

# Parents'/Carer guide to work experience placements for students



This guide is intended to cover the main aspects relating to the work experience opportunity that your son/daughter will be undertaking. It provides information on the wider aspects of and benefits to students undertaking placements as well as a brief resume of the legal aspects in relation to working hours, health and safety and employer's insurance requirements. *It is not designed to be a definitive guide.*

### **What is a Work Experience Placement?**

A Work Experience Placement is primarily an educational activity, which gives students the opportunity to explore the world of work. At Corby Technical School this takes place in Year 10 between Term 1 and Term 4. It is expected that **ALL** students engage with this initiative and go out on a placement for one week during that time.

### **How do students benefit from a Work Experience Placements?**

Following a period of Work Experience, it is hoped they may have developed:

- More confidence
- Improved self-esteem
- Ability to communicate with adults
- Improved timekeeping
- Additional practical work skills
- Team working
- Problem solving skills
- Changes in their ideas and perceptions about the world of work
- More understanding about the links between school subjects and the world of work
- Gains in maturity, self-awareness and confidence
- Start to appreciate the skills required to succeed in the workplace



**79% OF BUSINESSES  
SAY THAT WORK  
EXPERIENCE DEVELOPS  
EFFECTIVE SKILLS FOR  
THE WORKPLACE.**

**THE BRITISH CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE**

### **What type of work can students do?**

There is a wide variety of placements open to students. Most employers are supportive and will try to accommodate a young person within their business however there can be restrictions, usually based on age and risk, for example, clinical environments, places using heavy machinery or hazardous materials, areas of confidentiality etc.

These restrictions are designed to protect students from work places that are unsuitable for them. Due to a student's inexperience and age, some tasks may only be completed under strict supervision or may, in exceptional circumstances, be observational only. The emphasis, however, is always on trying to provide an interesting and well-balanced placement.

### **How can parents/carers help?**

Young people need to be motivated and determined if they are to benefit from the opportunities that a Work Experience Placement presents. Parents/carers could try to encourage their son/daughter to think of the type of placement that they believe they would like to have however it should be made clear that **any work placement is valuable**. It should not be viewed as an essential taster for a particular career pathway but as an opportunity to experience the world of work.

## Work Experience Programme – parent/carer guide

It is a good idea to encourage your child to:

- Spend time preparing for the placement through discussion and research at home
- Help them be prepared for the placement by asking them a range of questions they may be asked, For example, *'What do you want to do when you leave school?'* or *'Why did you choose this work experience placement?'*
- Encourage them to record their learning during their placement in the diary provided by the school
- Ensure they write a letter or verbally 'thank' the placement for taking them
- Encourage them to ask for a reference/testimonial at the end of their placement
- Ask them to share their knowledge and experience with fellow students on returning to school

Encourage your son/daughter to think about their own preferences, would they like to work for a large or small company, working indoors or outdoors, dealing with members of the public or being part of an office team, using equipment etc.

You may be able to help by looking within your own network of personal contacts, family members, friends, neighbours or colleagues

Students are expected to make their own way to and from the placement, arriving on time, every time, so please ensure they can get there. If a placement involves unsociable hours, safety of the student is paramount, so please ensure you can support them throughout the duration of their placement.

### How are Work Experience Placements organised?

There is an expectation that students will source their own placement. The Careers Advisor will oversee the arrangement of these placements in conjunction with other relevant staff in the school such as Form Tutors and Careers Lead, who are happy to support and guide them through the process but your child will also need your help and support.

Once a suitable placement has been identified and the dates agreed between the student and employer, the correct forms need to be returned to school. This is the **Employer Consent Form** and the **Parent/Carer Form**, both fully completed and signed.

The necessary checks can then be carried out and the employers' public liability insurance details obtained. The School will carry out all the necessary safeguarding and Health and Safety checks on the employer (these will vary depending on the placement) to ensure they meet the standards specified by government.

"IF YOU  
CAN DREAM  
IT, YOU CAN  
DO IT."

—  
- WALT DISNEY

Students will be fully briefed on the process in school. Please encourage them to begin the process as early as possible to help them secure a placement.

Some employers will take several students on placement throughout the year, so do not let them be put off if they think someone else has secured a placement with a particular company first. Encourage them to speak to their Form Tutor or Careers Advisor, as they will have a better understanding of local companies, and who is likely to take several students on placement throughout the year.

### **What sort of placement may be rejected or not approved?**

A placement where a student is working in close proximity with one other person, in a remote location, working on a 1:1 basis or where there is substantial, unsupervised contact. These type of placements are discouraged. Organisations such as sole traders, who may not have the relevant insurance policies and paperwork in place, are also unlikely to be approved. This means the student will have to start again and find another placement.

There are other more obvious rejections with placements such as-

- On board a registered boat or ship
- In any gambling context
- In a night club
- Behind a bar

Your support is greatly appreciated, whether it is to help your own son/daughter or offer a placement within your own company or workplace to another student.

**"Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new." Albert Einstein**

### **When can students participate in a Work Experience Placement?**

Students are required to participate in a work experience placement during Year 10. The placement is for the duration of one week and must take place between Term 1 and Term 4. In exceptional circumstances, a student may be allowed to carry out their placement during one week of the school holidays, but approval will be required first.

The school expects **every** Year 10 students to participate in this initiative even if they feel they have experience of the World of Work already, such as a part time job or carrying out voluntary work.

### **Expectations during their work experience placement**

Please remind them that they should be **Polite, Punctual and Realistic**.

Your child is an ambassador of the School. They are also representing their generation and therefore it is important they give a good impression at all times.

They will need to be polite to their employer and colleagues.

They may need you help when planning their journey to and from their placement. They will need to work out how long the journey will take, allowing for delays or hold ups due to heavy traffic at certain

times of the day. They may need to build a contingency into their plan to ensure they arrive on time, every day.

They need to be realistic and understand that they may not be given high-level tasks to carry out initially, however they may be given more responsibility later into the placement.

Encourage them to have fun, learn and enjoy the experience.

**What if the placement does not match to their career aspirations?**

Any work experience, irrespective of the placement/occupation, will provide a young person with the opportunity to acquire transferable personal and employability skills that will be useful for the rest of their working life. These will look good on a CV and could impress future employers. Please encourage your child to have a positive approach to the placement, even if it isn't quite what they expected.

**"The best way to predict the future is to create it."**

**Abraham Lincoln**

**What if they are unhappy during the placement?**

Discuss the problem with your son/daughter and if you are still concerned or worried then please get in touch with the Careers Advisor or Lead at the school.

**What happens if my son/daughter is unable to complete the placement?**

If for any reason your son/daughter is unable to continue with their placement, then you should notify the school immediately. It is also essential that you inform the employer that they will not be continuing/attending the placement. Students should be encouraged to complete their placement unless there is a genuine reason not to.

This is part of gaining confidence and preparing them for the World of Work. "I don't like it" is not a sound reason. When students are taken out of their comfort zone they may consider the way out is not to go. Please encourage them to complete the placement, and if you have any concerns or worries please contact the appropriate people in the school.

**Are students paid whilst on Work Experience Placements?**

Students are not paid whilst on Work Experience Placements, as it is part of their education curriculum, however, it may lead to a paid part time job.

**What hours can a student work whilst on a Work Experience Placement?**

It is recommended that students should not work for more than 5 days in any consecutive seven-day period. The number of hours worked together with the pattern of work is normally a matter of agreement by the placement provider (employer) and student. They will have to fit into the working pattern of the employer, for example, if the work placement closes for a day during the week, and is open for one day at the weekend, then this working pattern may be adopted by the student during the placement. However, they should not work excessively long hours or unnecessarily unsocial hours and should not work more than 40 hours per week.

### **Are there particular Health & Safety considerations?**

Young people on work placements are regarded in health and safety law (Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and The Health & Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990 as employees and must be provided with the same health, safety and welfare protection given to other employees.

Students are required to comply with the safety regulations of the organisation where they are working. Please remind them that it is their duty to take reasonable care for the Health & Safety of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or omissions. In addition, we have asked all employers to ensure students receive an Induction as part of their work experience placement.

Parents, carers and guardians are reminded that they should ensure there is a full disclosure of all existing medical conditions when completing the Parent/Carer form as this may influence the type of placement available. *Please note*, the information will also be passed to the employer so that they can take this into account when allocating tasks to the student. Failure to do so may contribute to the injury of a student or other party at the workplace. This practice further contributes to the safeguarding of students while they are on placement.

### **What Insurance Cover is required?**

It is a requirement that all employers hold a current **Employer Liability Insurance** and that this insurance covers a student whilst on placement. It is also recommended that valid **Public Liability Insurance** is held by the employer. (see Frequently Asked Questions section at the end of the booklet).

The school will carry out all the necessary employer insurance requirements and checks as part of the work experience process. If insurance details cannot be confirmed then the placement will not be authorised and an alternative placement will need to be found.

### **Social Media**

Parents/carers should remind students about the appropriate and proportionate use of social media from their personal accounts in relation to their placement, both while they are on placement and once the placement has finished. Students should ensure that they follow the guidelines set.

Please remind them to ensure their mobile phones are switched off, or on silent and out of sight.

### **Safeguarding**

The Government Statutory Guidance on Safeguarding in relation to work experience placements was introduced in April 2014 in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. The school are responsible for ensuring that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm. If parents/carers should have concerns or wish to raise a query, they should do so with the named Careers Lead, Careers Advisor or Safeguarding Lead.

Students will be given clear advice and a point of contact in the school in case of any problems. The school will provide each student and the employer with emergency contact details for a member of school staff who can be contacted should an incident occur or if concerns arise.

## Employers may ask you for advice, here are the answers to some frequently asked questions

### ***Are there lots of forms to fill in?***

No, There is a letter for the employer to complete, which includes providing some key information such as Public Liability Insurance details and Employers Liability details, Once the placement has been agreed, any additional checks will be carried out by the school.

### ***What about health and safety – does an employer need to carry out special risk assessment?***

In most cases, no. If the employer already employs a young person under the age of 18 then they will have already carried out a risk assessment as this is a legal requirement. If they do not employ a young person then they will need to review their risk assessment to identify if there are any specific risks which could arise, taking into account things relevant to a young person such as age, relative lack of maturity or experience.

### ***Does the employer need to take out extra insurance and will this be an additional cost for them?***

No – employers will be covered through their Employer's Liability Insurance and they should not have to pay more. It is good practice to inform the employer if your child has any specific needs, but it is very unlikely they will be required to pay any extra premium.

### ***Will the employer need to ensure the employees undergo DBS checks?***

No – there is no legal requirement to have staff DBS checked but may be needed in certain circumstances. Employers may need to *consider* whether a check is needed on a member of staff who has specific responsibility for supervising a student (rather than simply working alongside a student); especially where the student is under 16 or vulnerable for another reason.

### ***Why should a company take a Work experience student?***

The school sees this as a valuable part of the curriculum. In today's job market, they want to equip their young people to ensure they are work ready. A work experience placement is the best way of beginning to learn what employers look for and can be inspirational for the student. All surveys of work experience are positive about the benefits.

### ***What should I do if the student does not want to continue with their placement?***

Please contact the School to discuss this further.

SCHOOL PHONE NUMBER 01536 213100

**"FIND OUT WHAT  
YOU LIKE DOING  
BEST AND GET  
SOMEONE TO PAY  
YOU FOR IT."**