

The **gi**ant Handbook

creative adventures for all kids



What we do and how to get involved

creative adventures for all

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This handbook is also available in Braille, large print and audio formats.

Introduction

Giant has been producing arts adventures for children since 1989 when it was set up to deliver the Children and Young People's events as part of Glasgow 1990 City of Culture. Over time we have developed our work to make sure that it is inclusive ensuring all children can take part and have a great time together.

We have produced 'The Giant Handbook' to help people get the most out of working with us and having fun with us, whether as a child, parent or partner organisation. The handbook is also a guide for promoters, funders, teachers, artists or anyone else who wants to learn more about the work we do.

Our mission

Our vision is to enable all children to achieve self-fulfilment and enjoy themselves through a shared artistic and creative process and our

mission is to identify and challenge barriers to this. We are dedicated to making the whole experience, from first point of contact through creating and experiencing art, to going home, accessible, inclusive and enjoyable.

We deliver our vision and mission through four programme areas:

■ Giant: Theatre

Producing original inclusive touring theatre and innovative drama projects.

■ Giant: Visual Arts

Creating projects, workshops and exhibitions using a sensory visual arts approach.

■ Giant: Events

Combining different art forms to provide creative adventures for all children and their families.

■ Giant: Training

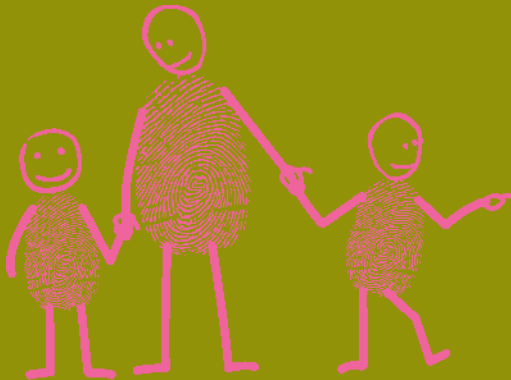
Providing training, support and advocacy in inclusive arts practice.



What do we mean by inclusive arts?

We define inclusive arts as art form experiences which are devised and delivered to enable all children to engage in the creative process together at the same time.

For us, inclusion is not an “add-on”, but the driving-force behind everything we do. We are committed to providing creative adventures for a wide range of kids with different needs and a wide range of experience of the world. As a company we try to understand how they understand the world and reflect this in the way we develop our work.



How Giant works

As a development organisation we are always researching new and exciting ways to work.

When planning our programme we experiment with mixing up different art forms: visual arts, music, drama, storytelling, movement and creative play to offer all children a broad range of creative experiences and a fun time.

Approach

In workshops and at events we use different multi-sensory materials and equipment: from paint and charcoal, clay and fabrics to scent machines and projection. Children can explore and experiment with different creative processes such as printmaking, sculpture, felt making, animation, marbling and drawing to name but a few.

Our inclusive theatre builds up individual layers, for example: scent, aural, tactile and interactive, which children can experience on an individual basis but that also make sense as a whole. Thus a child with a visual impairment can relate directly to the smells, noise, feel and interaction of the performance whilst a child with a hearing impairment can respond to the visual aspects as well as the scent, touch and participatory nature of the piece.

Performance, the setting and the narrative are still essential to the piece but are developed in a different way to more traditional theatre.

When do activities take place?

We run a programme of activities throughout the year. Public events take place at weekends and during school holidays. Projects are tailored to suit those involved for example: a

weekly school session, an evening with a group or a focused week long residency. We also create at least one new piece of theatre each year which tours in either the spring or autumn.

Where do activities take place?

Across our programme we work in a variety of different settings: from theatres, arts centres and community halls to schools, galleries and museums. We have also worked in some more unconventional locations such as outdoors, in kitchens and on buses!

Wherever we work we carry out a risk assessment to make sure it is a safe environment for everyone to be in.

Age range

We provide activities and events for all children aged 3 – 11 years: children in the nursery and primary years of schooling. This is a wide age range to work with so

sometimes we create different programmes and events for specific age ranges within this bracket e.g. a theatre show created for 5-8 year olds and their families or a creative play workshop for 3-6 years olds. We do this to match the content to the development of the children. Often we create activities for the whole age range of 3-11 year olds so that siblings or friends can come along and have fun together. The age range varies from project to project.

We will always give a guide to the age range in the publicity for the event so please use these guidelines when you make a booking with us.

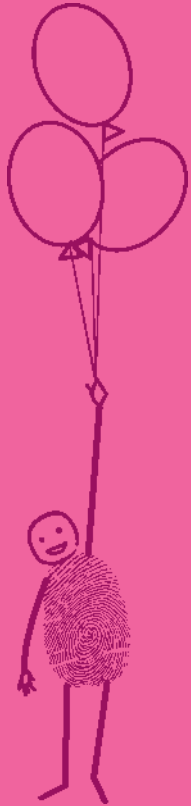
Group size

So that everyone who comes along to Giant has a great experience and is given attention and support, we look carefully at the number of children attending any one event. We

believe that to work in a genuinely inclusive way smaller group numbers are essential.

When we are planning an event we decide on the maximum group size. If a workshop is for children only then the maximum group size is likely to be 12. If an event is designed for family groups then the capacity may rise to 16 or 20. The size of the group is dependant on the activity we are planning.

For our theatre productions, our maximum audience size is usually 40. This is because we create self-contained theatre spaces that the audience share with the performers. This creates an intimate atmosphere for interaction between the performers and the audience and enables us to deliver multi-sensory experiences too.



Accessibility

When we are organising an event, project or selling a tour we choose our venue carefully. All the venues we choose must be physically accessible to everyone: ramps, lifts, toilets, parking are all essential.

We create information about our events in large print and can provide Braille and audio versions of leaflets and programmes.

As our work is developed to be inclusive and has a multi-sensory approach we tend not to use signers / interpreters.

As a charity and inclusive organisation we try to keep our ticket prices as low as possible so that everyone can afford to come along.

If you have any particular access requirements please do tell us and we will do our utmost to accommodate them.

Public events

Booking places at a Giant event

If an event is being booked directly through us you will be asked to contact the Giant Box Office on 0141 357 5000.

The Box Office is generally open from 9.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday with an answer machine outside of these hours. If we are unable to take your call please leave us a message and we will call you back.

When we speak to you we will ask quite a lot of questions. This is to make sure that we have your correct details for sending out confirmation of your booking and to allow us to cater for all of the children's needs.

Things we will ask:

- Your name, address and a contact 'phone number. If possible we like to have a mobile number so that we can contact you on the day of the event if necessary.

- The number of places you want to book and which sessions (depending on the nature of the event).
- The names and dates of birth of the children attending.
- Information regarding any specific needs that the children who are attending might have. Is there any information that would be helpful for us to know in order to make sure that your child has the best experience at a Giant event?
- Where did you hear about the event? This helps us to monitor our promotional activity to know what works and what does not.

What happens next?

Your booking will be held for a limited period of time (you will be told how long for when you book). On receipt of payment, your booking will be confirmed by letter which will

detail the name of the event, the venue address, how many places have been booked and which sessions they are for.

This letter is your ticket and you should bring this with you to the event.

At the end of the letter is a photo-permission slip which should be completed and either returned to us by post or brought along to the event.

The first time you book with us we will send you a database form to complete and return to us if you want to be included in future mailings.

We sometimes work in other venues who take the bookings themselves but we endeavour to provide their staff with support and information on our booking methods. Please call us if you have a problem when trying to book for a Giant event.



Attending a Giant event

We always ask people to arrive 10 -15 minutes before the event start time so that we can register everybody; sort out any payment or photo permission etc.

This allows us to start the event on time with everybody together and minimises disruption.

We advise children (and grown ups!) to wear comfortable old clothes for our workshops and events.

If your child has a specific allergy please let us know when you book so that we can make adjustments.

Some of our events are for children only and we will ask you to sign in your child/ren and then sign them out when you collect them from the event. We will also ask for a mobile number in case we need to contact you during the workshop. If you or a carer need to stay with your child then that's fine,



please let us know when you book.

At our family events everyone has the chance to participate in the art activity together and we really like it if everybody joins in but if you prefer not to then that's fine too.

Most importantly come along and have a great time!

Staff

We have a high ratio of staff to children for our events. In a group size of 12 children there will be **at least** two artists working with the children.

Everyone who works with Giant has a great deal of experience of working with children; they are all committed to working inclusively and have been Disclosure checked.

Time Out

During our events we try and create an area for Time Out. Children can go to the Time Out area on their own or an adult can go with them if they want support. If your child feels

unsettled during an event it is okay to take them out of the space and come back in when they feel comfortable, we understand that sometimes children need quiet time or to be away from the rest of the group. Equally, we appreciate that all children respond differently to different environments so please do not feel that you have to take a child out of the space. We try to make sure that the Time Out area is in the same room as the main activity so that the children still feel part of the event and our artists are there to ensure each person has a great time so please talk to them if you feel there are any issues.



Who do we work with?

Our audience is diverse and demanding – we are proud to have built a relationship with them – individuals, families and organisations all over the country - based on trust, mutual respect and a guarantee of high standards. It is important to us that we continue to develop this relationship with our audience.

The areas in which we work and the people we work with include:

Artists

We work with a wide range of talented artists from across the art forms from: performers to musicians, sculptors to animators, play workers to choreographers. We understand that to continue to provide quality arts experiences and for the sustainability of inclusive arts practice these artists need support. We therefore have a commitment to

providing training and skills sharing opportunities. Each artist is selected for their professional expertise, commitment and interest in inclusive practice and undergoes a rigorous selection and training process.

Local Authorities

Over the years we have developed relationships with local authorities not only in the arts but within education, inclusion and social work. Through touring theatre, arts projects and skills sharing we work with local authorities to: offer creative opportunities to as many children as possible; develop audiences and client groups; promote inclusive practice and provide training and mentoring.

Groups / Organisations

We strive to reach as diverse an audience as possible and to provide opportunities for all sorts of groups and organisations to get

involved with our activities. Groups might come along to workshops, be part of an audience, take part in specific training and through networking provide access to children and families who might not know about our work.

Parents / Guardians / Carers / Family

The adults who care for children are important to us. We encourage adults to participate with their children in a lot of our events. We devise training projects for adults to gain confidence in working with their children using the arts and encourage adults to get involved as volunteers.

Teachers / Education workers

We work with teachers and education workers in a variety of capacities: providing continued professional development training in inclusive practice, working in the classroom, working on collaborative projects bringing together

mainstream and Special Educational Needs schools and devising and delivering curriculum specific projects.

Venues / Promoters

Giant works in venues and with promoters from around the UK, whether in arts spaces or community based facilities; with cultural coordinators / arts development officers, programming for schools and nurseries or indeed directly with schools and nurseries themselves.



How can you work with Giant?

Partnership projects

This is where we work in partnership with other organisations, local authorities or educational establishments on a jointly funded basis. We use different art forms to bring children together on exciting arts projects which could be: public events at weekends; holiday programmes; or long-term projects of work with specific groups. Past work has included a food and music themed animation project with school children and a programme of arts work for young parents, and their children in and leaving care.

Commissioned projects

This is when we are approached to create arts activities where the funding is provided by the client. We then work with the client to develop an inclusive arts project within their

budget tailored to their needs. Past commissions of work have included local authority holiday programmes, cultural festivals, creating a piece of theatre with children and mums as part of a family learning project and creating a winter wonderland installation in a local SEN school.

Event programming

We also devise our own creative adventures which we run ourselves, generally as ticketed events. These can be anything from: all day themed activities such as cooking, designing and eating with food; exploring the outdoors and learning about pinhole photography and; seasonal arts events to more art form focused weekly sessions.



Theatre programming

Building relationships with promoters of children's theatre throughout the country and encouraging the development of inclusive audiences within venues is very important to us.

Small audience numbers with high level interaction and communication offer significant challenges to promoters but we believe the benefits of programming inclusive theatre far outweigh these.

As a company we provide help in building inclusive audiences. Through one to one guidance, promotion, marketing packs and ongoing support we endeavour to help venues be recognised as somewhere that all children can experience theatre in a truly inclusive way.

Research and Development

Although two of our main programme areas are theatre and visual arts, within these Giant incorporate many other art forms – including movement, animation, music, puppetry and storytelling. Our events also provide the chance to experience a variety of art mediums. This cross art form approach is core to the development of inclusive arts practice.

As a development organisation we take our responsibility to provide quality creative experiences very seriously. We always take the time to really plan our projects and explore the best ways to work within the art forms and with the participants. Through dedicated research programmes, devising and ongoing evaluation processes we are constantly developing and improving our practice.

Training and advocacy

Giant have a commitment to advocacy and skills sharing. We offer different training packages and run training days throughout the year.

Artists can develop their inclusive arts skills by volunteering at our events and shadowing our creative team and we are always on-hand to provide support and advice to anyone interested in inclusive arts practice.

Contact us

We hope you find 'The Giant Handbook' useful and we look forward to you joining us on a creative adventure soon. If you want to know more about the work we do or you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.

You can also log onto our website www.giantproductions.org for the latest news, to join our mailing list, download our newsletter or give a donation.

We are always happy to receive comments and feedback on the work we do so please feel free to let us know what you think.

**Giant: creative adventures for all kids
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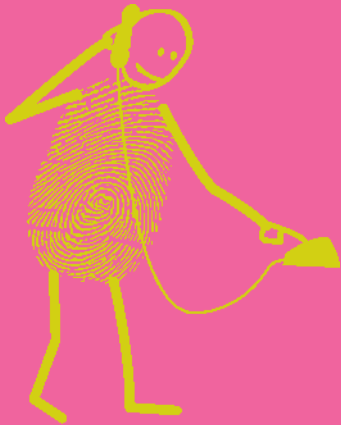
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