

### **Work Experience Policy**

Work experience is a planned, well organised activity that has an important role in developing a students' personal and social skills and gives them important opportunities to learn directly about the world of work.

However, students outside the school environment will be more exposed to the potential risks involved, both from the tasks they undertake and from the working environment. E.g. equipment and hazardous substances. The physical and psychological immaturity of students also constitutes a risk in itself and therefore it is important that these are taken into account in the risk assessments completed by the placement provider.

Work experience placements are only permitted by law for students during Key Stage 4 and above.

The Working Time Regulations 1998 apply to students at work experience placements, for example they should not work for more than five days in any consecutive seven-day period. The number of hours worked and pattern of duties is normally agreed by the placement provider, schools and students. The school will put measures in place to ensure that students on placements are not required to work excessively long hours or unnecessarily unsocial hours.

Children between 13 and the minimum school leaving age (MLSA) are prohibited from being employed in industrial undertakings such as factories, construction sites etc, except when on work experience schemes approved by the Children's Services Department. The Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990 have the effect of designating children on work experience placements as staff and employers must provide them with at least the same health, safety and welfare protection that they give their own staff. There are also some age-related restrictions which prohibit young workers, including children on work experience, from working with particular machinery or undertaking particular tasks. Employers should be aware of these restrictions.

This document provides advice on arranging work experience placements to ensure all placements are in line with health and safety legislation.

#### **Definitions**

The Department for Education (DfE) defines work experience as "a placement on an employer's premises in which a student carries out a particular task or duty, or a range of tasks and duties, more or less as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.

Work Experience can be classified as either:

- **Block-** the placement takes place over 5 or 10 consecutive days.
- **Extended-** the placement takes place on 1 or 3 days per week over a period of time. Schools must ensure that they comply with the criteria that are designed to safeguard students; entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. It is therefore unlikely that extended work experience of more than two days will meet this requirement.

## Responsibilities

### ***Headteachers and Board Directors***

The Head of Provision and Proprietor have overall responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of students on work experience and staff who are involved in the planning and preparation of the placement. They will ensure that:

- A suitable and sufficient management system is implemented for work experience.
- A named member of SLT is nominated within the school with responsibility for ensuring that health and safety requirements for work experience are carried out
- A Careers Lead is nominated within the schools.
- The suitability of the work experience placements has been assessed by a competent person.
- There is clear communication with all key parties involved with the work placement.
- Health and safety procedures are followed.
- Arrangements are in place to send consent forms and risk assessments to parents/carers and that a copy of this document is signed and returned before the placement begins.
- Arrangements are in place to provide placement providers with any additional needs of the student.
- Staff comply with the School's incident reporting procedure and that all parties understand their responsibility.

### ***Careers Lead (Placement Organiser)***

The placement organiser is responsible for the following duties:

Ensure that placement providers hosting students on placement have been approved based on a robust health and safety inspection, and there is evidence of Employer's Liability Insurance and Risk Assessment in place, so the student is not subject to unacceptable risks.

Assess the suitability and approve all placement providers with regards to health and safety and child protection.

Ensure that health and safety inspections are carried out by a competent person. A competent person is defined as someone who:

- ideally is qualified to assess work places, e.g. has an IOSH qualification or has more than 2 years' experience of running work experience placements;
- has relevant experience in assessing work placements for young people under the minimum school leaving age;
- has access to competent health and safety advice and relevant sector experience.
- Ensure that placement providers understand their responsibilities with regards to health and safety and when undertaking a risk assessment. That they take in to account any additional needs the student may have.
- Ensure that placement risk assessments are made available to school.

- Ensure that all placements are visited and there is a revisit program in place.
- Consent forms and risk assessments are sent to parents/carers and that a copy of this document is signed and returned before the placement begins.
- Liaise with school staff regarding any additional needs that students might have, and provide all placement providers with this information in order that a specific risk assessment can be completed for the student and sent to parent/carer before the placement begins.
- The person responsible for mentoring the student, and visiting teachers are provided with a copy of the risk assessment prior to the placement taking place.
- Comply with the school's incident reporting procedure if an accident occurs whilst on placement.

### Teacher(s)/School Staff monitoring Work Experience Placements

The teacher(s)/School Staff responsible for monitoring work experience placements will ensure that:

- They are familiar with the risk assessments for placements being visited and that any identified PPE or clothing is worn.
- Records are kept of the monitoring.
- A visit takes place once for a block placement every two to three weeks for an extended placement. Where it is not possible to make a visit due to location of the placement, phone contact takes place and recorded on Arbor.
- Ensure where there are any concerns, this is reported as soon as possible to the Careers Lead and more frequent visits made. Any concerns should also be fed back to the placement organiser.
- Ensure child protection and health and safety procedures are followed.

### Suitability of the Placement

The school must be satisfied that the placement providers:

- Have suitable systems in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare, so far as is reasonably practicable, of the student while under their control.
- Are competent to manage health and safety in relation to the placement.
- Will use competent people to supervise work experience.

Written parental consent is legally required before a placement can commence if a student is below the minimum school leaving age (pre-16). This consent should be obtained after the parent has sighted the risk assessment.

### Confidentiality

Parents/carers must inform the school of any issues, health or otherwise relating to the student prior to the student commencing work experience.

The school is required to inform an employer of any of the above that may affect the employer's willingness to take that student for work experience. If this information is not supplied the placement cannot be approved.

Permission must always be sought from parents and the student before any information listed above covered by the data protection act is shared.

### Supporting Students during the Work Experience Placement

Students should understand the necessity for health and safety controls in the workplace. General principles could be introduced as part of the pre-briefing by the school and/or at a pre-placement visit by the student.

### Pay, Tax & Hours

The parent/carer and student will need to be aware that it is a condition of the work experience that students do not receive payment. They therefore will not be entitled to the industrial injuries of the Social Security Act 1975 if they are involved in an accident while taking part in work placement.

Students on work experience have the status of an "employee" for legal and insurance purposes but must not receive payment for the work they do. Employers can assist with travelling expenses or lunch cost if they wish.

The number of hours worked and pattern of duties, is normally agreed by the placement provider, school and students. Schools should put measures in place to ensure that students on placements are not required to work excessively long hours or unnecessarily unsocial hours as laid down by the European Working Time Directive.