



WORK EXPERIENCE

Person responsible for policy:	Beth Atherton/Kieran Cook
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Rationale.

Work experience forms part of Careers and is part of the learning entitlement for pupils in the Sixth Form. At Park Lane School one of our priorities for our 6th Form pupils is to support them to develop the confidence and skills which will take them beyond school and equip them to be able to engage with their community with as much independence as possible. We believe that work experience plays a vital role in this development and wherever possible and appropriate strive to secure community work experience placements for our 6th Form pupils. It is also a vital part of preparation for adulthood. However, preparation for adulthood is not something we should only think about at school transitions such as the end of each key stage or post-16 planning. Preparation for adulthood should be a continual process for the child and young person that happens at the end of each lesson, topic, unit of study and school day.

Pupil and staff safety is of paramount importance so clear procedures are in place which aim to meet health and safety requirements, ensure risks are minimised, parents are informed and that all those involved in the placement are well briefed.

What Is Work Experience?

‘Work experience may be defined as: a placement on employer’s premises in which a student carries out a particular task or duty, or a range of tasks or duties, more or less as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.’
(Taken from Work Experience: A Guide for Employers - Produced by the Department for Education and Skills in 2002)

Aims.

Work experience placements should aim:

- To extend the pupils learning beyond the classroom and allow them the opportunity to further develop and generalise their communication, organisational and personal skills
- To build confidence, self esteem and independence in unfamiliar situations
- To connect the pupils with life beyond school and give them an insight into the world of work

- To introduce the pupils to working with adults other than school staff
- To introduce the pupils to the health and safety aspects of the world of work
- To give the pupils for whom it is appropriate, the opportunity to complete the Personal Progress 'Developing Skills for the Workplace' units in relevant, real life situations
- To give the pupils an opportunity to view themselves as useful members of society who can make a valuable contribution

Procedures.

When planning work experience placements in the community, a thorough Risk Assessment is required by the teacher in liaison with the placement providers.

Guidance suggests that the placement providers are solely responsible for carrying out risk assessments for young people in work experience placements. However, due to the nature of Park Lane pupils and the fact that in the majority of placements, Park Lane staff will be supporting the pupils throughout their placements, it is the teacher who will ensure a risk assessment is completed and shared with both the placement providers and the parents/carers of the pupil hoping to attend the placement.

The teacher will visit the work place to see the venue and discuss the placement with whoever will be overseeing it. The teacher will liaise with them to complete the relevant risk assessment forms shared with the class team and parents/carers of the students involved. These documents give detailed information about the placement objectives, the possible hazards and the steps to be taken to minimise and highlight those risks as well as general planning issues. The risk assessment must be read and signed by the teacher, whichever staff are supporting the pupil on their placement and a member of the SLT. It is good practice to leave a copy of the risk assessment with the placement providers as well and for the teacher to have a copy of any risk assessment they may carry out regarding the placement.

Once all the risk assessments and planning forms have been carried out and completed and parental permission has been obtained, a preliminary visit will be arranged for the pupil and their supporting member of staff. This visit will introduce the pupil to their placement and the people they will be working alongside. It will also give the placement providers the opportunity to go through any health and safety matters with the pupil and member of staff including any personal protective clothing which may be required during their placement. It will also give Park Lane staff the opportunity to share the targets from the Personal Progress qualification which the student will be working on whilst on the placement and introduce the work log/witness statements forms with the placement staff.

The school usually takes responsibility for transporting the pupils to their placements and this can be by school minibus with a driver and escort, by public taxi, on foot or on occasions, via public transport. There have been situations where parent have offered to either drop off or collect their child at the placement depending on what time of day the placement is. In these cases, Park Lane staff will be there to receive the pupil from their parent or will be there to hand the pupil to their parent at the end of the day. The exceptions to this will be if a pupil is working on gaining higher levels of independence and it has been agreed with parents and the placement staff that the pupil will arrive

unsupported. All risk assessments will have been carried out and agreed by the relevant people prior to this happening.

Once the placement begins, the staff supporting the pupils will form the very important link between the placement providers and school. These staff will feedback to the teacher after each session so that any issues can be identified and dealt with in order for the placement to continue smoothly. The teacher will keep the parents informed of how the placement is going and of any changes in the placement such as timings, tasks undertaken etc.

Equal Opportunities.

At Park Lane School all Key Stage 5 pupils will have the opportunity to experience work related learning irrespective of their special needs. However, there are restrictions on which pupils can access community placements due to the nature of work places and the risks they contain. Staff will consider each available placement and carefully match it to a pupil who will succeed and develop through their participation in it. Other pupils will be offered placements suitable to their needs, such as placements within the school campus.

Monitoring and Evaluation.

The policy will be monitored and reviewed based on any new guidance and the placements available to the pupils. Procedural changes will be made in consultation with the Head Teacher and the Careers co-ordinator.

Review of Policy.

The policy will be reviewed annually.