

RIVERSIDE SCHOOL



Work Experience Policy

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS

RESPONSIBLE PERSON – HEADTEACHER

BACKGROUND

Work Experience (WEX) forms part of our personalised curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 4/5. The programme provides work based learning opportunities to pupils and aims to build on work related projects such as mini-enterprise.

As with most other programmes of study, there are good opportunities to integrate other important areas of the curriculum. It is likely that communication and literacy, numeracy and ICT will all be heavily incorporated into any vocational studies and careers work.

It is important for pupils in the 14-19 age range to be given the opportunity to discuss and explore in detail the world of work and/or be given the opportunity to experience aspects of this in ways that will make the experiences relevant to them. Lessons planned to deliver this work should, wherever possible, focus on the practical and give pupils a chance to see, hear, do and record work and employment activities first hand and a comprehensive programme of visitors to school and visits to outside workplaces will help to achieve this. Much useful work can be conducted within school and this would normally be the starting point for both looking at careers and the possibility of work experience.

DIFFERENTIATION

Learning activities are sufficiently differentiated to be of relevance to all pupils within the department. Sensory aspects of visits and work around the school should be explored, together with opportunities for pupils to engage using the appropriate means of communication. It should also be acknowledged that there is a need to establish readiness for some aspects of the programme, in particular when placing pupils on work experience. Therefore work experience is seen as an additional element of vocational studies and careers for certain pupils.

PLACEMENTS

Work experience may take place for a one or two week period or for days or half days over a short agreed period at any time during the school year. During this time pupils will attend a place of employment where they will experience first hand, but unpaid, the world of work. This will help them to understand:

- Working alongside someone in a work situation
- Learning about equipment used in the workplace
- Following routines and schedules of the working day
- Following instructions in a work situation
- Using tools and equipment in the workplace
- Communicating and interacting with colleagues
- Working independently or as part of a team
- Self-assessment and keeping a record of progress
- Identifying health and safety measures and hazards in the workplace
- The routine of a normal working day or shift
- A working environment outside the classroom
- An unfamiliar situation involving working with people of different backgrounds and ages

- The chance to learn new skills and perhaps wear uniform and use equipment and machinery to learn work processes at first hand

Additionally work experience may give pupils the opportunity to:

- Move towards developing personal skills, qualities and interests;
- Move towards developing the self confidence required in the wider world

- Make some connections between what pupils can learn at school and the world of work

Employers who offer WEX and the WEX co-ordinator spend time and take great care in arranging suitable work experience placements. Placements are arranged for individual pupils that are appropriate to their level of skills and independence and a suitable type of support built in. This is usually in the form of a member of school staff shadowing the pupil for the duration of the placement. In return pupils are expected to fit into their working environment and attend for the whole placement. Part of the process of finding and starting on a placement may involve pupils in:

- Attending a pre-placement interview
- Dressing appropriately for the job
- Being punctual
- Notifying the person in charge if they are unable to attend through illness or other reason Pupils are supported to achieve these tasks.

PROCEDURES AND PRACTICE

- The placement will be chosen by the WEX co-ordinator in conjunction with the Student.
- All placements are carefully monitored by Riverside staff, including the Risk Assessment procedures. A briefing is held with the supervisor responsible to outline the particular needs of the student.
- The student will be shadowed by the WEX co-ordinator or another member of Riverside staff.

In exceptional circumstances where a student is considered independent enough to cope on their own, pupils will be able to complete periods of a placement independently with regular visits by a member of staff. In these cases the risk assessment will reflect this additional responsibility.

- Pupils, parents/carers and teachers are kept informed and encouraged to contribute where possible to the placement.
- Details of employers are kept by the WEX co-ordinator on a school database.
- Parental approval is required by law for all placements. Parents/carers must sign an acceptance form before commencement of placement.
- Pupils will be briefed on Health and Safety at Work procedures and will be inducted by the Employer on these procedures.
- The student will keep a record of their experiences for recording and debriefing purposes.
- The employer will provide an end of placement report and the student will review their progress at the end of the placement with the WEX Co-ordinator who also does an end of placement report.
- The WEX co-ordinator and the employer work very closely together to ensure that the duties offered individual pupils are appropriate to their ability and health and safety. The WEX co-ordinator will visit the placement to ensure the employer is adhering to this agreement and not providing any other duties outside of the agreed contract.
- A placement may be extended through agreement by all the parties and if it does not impinge upon the curriculum entitlement of the student.

- The school and the Employer reserve the right to terminate the placement if any student is deemed to have behaved in an inappropriate manner or the placement is no longer considered appropriate.
- The school WEX Co-ordinator has completed the required local authority training and works closely with Bromley Education Business Partnership (BEBP). BEBP will often be able to conduct work experience placement H&S visits prior to placement.