

## **Introduction and Rationale**

### **The DfES have defined work experience as:**

'A placement on an employers premises in which a pupil carries out a particular task or duty, or range of tasks and duties, more or less as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.'

### **DFE guidance for schools state that:**

'Schools are expected to offer high quality work experience that properly reflects individuals' studies and strengths and supports the academic curriculum.'

### **Gatsby Benchmark 6 states that:**

'Every student should have first-hand experience of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.'

Work experience is governed by the Education Act, 1966 (as amended by the School Standards & Framework Act, 1998). Under this legislation, the main features of work experience are:

- only pupils in their last two years of compulsory schooling, or pupils taking post-16 courses are eligible
- placements occur on employers' premises, a placement can vary, but most are for a minimum of two weeks.

## **INTENT:**

WSAPC are committed to following the guidelines of the Career Education Gatsby Benchmarks <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/schools-colleges/understand-gatsby-benchmarks> and aim to offer the following to students from Year 7 to Year 11:

- Every student will have access to at least ONE Work Experience Placement by the time they leave secondary education.
- KS4 students will be given the opportunity to experience the workplace independently through the Work Experience Programme.
- KS3 students will be given the opportunity to visit the workplace as an accompanied group visit, giving them the opportunity to think about options available to them in the future and assist them with career planning.

Work Experience is for many young people the first opportunity they have to experience at first-hand what it is like to be in the workplace. It is a valuable and essential part of their education and provides opportunities to learn about skills, work structures, duties and responsibilities that exist within organisations.

Internal experience of the workplace, through the 'Cook and Eat Programme' and 'Coaching experience' through the boxing session, will also be provided to develop students' confidence and workplace skills.

Work Experience is a relatively new development at WSAPC with the following points being considered:



Employers value work experience because it helps young people develop interpersonal and employability skills and become more aware of how businesses work. The value of a work placement is that by putting students into real business situations, they start to have an awareness of many aspects of working life which can be extremely difficult to convey in a classroom setting. Hopefully, the experience will make students see their schooling in a new light. Many students are inspired by the experience although some are simply driven toward academic successes and further qualifications because they have seen how mundane the working lives of unskilled staff can be!

Many of the skills that employers want from their employees can be developed, refined and evaluated during a work experience placement. These skills are common to nearly all sectors of the economy and include being:

- good at communicating
- able to work with others
- able to solve problems
- good at planning and organisation
- able to use their own judgement
- self-starters who show initiative
- able to complete a task on time and within budget
- IT literate
- Competent at working with numbers, data and information

This development of skills will be supported through the recent introduction of the Skills Builder Programme, where students have the opportunity to build and apply eight essential skills: Listening, Speaking, Problem Solving, Creativity, Staying Positive, Aiming High,

Leadership and Teamwork. Research has shown that building these essential skills can not only support the emotional wellbeing and academic success of students, but also prepare them to live independently as adults including in their future work and careers. We aim that work experience placements and encounters will, therefore, provide students the opportunity to both apply and see these skills in a career-related context. These connections will be made through student questioning as well as information shared by employees encountered on the placements. Employers will be given guidance on how to make these references prior to the placements starting.

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

### **Aims and Objectives Work Experience:**

Work experience placements offer many benefits and learning opportunities, not only for the students who take part in the scheme, but also for the teachers and employers.

#### **For students:**

- the chance to practice knowledge and skills learnt in the classroom in a working setting, including the eight essential skills.
- better understanding of how organisations work and what a work environment is like.
- a chance to see how skills, alongside knowledge, are applied in a work environment, including speaking to a range of employees about which skills they need and use the most in their role.
- exposure to 'real' work can help pupils have a more mature attitude to work and increased motivation to study.
- an insight into relevance to working life of school subjects.
- greater awareness of the range of opportunities within an organisation.

#### **For teachers**

- opportunities to learn about different organisations and their employment needs.
- enrichment to teaching programmes by creating different environments in which students can learn.
- involvement of local organisations in the life of the school and its curriculum.
- potential to work with other partners in the local work experience community.

#### **For employers**

- understanding changes in educational courses and qualifications.
- promotion of their organisation to potential future employees.
- opportunities to develop the skills of staff who act as mentors, supervisors etc.
- influencing teachers to understand the needs of employers.
- ability to contribute to the development of young people and to the local community.
- Why is work experience of value to employers?

Individual work experience opportunities will be offered to Key stage 4 students throughout the academic year. The placements will be tailored to the individuals' needs, interests, and ambitions. The length of time that a student is placed on a Work Experience placement will vary dependent upon the individual needs of each student. A long-term placement may be beneficial to a student to allow them to engage and further improve their learning journey giving them every opportunity to succeed Post 16. Short term placements can be offered to allow students the opportunity to experience a number of different career paths to assist them with their Post 16 destination in Further Education/Apprenticeships.

**Short Term** – 1 off days in placement during the school year – 1 or 2 week block placement.

**Long Term** - 1 to 2.5 days per week on an ongoing basis.

### **Work Placement Duties**

Students will carry out meaningful work in accordance with the agreed duties for their placement. A responsible person will plan the work and be designated for the welfare and supervision of the student during the period of the placement.

Students will not receive any payment for this work. Students will not be allowed to work hours which are considered unreasonable. In any event the employer confirms they will comply with the relevant provisions of the Working Time Regulations.

The employer will take into account any relevant information relating to the student's medical condition, or any physical and learning disabilities, details of which may have been provided, in formulating appropriate risk controls to protect both students and/or employees.

All tasks asked of the student will conform to the laws governing the Employment of Young Persons and Work Experience (as defined in the Education Act 1996) and any other statutory obligations to the student will be observed. The company is registered with the Health and Safety Executive or Local Authority, as applicable.

### **Health, Safety, Welfare and Security**

The employer recognises that a student on work placement is to be regarded as an employee for the purposes of Health and Safety legislation and the associated duty of care. A current health and safety policy will be maintained and there will be compliance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its relevant statutory provisions.

EBP South will undertake a 'placement suitability check'. This will include confirming contact details, finding out about the tasks a student will do on placement and will ask some questions in relation to the health and safety of work experience and that of the business.

The employer will undertake a suitable and sufficient risk assessment in relation to the health and safety of the student while on the placement, taking into account the student's inexperience, immaturity and lack of awareness of risks. At the start of the work placement, the employer will provide students with a health and safety induction, which will include workplace hazards and their control, fire, emergencies, first aid, accident reporting and security arrangements.

Students will not do work prohibited by law, operate dangerous machinery, carry out any manual handling tasks identified as being a risk to the student's health and safety, or be exposed to dangerous substances, radiation, extreme heat or cold, noise or vibration or any other work environment that may endanger their health and safety.

Where appropriate, students will be provided with and instructed on the correct use of personal protective clothing and equipment (PPE) and its use will be enforced.

The employer will notify the parents/guardian and School, by telephone and as soon as practicable, of any accident, of any case of ill health or any other incident which relates to the student's work placement. When appropriate, the employer will comply with the provisions of

the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995. The employer will have access to adequate first aid facilities as required under the Health and Safety (First Aid Regulations 1981).

The students should receive an induction at the start of the work experience placement, which should include:

- A tour of the working area/premises.
- Fire procedures.
- First Aid arrangements.
- Overview of the expected tasks during the week.
- Prohibited tasks and/or areas.
- Requirements for personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Introduction to colleagues.
- Confirmation of working hours and breaks.
- Shown welfare facilities.

### **Child Protection**

The employer is responsible for the welfare of the student during a work placement and is aware of child protection issues, particularly responsibility under the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000 to disclose the names of individuals who are disqualified from working with children, where known to them.

Child Protection guidance notes will be provided to employers to ensure that the placement is a secure and productive environment for the provider and the student. This will include advice regarding behaviour guidelines, not being on their own with a young person, adherence to equal opportunities procedures and what to do if a student makes a disclosure in the workplace.

### **The Role of the Work Experience Co-ordinator in each WSAPC Centre:**

- to co-ordinate the work experience programme.
- to act as a contact for students, parents, employers and other teachers involved.
- to monitor the programme and provide support where necessary.
- to provide resources and act as administrator where necessary.
- to help students to choose and arrange the work experience placements.
- to visit prospective employers
  - (i) to carry out pre-checks
  - (ii) to visit students on placement
- to secure appropriate placements to meet the needs of the students.
- to help students learn from the placement.
- to evaluate the effectiveness of the placement.

### **Work Experience Co-ordinator Guidelines:**

#### **Sourcing, confirming and monitoring of Work Experience Placements:**

1. Work placements are found by:
  - the Work Experience Co-ordinator
  - the students
  - the parents/carers

- 2.** Letters are sent to parents/carers of all students who attend WSAPC, at the start of every academic year/when a new student is placed on the WSAPC roll during the academic year. The letter explains the WSAPC Work Experience Programme and sets out the responsibilities/expectations of the parent/carer and student in relation to the programme.
- 3.** Parents/carers should give their consent for their child to take part in the programme and agree to the responsibilities/expectations as set out in the letter ie punctual attendance/behaviour whilst off school site, advising the school and employer of non-attendance and arranging to collect their child from the work experience placement should they be requested to do so.
- 4.** The Work Experience Co-ordinator must carry out a suitable risk assessment relating to the student and the work experience placement requested. If there is any doubt as to the suitability relating to risk, an alternative placement must be sourced.
- 5.** The Work Experience Co-ordinator uses the WEX database to search for jobs. Work Experience Placements cannot go ahead if the employer is not set up on the WEX Database. Private Placements may be used where parents are able to offer contacts. In these cases, the work experience co-ordinator must register the employer on WEX and request a Health and Safety check to be carried out. New placements can take up to 3 months to set up and must not be used until the HASP has been confirmed by WEX.
- 6.** EBP South carries out the placement Health and Safety checks for each organisation/parent, and for those organisations on their database, which are valid for 3 years.
- 7.** Information relating to the students' health or any other factors **MUST** be passed on to the employer that may affect the placement.
- 8.** Prior to confirming the placement, the Work Experience Co-ordinator must ensure that any personal protective equipment necessary for the placement such as safety footwear, can be provided by the employer, parent/carer or WSAPC.
- 9.** The Work Experience Co-ordinator **MUST** provide a Health and Safety briefing to every student who is attending a Work Experience Placement. For Long Term placements, regular briefings should take place to ensure the health and safety of the student.
- 10.** Parents/carers **MUST** give their written consent for every placement that their child is allocated, after having read the information sent out to them specific to the company and any risks involved.
- 11.** Placements are confirmed on the WEX Database and with the employer. The Work Experience co-ordinator prints the relevant pages from the WEX Database and confirms the placements to parents/carers.
- 12.** During the placement, the Work Experience Co-ordinator will visit employers where time allows otherwise phone calls and emails are carried out to confirm any issues or concerns.
- 13.** The work experience coordinator will arrange for all staff (who wish) to visit the employer during the placement to ensure that the student is attending, only carrying out

duties as set on the WEX Database and that Health and Safety issues are being adhered to by both student and employer.

- 14.** Any concerns in relation to the visit must be reported to the AHT/Centre Manager and WEX. As a result, an unannounced visit by a member of staff may be put in place to ensure the safety of the student.
- 15.** Letters are sent to all employers thanking them for their continued support and also asking them to send a written response/feedback for the student.

### **Responsibilities of EBP South:**

- Provide the relevant suitability check paperwork for completion by all parties.
- Provide access to the database.
- Complete placement suitability checks in line with HSE guidance and inform the Careers Lead and school contact when placements do not meet health and safety requirements.
- Initiate DBS checks for work placement staff if appropriate.
- Support employers and the schools in the evaluation of placements.

### **Responsibilities of the PARENT/CARER in relation to a Work Experience Placement:**

- 1.** The parent/carer must give written consent and agree to the responsibilities/expectations of the Work Experience Programme at the beginning of each academic year or at the time that their child is placed on the WSAPC roll.
- 2.** Responsibilities/Expectations:
  - Complete the written consent form for the specific Work Experience Placement prior to the student starting.
  - Ensure that the student has a means of travel to/from, is punctual and attends the Work Experience placement on a daily basis until such time that the placement ends.
  - Advise WSAPC and the Work Experience Placement at the earliest opportunity if the student is unable to attend.
  - If the student chooses not to attend their placement because they do not want to, the parent/carer must advise WSPAC and the employer immediately and ensure that their child attends school instead.
  - Ensure that arrangements are in place to collect the student from placement for any reason if requested to do so by WSAPC or the employer.
  - If personal protective equipment is required by a work placement, the parent/carer must ensure that this is taken/worn by the student for the duration of the placement.
  - Discuss the importance of Health and Safety with their child and encourage compliance for the duration of the work placement.
  - If the parent/carer has any concerns at all relating to their child's Work Experience Placement, they must inform a member of staff at WSAPC immediately.
  - Encourage the completion of the "Work Experience Placement Daily Diary" by the student – this may have to be completed at home.

**Responsibilities of the STUDENT in relation to a Work Experience Placement:**

1. Students should be respectful, polite, follow instructions and be willing to try new things whilst on placement. Whilst on placement, students must understand that they are representing WSAPC and so behaviour must be appropriate and acceptable.
2. Students agree to being dressed appropriately for their Work Experience Placement and will take guidance on this from the Work Experience Co-ordinator or the employer.
3. If student has any concerns whilst on placement, they must report them to their parent/carer and a member of staff at WSAPC.
4. Students will be expected to complete the "Work Experience Daily Diary" whilst on placement. This will need to be signed by the employer on a regular basis and an opportunity given for them to provide feedback.
5. Students should notify the school if they no longer wish to continue with the placement. They agree to attend school immediately if they choose not to continue with the placement altogether or on occasional days.

**Equal opportunities – Work Experience**

All staff at WSAPC have a responsibility to promote equality of opportunity, which ensures that all students have an entitlement and appropriate access to work experience regardless of race, gender, religion, ability, disability, social background or sexual orientation. All advice given will be impartial and confidential. Students will be helped to understand the importance of equal opportunities and be made aware of the risks of stereotyping and discrimination.

**Safeguarding**

WSAPC has a thorough and comprehensive Safeguarding policy which supports all areas of school life, including the Work Experience Programme, ensuring that the educational experience of our students is the best it can be.

**Parental/Carer Links – Work Experience**

The important role of parents in the whole process of Careers Guidance is recognised as vital, as a result parents/carers are welcome to contact WSAPC if they have any concerns or wish to discuss their child's career plans or work experience placements.

**Work Experience – Parent/Carer Work Placement Contacts**

The link with parents is in providing possible work placements. The aim is to build up a School Bank of employers which will in turn link with the WEX Database in providing our students with the opportunity of having Work Experience opportunities during their time at WSAPC. If parents/carers are able to help in this area, they should contact the Work Experience Co-ordinator at the centre that their child attends.

**IMPACT:**

The impact of work experience will be:

- Closing the gap
- Engaging the disengaged students.
- Socialisation of students.
- Social, Emotional, and Mental Health benefits for students.
- Practical skills development.
- Career opportunity and role awareness.
- Preparing for recruitment procedures and working practices.
- Identifying how essential skills, and developing them, can support students with their next steps in all places of work and different careers.

**Monitoring**

The WSAPC Careers Education Lead will monitor the Work Experience Programme on a regular basis throughout the academic year to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme and to collect outcome data.

This collection of data to monitor the impact will be through:

- Baseline data (FSQ provided by the Careers and Enterprise Company)
- Student voice through their daily diary entries.
- Skills Builder benchmark tool to monitor the development of the essential skills.
- Compass+
- Website and newsletter reports.
- Onward destinations – how has the work experience influenced this?

The Work Experience Policy will be reviewed and amended should any changes/improvements be made.

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