

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### STUDENT INFORMATION

Work experience is a great opportunity to gain important insights into the world of work and it can help you with your future decision making. Work experience gives you the opportunity to understand the work environment, develop and practice employability skills and prepare for employment or training, in a safe and supported way.

You will have attended a Year 10 assembly during October where *Mr Lamb, Deputy Headteacher, Mr Choi, Head of Year 10* and *Mrs Betteridge, Work Experience Coordinator* will have discussed details of how work experience operates at Wallingford School.

### **FINDING A PLACEMENT**

Having the initiative to find your own work experience is one of the best ways to experience the world of work. It means that you get the placement that you really want, and you'll gain valuable experience when applying for future training or employment.

Firstly, you will need to do some research. You will need to think about the type of role you would like and the type of organisation it will be in. Then you can ask parents/ guardians, family, friends, school staff for contacts and ideas. Google is also useful for research and can help you to look at the location of the organization and see if you can easily get there.

Secondly, you will need to contact the organisation to ask if they can offer you a placement. A direct introduction is best, so see if anyone you know (parents, friends, teachers) can introduce you. If not, see if you can find a contact online. Approaching new people can be slightly daunting but if you are well prepared, you are likely to feel more confident so be clear about what you are asking for and give details such as when, how long and what you are looking for. You can contact the organisation by telephone, letter or email, but make sure you look (or sound) professional, interested and polite. Remember, people in business are busy, so you may need to follow up several times to get an answer and sometimes it may be a no, but always be polite and thank them for their time. You may need to try a few people to get a yes – just like you will need to apply for more than one training provider or employer in the future. Remember, when you get a yes, to give your school the employer's information (you probably have a form to complete for this).

If you are having problems finding a placement remember to talk to your school's work experience coordinator (**Mrs Betteridge**) before any deadline dates. They may have contacts you can use or can help you with emails/letters to send out.

Things to consider:

- your parents have responsibility for your travel to a placement so make sure you can get there.
- a trial run of the journey before your first day is always a good idea!
- not all job roles are suitable for work experience (e.g. brain surgeon), so you may need to be realistic in your choice or about what you get to do when on placement
- some sectors are very competitive

- some organisations may have an application form you will need to complete

## **HOURS OF WORK**

Please note that you will be expected to work the same sort of hours as the business you are in however:

- you will not work more than an 8-hour day (not including breaks/travel) You should not usually work before 7am or after 7pm
- you are entitled to a rest break (of at least 30 mins) after 4.5 hours worked
- you should have a rest period of not less than 12 consecutive hours in each 24-hour period
- some job roles will require flexibility or may include shift work, so hours of work will need to be agreed in advance. Hours should be confirmed when you contact the employer prior to the placement, so your parents/carers can organise suitable travel.

## **PAYMENT & EXPENSES**

Work experience is part of the school curriculum and therefore you do not get paid. Employers may give you expenses for lunch or travel, but as employers offer placements free of charge, you must not expect this.

## **TRAVEL**

Your parents/carers have the responsibility for getting you to work experience placements as they would for getting you to school. Check with them how you can get to the placement, whether they can drop you off, or if you need to take a bus/train or can walk there. It can be a good idea to do a practice run before your placement to see how long it takes and if bus/train timetables work out.

## **LUNCH ARRANGEMENTS**

You can take money to buy lunch on the employer premises, if available, or locally. Alternatively, you might prefer to take a packed lunch. You are able to act as an employee at lunchtime and leave site where appropriate.

## **INTERVIEW &/OR EMPLOYER CONTACT**

It's essential that you speak with your employer before the placement starts to clarify information such as what time and where you need to be on your first day. This pre-placement contact may be a telephone call, email or a visit. You may feel uncomfortable calling your employer as you may not be used to making phone calls. If this is the case, ask school for help.

In some cases, the employer may want you to come for an informal interview. Again, ask school to help you with this. It's excellent practice for future interviews and will help increase your confidence moving forward.

## **BEING PREPARED**

Once you have found your placement and the school have checked the details and completed any health & safety checks you will receive an email from school confirming this has been agreed and providing you with all the details of the placement, clothing, hours, lunch information etc. You can research the employer further online and you can also ask your employer when you contact them anything else you may want to know. School will also have given the employer information to help them set up an interesting placement. If, when you are on placement you have any concerns, please do let the Work Experience Coordinator know – Mrs Betteridge at **workexperience@wallingfordschool.com**. They can then talk with the employer to resolve any issues.

## **SICKNESS AND ABSENCE**

If you are ill or injure yourself on placement you must tell your employer straight away, so they can assess what first aid you need and whether you need to go home. If you do need to go home, your employer will have a contact number for your parent/carer, so they can tell them this is what is happening. The employer will also notify school.

If you cannot go to your placement for any reason, you must contact your employer and your school within 30 minutes of your usual start time, so they know where you are.

## ADVICE FROM EMPLOYERS

The 6Ps: advice for pupils going on work experience from employers at Reciprocate - a membership network of responsible businesses.

<p><b>Be PROFESSIONAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write your own application letter and CV, and get a teacher to check them</li><li>• Expect to be invited to an interview or meeting before your placement</li><li>• Say thank you regularly</li></ul>	<p><b>Be PREPARED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make sure you plan how to get to your placement so that you're not late</li><li>• Check with the company what you should wear and if in doubt, go smart</li><li>• Make notes before and during the placement</li></ul>
<p><b>Be POLITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Never swear and never be rude about or to anyone you meet</li><li>• Don't look at your phone or social media whilst in the workplace</li><li>• Treat information you hear as confidential</li></ul>	<p><b>PUT yourself out there</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be as communicative as possible and ask lots of questions</li><li>• Show initiative and make suggestions that might help us</li><li>• Be confident in the skills you have already</li></ul>
<p><b>Be PRACTICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work hard and you will be rewarded</li><li>• Don't expect to be running things on your first day – some workplace tasks are boring!</li><li>• Consider how you could build on what you learn after the placement</li></ul>	<p><b>Take time to PONDER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reflect on what you have learnt and tell your employer the impression it made on you</li><li>• Request feedback on how you did</li><li>• Ask if you can stay in touch and if the employer will give you a reference</li></ul>