



Parent/carer guide to work experience in Year 12

From **10 – 14 February 2020**, all Year 12s will have the opportunity to spend a week out of school gaining experience in the workplace.

Our expectations

- All Year 12s are expected to take part.
- Wherever possible, this experience should fit in with a student's career plans.
- Work experience should be carried out in addition to any part-time or voluntary work that the student already has in place.
- Students will be provided with a diary to log their progress during the week and employers will provide feedback on progress.

The benefits

The many benefits of work experience include the opportunity to:

- Test out and develop career ideas.
- Apply skills in a work environment and develop a greater understanding of the workplace.
- Have something to talk about on a CV, application form or at interview in future.
- Help students to stand out in competitive application processes in future.
- Develop a network of people who could help them in future.

A number of our students have gained part-time jobs, apprenticeships and other opportunities as a direct result of work experience. Most students include skills they have developed on work experience in their CVs and post-18 applications.

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 are prepared 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 son/daughter taking part, please get in touch.

Key dates

Students should arrange their work experience and return one copy of the signed **work experience agreement** to school **before 13 December 2019**. This gives us time to carry out all the necessary arrangements and checks.

Flexibility

Employers often find it easier to offer work experience if students can offer some flexibility, so the following alternatives are on offer:

- Students might prefer to carry out work experience week commencing 17 February (February half term). Where this option is taken, students will not be expected to attend school week commencing 10 February.
- Students have the option to spend two weeks on work experience from 10 to 21 February 2020.
- Alternatively, students can opt to complete work experience on an ongoing basis for the equivalent of five days across Y12. This can take place during the school day, but outside formal learning times (lesson or tutor time). The work experience agreement must be returned to school at least one week before the experience is due to start and by 13 December 2019 at the latest. Provided that all

the above requirements have been met, students taking this option will not be required to attend school week commencing 10 February 2020.

Our tips

- Start the search early.
- Talk to your son/daughter about where they might like to work.
 - Students are asked about their career aspirations at sixth form. Consider which jobs or employment settings might fit in with these aspirations.
 - Use the school's list of employer contacts to get some ideas. Students can find this on the school website from late September (<https://www.meadowhead.sheffield.sch.uk/page/?title=Work+Experience&pid=600>) or pick up a copy in the Sixth Form Office or Careers Office.
 - Need help deciding on a job area? Students should call into the Careers Office at school outside lesson times.
 - Attend after-school drop-in sessions on Tuesdays 3-4pm in the Mezzanine from 1 October for ideas and further support.
- Some workplaces don't offer experience and some jobs (jobs requiring confidentiality and jobs with risk, for example) can be more difficult to arrange, so students may need to think creatively in order to find a setting that works for them.
 - NHS work experience in hospitals is very limited, so students could try a GP practice, medical centre or care home instead, for example.
 - Students who need help finding the right setting for their experience should speak to Mrs Simpson in the Sixth Form or Careers Office.
- Some students start by approaching their network of contacts (family, friends or neighbours) initially.
- If your son/daughter is interested in a particular company, they could approach them direct. If it is 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 son/daughter for some knockbacks – most students have to face some rejection before they manage to secure the right experience.

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.

Contact

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 have any questions, please get in touch.

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