

Work Experience A Guide for Parents



What is Work Experience?

It is an unpaid opportunity for young people to experience working life while they are still in school. It gives them the chance to:

- Work alongside adults as part of a team.
- Develop and practice a range of new skills.
- Become more confident in their abilities.
- Make more informed decisions about their future.

During their placement it is expected that the students will learn and use a range of transferable skills, personal qualities and competencies that will contribute towards their employability.

How will the school help?

The school will deliver a programme of preparation before the placement starts.

In the first instance documentation is given to each parent/carer and student. This outlines the process of obtaining a placement and includes forms to be completed.

Having received the completed forms from parents/carer (prior to 16th December) we then contact the employers and East Sussex County Council (ESCC) on your behalf.

Some students, often through no fault of their own, can sometimes find it difficult to obtain a placement.

Later, when all the documentation has been checked and approved by ESCC, students are then expected to contact the employer. At this stage some students are invited to attend an interview. This we feel is good practice.

The students are given a Work Experience Record Book, which includes an employer's report form. This provides students with an invaluable record of their achievements which can then be used when applying for work, or post 16 courses.

Finally, when students are on their placement it is envisaged that a member of the school staff will visit or telephone the student/employer at least once during the five days. This is a courtesy to the employers as much as it is to monitor the student's progress and well-being.

What can students do to help?

- Contact possible employers early, particularly if the placement being sought is outside of Sussex.
- It could be that you are turned down many times before you find an employer. Be prepared to persevere!
- Some placements are refused on the grounds of health and safety. We appreciate this can be disappointing, but be willing to try again.
- Be flexible in the kind of work experience you would be prepared to do. Work experience does not have to be in your chosen career.
- Do not have unrealistic expectations of the week. Most work experience involves a large number of menial tasks, and a lot of watching rather than doing.
- Arrive promptly to the placement and keep to the employers codes of practice. For example, if you are told that you need to be smartly dressed then no jeans please! If you have to wear protective clothing, wear it!

REMEMBER - Be safe, courteous and responsible.

How can parents/carers help?

- **Encourage the student to sort their work experience now.** Some placements e.g. media, solicitors, vets, theatre, etc. get booked up early in September and students in other schools will also want these placements.
- If the placement is outside of East Sussex there could be a charge from the local authority payable by parents/carers.
- Support your child to make contact with the employers but **please don't do everything for them.**
- Get them to understand the goodwill demonstrated by our employers in offering placement opportunities.
- Advise the school of any health matters or learning difficulties which may affect the student's work placement.
- Discuss the expectations employers will have.
- Sign and return paperwork promptly – **by 16 December 2016.**
- Encourage the student to undergo a pre-placement interview.
- Encourage the student to have a positive approach to the placement, even if it isn't quite what they expected.
- Ensure good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that both the school and employer are notified if an absence occurs.
- Inform the school of any difficulties as promptly as possible.
- By checking that suitable lunch arrangements have been organised. (Please be aware that if a student leaves the employer's premises during lunch or break periods, no liability can be accepted by the employer or the school).
- Discuss the placement with the student and encourage them to complete and return their Record Book.

Can you help us? Could you provide a work placement?

We always have a need for more work placements and there are a wealth of employment possibilities among parents/carers. If you can help, please contact Mrs Bodner on 01273 890407, or email sbodner@chaileyschool.org.