inform the pastoral team if they intend going out. They should report back to the pastoral team on their return. 18+ are also expected to pay the pastoral team the same courtesy.

#### 5. Drugs

Possession and/or supply of drugs is a criminal offence and anyone engaged in such activities will be asked to leave the project and the police will be informed.

#### 6. What if I'm being bullied?

We have a strict anti-bullying policy. If you feel that you are being subjected to any form of bullying speak to a member of the pastoral team immediately. Discrimination in any form will not be tolerated.

You should be aware that MT4Uth does not tolerate the following.

- ❖ Bullying
- ❖ Offensive behaviour of any kind including racism, sexism and rudeness
- ❖ Unauthorised smoking
- ❖ Drunkenness or encouraging under age people to drink
- ❖ Arriving at rehearsal/workshops late, overtired or hungover

- ❖ Failure to observe House Rules set down at each venue.

Any of these offences could lead to disciplinary action which may include temporary suspension from the project or permanent dismissal. Normal steps in any disciplinary procedure are as follows.

- 1) Verbal warning from the Head Chaperone, who will inform all pastoral/artistic staff on the project. A record will be kept of all 1<sup>st</sup> warnings.
- 2) Second verbal warnings from the Head Chaperone, who will again inform all necessary staff members on the project along with the Head of Pastoral Care at the office. A report will also be given to your parents/guardians.
- 3) Extreme action taken which could result in dismissal from the company and all future MT4Uth projects.

## 7. What if I have a complaint?

If you're unhappy with any aspect of the project your first port of call should be a member of the pastoral team. If the matter fails to get resolved then get in touch with the Head of Pastoral Care – contactable through Sorcha at the MT4Uth office. If you are still unhappy then put your complaint in writing and send it to The Head of Pastoral Care, MT4Uth, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 35 Donegall Street, Belfast, BT1 2FG.

You will be given a feedback/evaluation form at the end of the project, to let us know, good and bad, what you thought about the project. This will help us to continue to get it right!

## IS THAT IT?

The key to getting the most out of an MT4Uth project is respect! Respect for the other company members and staff, and they will no doubt respect you. We all want to achieve the same goal, a good piece of musical theatre that we can all be proud of. Same goes for the venue - respect your surroundings. Keep your work areas tidy so that everyone can enjoy them. Put litter in the bin, no chewing gum, and most importantly no eating or drinking (apart from water) in rehearsal rooms or main theatre.

Phew – so what happens next...

Turn up and have fun, oh yes, and work really hard! It's that easy.....