**Health & Safety Plan – NSW Touring Incursions during COVID -19**

The safety and well-being of all ASC cast members and audience is our highest priority. As the concern over coronavirus (COVID-19) continues alongside our continuing touring schedule, our goal is to keep your school community healthy.

The Australian Shakespeare Company is closely following direction from the Australian government regarding regular cleaning and sanitizing as one of the most important measures against the spread of COVID-19. Below is a list of precautions we are taking to ensure a safe experience for the teachers, parents and especially children we care so much about.

Before arrival we will ensure:

* All staff are healthy and not showing any symptoms of cold, flu or fever
* All staff have the COVIDSafe app
* No staff members have been in contact with any known cases of COVID-19
* No staff members have travelled outside NSW within the past 14 days
* Extra time is allocated for signing in at reception and following each school’s specific visitor protocol procedures.

Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, including:

* Costumes, set and props
* Technical equipment

Requiring cast members to keep hands clean by:

* Using gloves and wearing masks at all venues during set up and pack up
* Washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being at a school, in a public place, nose blowing, coughing, or sneezing
* Using hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
* Covering all surfaces of hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry
* Making hand sanitizer available to all cast members attached to each costume box and in our vehicle
* Avoiding touch to nose, eyes, and mouth with unwashed hands
* Covering coughs and sneezes
* Covering the mouth and nose with a tissue or inside of the elbow
* Throwing used tissues in the trash
* Sick employees are not to report to work
* Rescheduling of any shows as a result of any signs of sickness

In addition, on site before, during and after the shows we will prevent physical contact with children and teachers. We ask that children be kept out of the venue where we are setting and packing up until show time as well as away from the touring vehicle. When we meet you on site, please do not be offended as we follow the new guideline of not shaking hands.

Although “physical distancing of children in schools is not required under the AHPPC guidelines”\* we suggest using the largest space possible so we can seat the audience following the guidelines of one person per 4 square metres, maximising space between students. If a large space is not available then we can arrange an additional performance so as to not over-crowd a venue. If you need this option, please let us know so we can schedule this. Rest assured the price will not be affected, if our schedule allows for the extra performance.

Furthermore, we will be making the following changes to the format of the live shows:

* There will be at least 1.5 metres extra space between the front audience members and the performance area (with a buffer zone adhered to at all times marked with rope). Teachers are asked to please help your students stay behind this buffer zone at all times
* Audience participation will continue with students remaining 1.5 metres away meaning they will NOT be brought on stage or asked to wear any costumes or use props. Scripts will be sent to teachers in advance to print and give to the assigned student volunteers.
* Teachers will be responsible for getting students seated safely during the performance and leaving the space directly after the performance or show is finished.

We value your understanding as we navigate this rapidly evolving situation. At this time, we will maintain our full touring schedule. We believe that by following the above policies we will be able to continue our full schedule without any risk to our cast or audience. If at any time any school we are scheduled to visit is going to be closed or your school is temporarily limiting gatherings of this type, we will be happy to work with you to reschedule your performance to a later date.

As always, please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

\* <https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families>