



Parent/carer guide to work experience 2022

All Y10 students will be taking part in work experience activities from **4 - 8 July 2022**. Y12s will take part from **7 - 11 February 2022**. Sixth form students can also choose to take part in school holidays or on an ongoing basis for the equivalent of five days (as long as this is outside their lessons and tutor time).

Last year, work experience looked a little different. Most Y12 students took part in online work experience activities in February, but over two-thirds of the Y10 year group managed to arrange work experience in July at an employer's workplace. Some students gained experience of the workplace through online activities (*virtual work experience*).

We have contingency plans in place in case of any changes to local or national restrictions this year, or any issues in finding work experience in particular sectors. All Y10 students who aren't being supervised in the workplace from 4 – 8 July 2022 will take part in work-related activities at school during work experience week.

The benefits of work experience

- To test out job ideas
- Learn what they like (and don't like)
- Learn how things work in the workplace
- Develop skills they'll need at work
- Have something to talk about on a CV, application form or at interview
- Make them stand out
- Meet people who could help them in future

While it can be beneficial for the experience to be linked to a student's career plans, this isn't always possible, so please don't worry about it being their 'dream job', particularly in Y10; there will be further opportunities for work experience post-16 and beyond.

A number of our students have gained part-time jobs, apprenticeships and other opportunities as a direct result of contacts made during work experience. Students in Y11, 12 and 13 often include skills they've developed on work experience in their CVs and applications to university, sixth form, college or apprenticeships.

Students are encouraged to consider where they would like to work and are expected to find placements themselves, with your support and the support of staff at school. This allows students to build essential skills for future employment (communication, initiative and resilience) and also means that they have control over how far they want to travel, what type of industry they want to work in and so on.

We believe that all students should be able to undertake this experience. If you have any particular concerns with regard to your child taking part, please get in touch.

Our tips

- Start the search early.
- Talk to your child about where they might like to work.
 - Consider interests in school and outside school, and any jobs that might relate to those interests.

- Use the school's list of previous placements on the school website to get some ideas. Please use any lists with care, as this is not a guarantee of work experience, even more so this year due to coronavirus and job market changes.
 - Y11: www.meadowhead.sheffield.sch.uk look for Curriculum/Careers/Work Experience
 - Y13: www.meadowhead.sheffield.sch.uk look for Sixth Form/Work Experience
- Some students start by approaching their network of contacts (family, friends or neighbours) initially.
- If your child is interested in a particular company, they could approach them direct. If it's a large firm, try the company website to find contact details and details of any work experience schemes – look for the *careers*, *work for us* or *work experience* pages.
- There is no single strategy that works best in making contact with employers; students have had success phoning, face-to-face, sending letters or emails. Sometimes, making contact via social media can work.
- What does work is being polite, professional and, often, a bit persistent. If the employer doesn't respond to one method, it might be worth trying another way eg a follow-up call after an email.
- It is worth preparing your child for some knockbacks – most students have to face some rejection before they manage to secure the right placement.

While some jobs (jobs requiring confidentiality and jobs with risk, for example) can be a bit more difficult to arrange, there are lots of ways for young people to find a placement that suits them.

Key dates

Arranging the placement in good time allows us to carry out all the necessary arrangements and checks. We ask Y10 students to arrange their work experience and return the signed **work experience agreement** to school before **1 March 2022**. Other schools also go out on work experience during the same week in July, so making contact early often produces the best results. We ask sixth form students to complete and return their work experience paperwork by the **Christmas break**.

Health & safety

We follow the Health & Safety Executive's guidelines on work experience. You can find out more here <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm>. Students will be required to follow the health and safety guidelines set out by their employer.

Further support

We know that work experience can be very valuable for students and we want every student to get the most from the experience. If you or your child have any questions, please get in touch.

Students can access support at the Careers Drop-In in M10, Tuesdays 3-4pm.

If you have any queries, please contact the Careers Team on careers@meadowhead.sheffield.sch.uk or 0114 2372723 ext 762 or 763.