



# Work Experience Guide for Schools

This guide is intended to support school staff<sup>1</sup> with a responsibility for managing work experience programmes, particularly if they are new to the role.

It includes:

- an overview of the legal framework and duty of care of partners in a work experience agreement
- guidance on planning and administration
- best practice for maintained and independent schools or Academies

- X** This guide does NOT negate the use of qualified competent people to carry out health and safety or safeguarding vetting of placements.
- X** It complements but does not replace Local Authority guidelines where they apply.
- X** Educational visits are not covered.

This guide has been developed and made freely available by **Knowledge and Skills**. We are a learning and development company specialising in employability skills, professional development and online learning. Most importantly – we have done the job!

Our expertise includes over 25 years combined management of work experience and work-related learning programmes for schools and colleges.

We carry out consultancy and risk assessment for education providers and Local Authorities and can help with staff training in this area. You can find our lesson plans to support careers education and work experience preparation on TES Resources or on our website. We also publish work experience journals for recording work experience learning, see [www.knowledgeandskills.co.uk](http://www.knowledgeandskills.co.uk)

If you have questions that are not answered here you can contact us at any time on [hello@knowledgeandskills.co.uk](mailto:hello@knowledgeandskills.co.uk) or via our website and we will do our best to help.

<sup>1</sup> Throughout, this guide the term **schools** applies equally to maintained and independent schools, Academies, FE colleges and other organisations working with younger learners, pupil referral units, agencies working with looked after children and travellers.

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# Part A: Legal Framework

## 1. Why Work Experience is a Good Thing

Work experience is no longer compulsory but an option that schools are encouraged to take for the personal development of their learners.



This means that the troublesome business of finding placements and all that health and safety stuff can be dropped, right? Think before you take this option. There is no substitute for real work experience in helping young people to develop confidence, independence and learn about potential careers. There is a huge difference between reading about customer service and dealing with a real customer while keeping your calm.

Of course we don't advocate sending people into real work situations without preparation, that's why we created this guide, but every school is unique. You need to think about how to maximise the benefits of work experience for your learners.

Properly planned work experience can be used to support a wide range of curriculum and development activities including:

**Subject learning:** Projects or assignments related to any curriculum subject particularly PSHE and business studies.



**Careers and work related education:** Learning about jobs, entry requirements, researching Labour Market Information (LMI), contacting employers and interview practice.

**Preparation (and qualifications) for life and work:** Generating evidence of work or witness statements, developing independent self-management skills and employability skills.



**Contributing to Inspection:** From January 2012, under the revised school inspection arrangements, inspection has focused more sharply on those aspects of schools' work that have the greatest impact on raising achievement.<sup>2</sup> However inspectors still have to consider the "spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school" Learning about careers and the world of work should be part of a balanced education.

<sup>2</sup> The framework for school inspection, Guidance and grade descriptors for inspecting schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005, from January 2012, Ofsted)






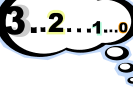

In April 2012 a **new framework for Careers and Work-related Education** was issued by the Association of Careers Education and Guidance (ACEG)<sup>3</sup>

The framework combines the three aims of careers education (self-development, career exploration and career management) with the three strands of work-related learning (learning about work, learning for work and learning through work). Work experience could make a real contribution to these three strands:

1. **Self-development through careers and work-related education**
2. **Finding out about careers and the world of work**
3. **Developing skills for career wellbeing and employability**

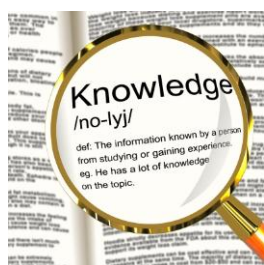
Well planned work experience makes a direct contribution to developing skills cited as “in demand” by employers such as teamwork, communication and customer service.

The CBI defines employability as “a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy...”<sup>4</sup> These skills are listed below:

	<b>Self-management</b>	Accept responsibility, flexibility, resilience, self-starting, appropriate assertiveness, time management, readiness to improve own performance based on feedback/reflective learning.
	<b>Team working</b>	Respecting others, co-operating, negotiating/persuading, contributing to discussions, and awareness of interdependence with others.
	<b>Business &amp; customer awareness</b>	Basic understanding of key drivers for business success – including importance of innovation, taking calculated risks and profit – and the need to provide customer satisfaction and build customer loyalty.
	<b>Problem solving</b>	Analysing facts and situations and applying creative thinking to develop appropriate solutions.
	<b>Communication &amp; literacy</b>	Application of literacy, ability to produce clear, structured written work and oral literacy, including listening and questioning.
	<b>Application of numeracy</b>	Manipulation of numbers, general mathematical awareness and its application in practical contexts (e.g. measuring, weighing, estimating and applying formulae).
	<b>Application of IT</b>	Basic IT skills, including familiarity with word processing, spread sheets, file management and use of internet search engines.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.aceg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/The-ACEG-Framework.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Time Well Spent – Embedding employability in work experience, CBI, 2007)  
[http://www.employers-guide.org/media/20848/time\\_well\\_spent\\_cbi.pdf](http://www.employers-guide.org/media/20848/time_well_spent_cbi.pdf)



## 2. Some Useful Definitions

You are probably familiar with these but we have included them as they have legal implications:

<b>Work experience</b>	<i>'A placement on employer's premises in which a pupil carries out a particular task or duty, or range of tasks and duties, more or less as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience'</i> (DfES1997). <sup>5</sup>
<b>A Child</b>	anyone who has not yet reached the minimum school leaving age (but 'child protection' legislation applies up to age 19 or up to the age of 25 for someone with additional physical or learning needs)
<b>A Young Person</b>	is anyone under 18 years old
<b>Work-related learning</b>	<i>'planned activity that uses the context of work to develop knowledge, skills and understanding useful in work, including learning through the experience of work, learning about work and working practices, and learning the skills for work'</i> (DCSF)

## 3. Children in employment

The youngest age at which a child can enter any *paid* employment is 13 (exceptions may be made for theatrical or other performances).<sup>6</sup>

Children and young people are classed as employees for the duration of work experience and subject to the same legal expectations and protection as other employees.<sup>7</sup>

Currently the term 'child' applies until the last Friday in June, in year 11 (Minimum School Leaving Age or MSLA). This may be subject to change with the raising of the participation age but until then the term applies. If a child reaches 16 years before the MSLA there are still restrictions on where they can be employed until they are officially past the MSLA.



<sup>5</sup> The term Work Experience is generally used to describe the experience covered by Section 560 of the Education Act (1996), as amended by Section 112 of the Schools Standard and Framework Act 1998. These Acts allow students to go on work experience at any time in their last two years of compulsory education.

<sup>6</sup> The main provisions governing the employment of school children in England are contained in Section 18 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (as amended by subsequent legislation.)

<sup>7</sup> The main *enabling legislation* covering work experience in its current is section 560 of the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The 1996 Act allowed "children" to be designated "young people" for the purposes of a properly approved and managed work placement. This meant that they could undertake work experience in situations where they would not legally be employed otherwise.

## 4. Health, safety and welfare law



Learners on work experience are protected by the same health and safety legislation as other employees. Employers must ensure the health, safety and welfare of all their employees “*so far as is reasonably practicable*”. The key is doing what is reasonable. This is where a lot of uncertainty arises around young people in work.

### Legal obligations of employers under health and safety law<sup>8</sup>:

1. To carry out adequate induction, training and supervision for all staff
2. To complete risk assessments for all aspects of their work
3. To assess any additional risks to someone under 18 years old before they start work
4. To give everyone at work ‘comprehensible and relevant’ information on the potential risks to their health and safety and the protective and preventative measures in place to deal with risk
5. If more than 5 people are employed their policies and rules must be in writing

The age, mental and physical development of a work experience learner can vary greatly during the window of opportunity when they can take part. This means that schools must take into account the individual abilities and needs of each learner and the risks associated with each placement in the matching process.

For learners under the minimum school leaving age employers must share any significant findings from risk assessment, and the control measures in place, to parents/carers before the start of the placement.<sup>9</sup>

Even when the legal obligations have been met there is still a need for employees and work experience learners to follow instructions and to protect their own safety and that of others at all times. In order to help employers to meet their legal obligations it is also vital that the school senior management team acknowledges the need to communicate essential medical and learning needs to the employer where necessary for the safe management of the learner.

## 5. Equality and diversity

Work experience learners have the same protection in law as other employees. This includes the right to fair treatment and the absence of discrimination. No one should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, pregnancy, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, HIV status, trade union involvement or political activities.



<sup>8</sup> Health and safety at Work Etc. Act (1974)

<sup>9</sup> Clause 10.2 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992)

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1995, 2005)<sup>10</sup> gives disabled people rights in a wide range of circumstances including employment and education. Remember though that employers offering work experience are acting in a voluntary capacity. It is vital that schools highlight any potential concerns at the earliest opportunity to negotiate what adjustments can be made for a work experience placement and so that the employer can carry out an adequate risk assessment. In some cases it may be appropriate to accompany the learner for part or all of the placement.



## 6. Insurance

Work experience learners are covered by existing **Employers Liability Insurance** and/or **Public Liability Insurance**.

There is no need for specific insurance to cover work experience however employers are advised to let their insurance company know about the agreement and dates. The school or any third party engaged by the school to organise work experience must ensure that employers' liability insurance is in place except in specific cases where the employer is exempt.

The following organisations have **exemption from ELI** but this does not reduce their legal obligation to protect employees:

- Government departments, local authorities, police authorities
- Health service bodies, NHS trusts, primary care trusts
- Publicly funded organisations granted indemnity (e.g. magistrates courts)

The following types of business are **unlikely to have ELI** as it is not a legal requirement, but the employer may choose to take out cover for the purpose of managing a work experience learner:

- Family businesses *only* employing close relatives.
- Sole traders

If the placement involves travel in a vehicle belonging to the placement provider or a sub-contractor, the placement provider must be able to give evidence that the vehicle is properly insured. This would usually need to be fully comprehensive cover that is extended to include business use.

## 7. Data Sharing

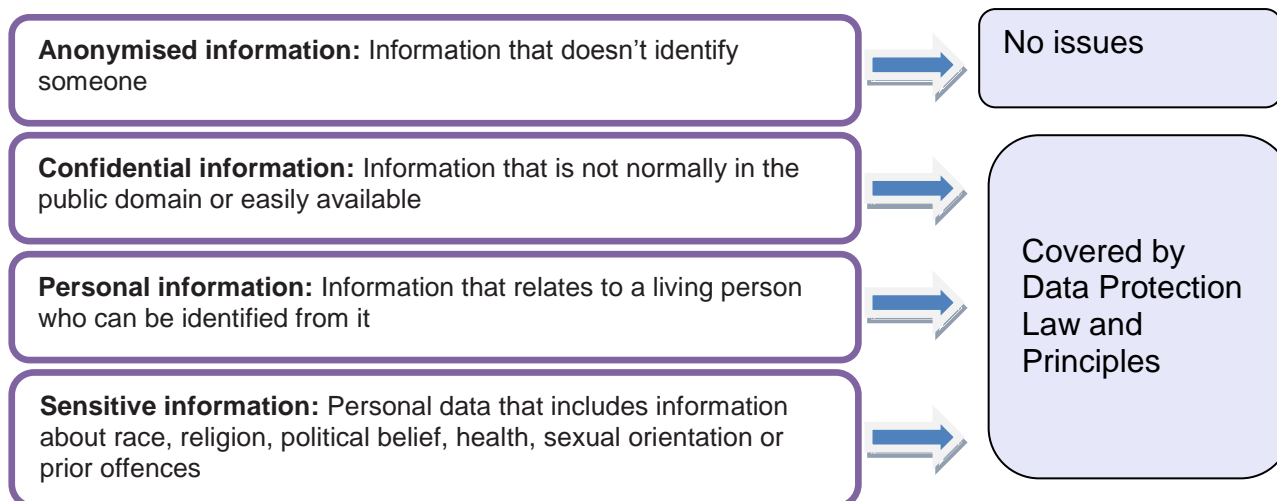
To properly organise work experience (and to keep people safe) you will need to share some data about learners. This can cause worry or confusion for organisers, learners and parents/carers. The important things to remember are

- Is there a necessity for sharing data?
- Is it personal or sensitive data?



<sup>10</sup> An introduction to the Disability Discrimination Act is available from the Directgov website: <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/RightsAndObligations/DisabilityRights> There is also specific guidance for young people at work available from the TUC: [www.worksmart.org.uk](http://www.worksmart.org.uk)

First you need to be clear about the types of data you may be handling:



Telling an employer that you are asking to place three learners is not personal or sensitive, it is anonymous. Naming three learners is personal data. If one of them has a prior criminal record then this is personal and sensitive information.

**Personal data** is any information which is about living, identifiable people. It does not have to be sensitive in nature to be personal. It includes information in writing, on computer databases or pictures. Personal information relating to learners on work experience activities is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998. The act prohibits the misuse of personal information. You need to get permission to share any confidential, personal or sensitive information first from the learner. If they are under 16 (or 25 in the case of people with additional needs) you also need permission from their parent/carer.

**The need to share data:** You should though be aware of the need to communicate matters to a placement provider which could have a significant impact on the safe management of a learner. If in any doubt – get consent. Minimise the need to share personal data with careful matching of learners and placements.

**Use of images:** You need to be clear about the definition of personal information because it includes material which may not of itself be seen as risky, for example photographs of work experience activities for your school website. The Data Protection Act does not prevent parents and teachers from taking photos of work experience activity. Get permission first and let the subject know where and how the image will be used.

## 8. Partners in a work experience agreement



The following are key partners in a work experience agreement. Their responsibilities are outlined overleaf:



<b>Local Authorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall duty of care for learners in that area</li> <li>• Handling claims for damages or personal injury</li> <li>• Appointing agents to act on its behalf</li> <li>• Issuing local standards and guidance</li> <li>• Professional development and training</li> <li>• CRB and safeguarding guidance</li> <li>• Lead role in accident investigation</li> <li>• Lead role in investigating safeguarding concerns</li> </ul>
<b>Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duty of care</li> <li>• Responsibility for checking third parties (brokers) working on its behalf</li> <li>• Preparation of learners</li> <li>• Safe matching of learners to placements</li> <li>• Quality assurance of third party brokers including learner matching process</li> <li>• Compliance with Local Authority guidelines</li> <li>• Procedures for reporting concerns (learners, parents and employers)</li> <li>• Monitoring learners on placement</li> <li>• Debriefing learners</li> <li>• Emergency contacts</li> <li>• Contribution to accident/incident investigation</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: Academies and independent schools should ascertain the level of LA support and management of key issues that will be applied (if any) including health and safety and accident / incident management.</b></p>
<b>Brokers<sup>11</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependent on local arrangements brokers may manage the following:</li> <li>• Finding placements</li> <li>• Health and safety vetting</li> <li>• Safeguarding and CRB checks</li> <li>• Providing a channel of communication between the Local Authority, schools, parents, learners and employers</li> <li>• Contribution to accident / incident investigation</li> </ul>
<b>Employers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complying with health and safety law</li> <li>• Complying the equality and diversity law</li> <li>• Induction and training for learners and employees</li> <li>• Safeguarding</li> <li>• Supervision</li> <li>• Communication with schools</li> <li>• Insurance (ELI and PLI)</li> <li>• Contribution to accident / incident investigation</li> <li>• Notifying reportable accidents under RIDDOR</li> </ul>
<b>Parents/carers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperating with school procedures</li> <li>• Informed consent <sup>12</sup></li> <li>• Consent for sharing of personal data</li> <li>• Communication with schools</li> <li>• Reporting concerns</li> </ul>
<b>Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding placements (occasionally)</li> <li>• Complying with employers' standards and expectations</li> <li>• Following health and safety rules</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Reporting absence</li> <li>• Reporting concerns</li> <li>• Consent to sharing personal data</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> Any organisation appointed by the school or Local Authority to facilitate work experience

<sup>12</sup> In the case of pupils under the minimum school leaving age it is essential that schools obtain informed parental consent prior to the placement (i.e. they must agree to the specific job role, location, time(s) and risk assessment) and that schools keep a record of this. General consent to work experience is not sufficient.

## 9. Safeguarding

Schools should work to minimise the risk every learner through the matching process, taking account of any individual circumstances. You should have the following in place:

- Child protection training for school staff involved in work experience delivery
- Internal procedures for handling child protection concerns
- Learner preparation or briefing on how to report concerns



**CRB checks** are not required for every placement. The need for CRB checks should be considered on an individual risk-basis<sup>13</sup>. They may be required for people who have a named responsibility for working with young people in the organisation, where an adult will be spending a substantial amount of time working with a learner, or in the case of vulnerable learners. It is not appropriate to ask for a CRB check for someone simply working alongside a child.<sup>14</sup>

Learners themselves may be subject to CRB checks in some cases. Post 16 learners completing vocational courses in childcare or social care *will be* required to undergo a CRB check. Work experience learners from 14+ *may be* required to undergo a CRB check for work experience in a school, nursery or care home, depending on the local agreements in place.

Schools should allow for the additional time required for the processing of CRB checks, or for the possibility that a CRB check cannot be completed if the learner does not hold enough relevant documentary evidence.

**The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)** exists to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. Work experience arrangements are not currently subject to registration with the Independent Safeguarding Authority; however employers must comply with the following:

- ✓ Any person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults will be breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to, with those groups
- ✓ Any organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law

It is an offence for any employer to knowingly allow someone barred from working with vulnerable groups to manage a work experience placement – this should be included in employer briefings or hand-outs.

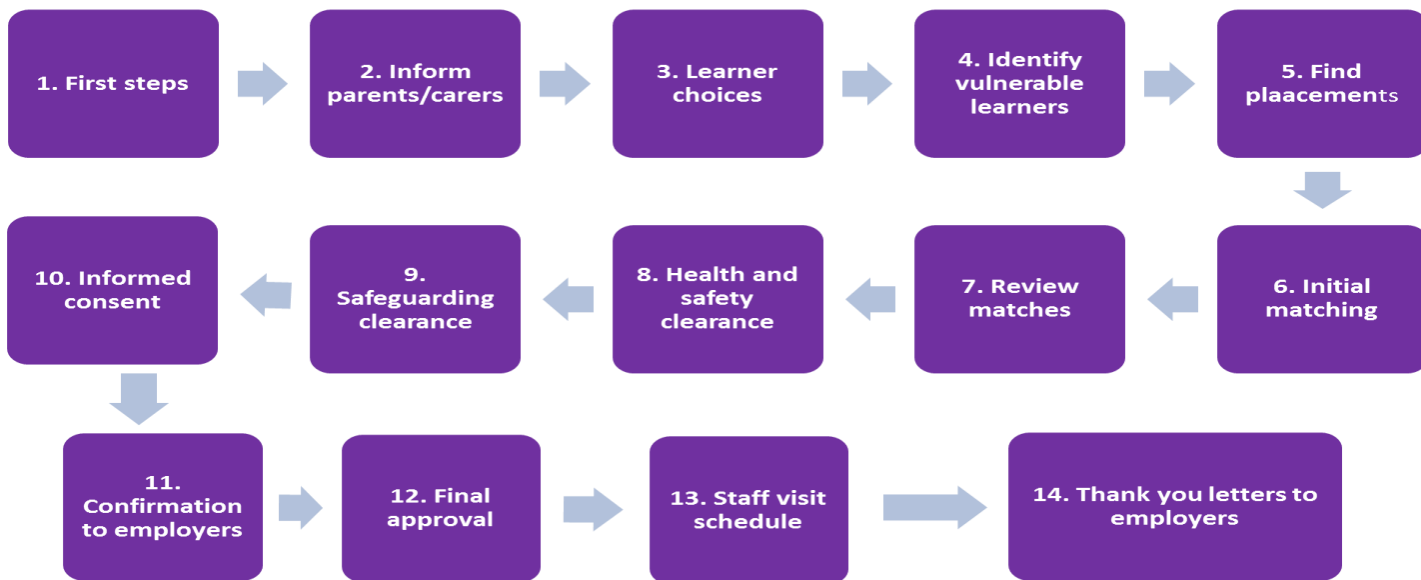
<sup>13</sup> "... a CRB check should only be carried out only on a member of staff with **day-to-day responsibility** for the student as part of their job description. This could be the manager, a supervisor or a mentoring employee (but in many cases, no-one). In the vast majority of placements, where the employer/employees involved will not have regular unsupervised access to young people at work a CRB check is not recommended" (*Safeguarding young people on Work-Related Learning including Work Experience (DCSF, 2010)*)

<sup>14</sup> Department for Education <http://www.education.gov.uk/>

## Part B: Administration

### 10. Annual Cycle

The following is a suggested annual cycle of administration processes. You should have these in place in some form.



#### 1 First steps

**Start up:** Allow sufficient time to plan. For a whole year group programme we recommend that at least six months is allowed for finding and confirming placements and health and safety clearance.

**Agree key dates and deadlines:** These should not clash with any major deadlines, exams or holidays

**Establish the school team and lead for coordination:** The school team should include:

- A representative of the Senior Management Team (SMT)
- the school lead on child protection
- heads of year or form tutors
- support staff, SENCOs or other specialised support as appropriate

The Senior Management Team (SMT) and Governors are responsible for approving all the arrangements made in their school and have an overall duty of care for learners while they are off-site as part of the school timetable.

All school staff should be aware of the key dates and deadlines for work experience and where possible they should contribute to carrying out monitoring visits.

## 2 Inform parents/carers

Give dates as soon as they are confirmed.

Seek early consent for permission to communicate essential medical or learning needs to employers *if this is relevant to the placement*.

## 3 Learner choices

**Encourage learners take an active part in work experience:** As soon as practicable, once you have confirmed dates and informed parents – ask learners to start thinking about what they would like to do. You might ask them to complete a form or e mail their answers to the school coordinator.

Set a deadline for this process, those who delay are less likely to get a placement of their choice.

Review these as they come back to make sure they are realistic and achievable.

## 4 Identify vulnerable learners

Identify any vulnerable learners in your work experience cohort, including those with additional social or learning needs.

Record what extra help the learner may need to take part in work experience, for example - help with transport or managing regular medication.

There is no overall definition of *vulnerable* but many factors are known to have an impact on a child's ability to thrive and develop successful interaction with others. Schools will generally be aware of these children well before they take part in work experience.

There may also be factors which are unknown but manifest in changes in personality, behaviour or attendance adversely affecting performance in school.

Any decisions regarding vulnerability or additional needs in relation to work experience should be agreed with the school lead on child protection.

The school team should complete an individual risk assessment for any learner designated as vulnerable. The risk assessment will be communicated to the employer to allow them to adapt the job role and complete an adequate risk assessment.

All placements for vulnerable learners will be subject to CRB checks so allow extra time for this.

## 5 Find placements

**Build your placement database:** If you are working with a third party (broker) you will most likely be given a list of available placements in your area. If not – you will have to find them.

Finding placements is a push-pull situation. You need some to start off your process, but you need to keep looking for new ones to meet the expectations of your learners as you go through and they make choices.

Consider where you can find these, for example:

- placements your school has used before
- contacts found by learners and parents
- cold calling
- using a third party broker

Set up a common database in school for holding information about placements. It is possible that more than one member of staff will be finding and using them so you need to ensure that the same employer isn't contacted many times.

Filter out any placements that are needed to support vocational courses from those offering general work experience so you make the most of these opportunities.

## 6 Initial matching

**Provisionally assign learners to placements:** Pencil in where you can a match between learners and placements. Do not confirm at this stage that they can go ahead.

Place learners in situations which reduce the need for communicating sensitive data, CRB or implausible health and safety checks (for example limit the use of sole traders or placements way outside your area).

## 7 Review matches

**Risk assesses your matches:** Allow heads of year, SENCO or others who know the learners to review the provisional matches. Are there any undue risks?

Highlight any situations where the learner may need additional help. Can these be supported with the resources and people you have?

Are employers aware of learners with additional needs before the placement is confirmed?

Are additional risk assessments in place for all learners with additional needs?

Do you need to make new arrangements for any learners at this stage?

## 8 Health and safety clearance

**Complete health and safety checks:** Health & Safety clearance will be needed for all placements. This involves a personal visit to the placement. Telephone surveys are not

sufficient. Visits should only be carried out by competent, qualified professionals who understand the legal frameworks applying to young people in the workplace and have a sufficient level of 'occupational' competence.

The purpose of health and safety vetting is

- To assess the overall suitability of the company and how it manages health and safety for all employees
- To assess its suitability for a young learner and make sure that there is an adequate young person's risk assessment in place
- To help the employer to meet their legal obligation to communicate
- It should cover all aspects of the work, location, supervision and safety arrangements and record the findings.
- Risk assessments apply to the job role not the company. If a company has several different job opportunities in the same location these will require separate assessments.

They are not needed for every learner, a generic visit to the company for a mainstream pre-16 learner is sufficient for most. However, learners with additional needs will need an extra risk assessment to be carried out.

There is no legal regulation for carrying out health and safety vetting for work experience or the frequency. Running work experience is a risk-based approach so you want to reduce the risks to your learners, your school and the employer as far as you can. Never use a placement that has not been cleared for health and safety. Never allow parents to assume responsibility for a placement that you do not approve but they want to use, your school cannot delegate this duty of care.

Some occupations are considered too risky for this age group or carry very stringent requirements for regulation. A list of these is included in **the FAQ section** this guidance and you should make learners aware of the likelihood of being turned down if they are interested in these occupations.

Location, location....A placement regarded as low risk **may** be upgraded to a higher risk if it involves long or unsocial hours, travel between locations or is situated in a higher risk environment (e.g. office space next to a building site).

Any learner who takes part in a non-approved placement should be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

The same level of regulation and approval applies to a placement with family contacts or relatives as any other placement (you should discourage placements with direct family members as not sufficiently developmental).

Confirm insurance cover is in place for the duration of all placements (Employers Liability and Public Liability Insurance).

## 9 Safeguarding clearance

**Complete safeguarding and CRB checks:** The need for CRB checks should be considered on an individual risk basis. Wherever possible, minimise the risk by not using placements which will require a CRB check.

Any member of staff with day to day responsibility for young learners within their job role will require a CRB check.

CRB checks will be required in all placements where the learner has been identified by their school as vulnerable for educational, medical, behavioural or home circumstance reasons, including those who have special educational needs. This will also apply to post 16 learners who have been identified as vulnerable.

Make sure you have a contingency plan for any CRB checks that result in positive disclosure.

## 10 Informed consent

**Informed consent is needed from all partners:** It is vital that everyone in the agreement – learners, parent/carers, employers and schools are fully informed of what they are agreeing to. You must communicate with all parties throughout your planning and keep proper records of what has been communicated.

**Give parents/carers the significant findings from risk assessment:** For learners under the minimum school leaving age (children) there is a legal requirement\* which states that the significant findings from risk assessment must go to parents/carers before the start of the placement.<sup>15</sup>

**Get consent specific to the placement(s):** Parental consent must be obtained for the **specific** job role, location and conditions agreed before the placement starts. This should include acknowledgement of the key findings from risk assessment and any agreement to provide personal protective clothing (specialised equipment should be provided by the employer).

## 11 Confirmation to employers

**Confirm arrangements with employers:** Give every employer confirmation by letter or e mail of what you have all agreed to: learner names, dates, job roles.

Make sure the employer has emergency contacts for someone in school for the duration of placements. This includes out of hours contact.

## 12 Final approval

**Your school can regard placements as *approved* only when:**

- They have been approved on health and safety grounds
- They have been approved on child protection/safeguarding grounds
- Parents/carers have given *informed consent\** in writing (*for the specific job role, location, conditions and risks*)
- The school has confirmed that the learner:
  - ❖ has no additional needs, or
  - ❖ has additional needs, and an individual risk assessment has been completed, communicated to the employer and approved

<sup>15</sup> \*Clause 10.2 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999

## 13 Monitoring visits

Plan your monitoring / visiting schedule for staff. You may find that a checklist of key questions is helpful here, particularly for any visitor that doesn't know the learner well. Questions could include:

- whether a full induction was included on day 1
- what they have learned on placement
- their general welfare and confidence in the placement
- whether proper supervision is in place
- any concerns they have

## 14 After the placement

Arrange for a letter of thanks to be sent to every employer.

**Back to the drawing board:** At any time in this cycle you may have to revise your decisions, reconsider what is possible or manage expectations. Never compromise on safety or welfare to avoid a possible confrontation, the safe management of your learners is paramount.

**If something goes wrong:** You must have arrangements in place to deal with:

- **Accident reporting**
- **Disclosure**
- **Reporting concerns**

There is no universal process for these, you should have a named person in each case to be the first point of contact and make sure they are contactable for the duration of the work placement including out of normal school hours. Your Local Authority health and safety team may require you to notify accidents or concerns and may have the main responsibility for investigation and follow up. These are local arrangements that you need to clarify. Make sure you know who to contact in the first instance at all times.



## 11. Learner journey

<p><b>Preparation</b></p>	<p>Your learners should have access to a programme of preparation. There is no set format for this, often it sits within PSHE or careers sessions. Preparation should include as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practical arrangements, managing day 1, travel, who to report to</li> <li>Health and safety, the need for protective equipment</li> <li>Job role: skills, employer expectations</li> <li>Reporting problems, disclosure</li> <li>Reporting absence</li> <li>Objective setting, learning aims</li> <li>Any free lunch entitlements</li> </ul> <p>A work experience record book or journal can be a handy way to focus preparation and aims for the placement.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring</b></p>	<p>Monitoring work placements is a part of overall safeguarding policy.</p> <p>Wherever possible, learners should get a visit on placement. The visit should be made by someone who knows the learner and can assess their progress in the workplace, both academic and personal. The school team should make staff available to visit (including pastoral staff) to check on their progress.</p> <p>Staff may find a check list of questions helpful.</p>
<p><b>Debrief</b></p>	<p>Back in school a debrief session can be an entertaining way for students to compare what they have learned, practice presentation skills or act as peer mentors for younger students preparing for work experience.</p> <p>They should be encouraged to write a letter of thanks to the employer.</p>

## 12. FAQs

<b>Can I use a part time placement?</b>	If any placement does not cover a full school day or every day of the week, you must ensure that there is a contingency plan for times when the learner is not required to work. This must be agreed with parents beforehand and the exact arrangements recorded.
<b>Can I travel outside my home area for work experience?</b>	Yes in theory, but you must have assurance that the health and safety and safeguarding clearance have been carried out. This means you have to find out who manages these arrangements in that area. If you cannot get clearance don't use it.
<b>What is an extended work placement?</b>	Any placement of more than 10 days in total will be regarded as an extended placement. Extended placements will incur the need for CRB checks and additional monitoring.
<b>How many hours can I work?</b>	Generally not more than 8 hours a day or more than 5 consecutive days in a week. Flexible arrangements are possible if all parties agree. If the placement involves unsocial hours such as split shifts, you must assess the additional risks such as late travel.
<b>Is the school responsible for travel arrangements on work experience?</b>	Travel to and from work placements is the responsibility of the learner. If the placement location involves a major risk, for example it is on a very busy road; this should be included in the initial risk assessment and communicated to parents beforehand.
<b>Can I do work experience during the school holidays?</b>	Yes but you will still need to provide emergency contacts for key school staff during the placement.
<b>Do I need to take a register for learners on work experience?</b>	You need to record their attendance or absence for every day of the placement. One way is to ask employers to ring in if they do not arrive by a designated time. Unless the absence is notified by the learner it is unauthorised and could represent a safeguarding risk.
<b>What if a learner misbehaves on work experience?</b>	Learners on work experience will be expected to comply with the same codes of conduct and behaviour as all employees but it may be necessary to make some allowances for age and immaturity. There may also be an underlying concern causing the behaviour which employers or even schools are unaware of. If the employer has any concerns about behaviour they should contact the school in the first instance.
<b>Can I withdraw a learner after they have started the placement?</b>	You should withdraw a learner as soon as you become of any situation which is a cause for concern such as inappropriate behaviour from staff, a lack of supervision or a significant change in the working environment.
<b>Can the employer send a learner away if they misbehave?</b>	The employer should telephone the school in the first instance so that they can arrange to collect the learner or approve them being sent away. No learner should be sent away from the workplace without prior notice and permission from the school/parent. In cases of misbehaviour, school should arrange collection.
<b>What if a learner is bullied on work experience?</b>	All employees including work experience students are entitled to a work place where discrimination and bullying are not tolerated. Although such instances are extremely rare, young people should be given clear instructions as part of preparation and induction on how to report incidents of bullying. Give employers guidance on appropriate behaviour, they may not understand the fine line between teasing and bullying.

<p><b>Should learners be paid for work experience?</b></p>	<p>Learners should not be paid for the work they do on placements, although employers may sometimes be willing to help with travel or meal costs.</p>
<p><b>What if an accident happens?</b></p>	<p>Accidents on work experience are rare, largely because of the close regulation and approval of all placements by competent staff; however it is important that when an accident occurs there is a clear and straightforward system in place for schools to follow. There should be a named person responsible for taking the information and communicating with the Local Authority who may record the information depending on how serious it is. Make sure employers have an emergency contact for this purpose.</p>
<p><b>Do I have a legal obligation to report accidents?</b></p>	<p>All work experience placements are subject to the 'Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations' (RIDDOR). This concerns serious accidents or illness resulting from the work. Employers have the responsibility to notify the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) of relevant instances. Minor accidents should be notified to the school and/or Local Authority and are not reportable to the HSE.</p>
<p><b>What should I do if a child protection (safeguarding) concern is raised on work experience?</b></p>	<p>If any member of school staff is made aware of a potential safeguarding (child protection) area of concern during or after a work experience placement the same protocols apply as for all child protection concerns. The allegation should be reported this as soon as possible to the designated lead person in school.</p>
<p><b>What if a learner discloses information of a sensitive nature to an employer?</b></p>	<p>Give employers advice about how to handle disclosure. It is rare but an employer can take the role of a trusted adult in this situation. They should contact the school in the first instance. Make sure the employer has a school contact number.</p>
<p><b>What occupations are banned for work experience?</b></p>	<p>A child under 18 cannot be employed for work which is beyond their physical or psychological capacity; involves harmful exposure to toxic or carcinogenic substances; involves harmful exposure to radiation; is likely to lead to increased risk because of a lack of attention to safety or lack of experience or includes a risk to health from extreme cold or heat, noise or vibration.</p> <p>The following are also restricted by local authorities to some degree but there may be local variations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cinema, theatre, discotheque, dance hall or nightclub premises except in connection with a performance given entirely by children. This includes franchised catering or ticket sales.</li> <li>• Delivering milk</li> <li>• Delivering fuel oils or working as a petrol pump attendant</li> <li>• Cooking in a commercial kitchen or take away establishment (counter service is not restricted)</li> <li>• Collecting or sorting refuse</li> <li>• Any work which is more than 3 metres above ground or, in the case of internal work, more than 3 metres above floor level.</li> <li>• Employment involving harmful exposure to physical, biological or chemical agents</li> <li>• Collecting money or canvassing door to door except under the supervision of an adult</li> <li>• Work involving exposure to adult material</li> <li>• Telephone sales</li> <li>• Slaughterhouses or butchers' premises connected with killing and</li> </ul>

	<p>processing livestock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairgrounds or amusement arcades</li> <li>• Residential care involving elderly or vulnerable adults</li> <li>• beauty treatments, tattoo and piercing</li> <li>• Outdoor work unless the child is wearing suitable clothes and shoes.</li> </ul>
<b>When can learners undertake work experience?</b>	There is no actual age defined but it is accepted practice that this means years 10 and 11 if the child is in the appropriate year group for their age. Learners who have been 'fast tracked' a year will not be eligible for work experience. With the raising of the participation age this definition may change but until it does the convention still applies. <sup>16</sup>
<b>How long is a work experience placement?</b>	There is no defined upper limit for how long a placement should be <sup>17</sup> , but taking part in work experience should not compromise other areas of the curriculum or entitlements. Most take place for a week or two. Unless the learner is working towards a qualification that requires being in work, they should not miss more than two days a week.
<b>How long should I keep records from my work experience programme once it's finished?</b>	<p>For audit purposes, schools should be able to evidence that they have processes in place to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safeguarding is considered in the matching process for all learners</li> <li>• key findings on risks and controls are sent to parents/carers as part of the consent process</li> <li>• all vulnerable learners are covered by an individual risk assessment</li> <li>• employers acknowledge the individual risk assessments for all vulnerable learners</li> </ul> <p>These may be important in the event of a later issue or concern arising from the placement.</p> <p>There is no legal time limit for the retention of files; however learners can make claims for personal damages resulting from any work experience incident/accident for up to three years after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and in such cases all relevant documentation would need to be produced.</p>

<sup>16</sup> Education Act 1996: Section 560 of the Education Act 1996, amended by section 112 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, enables students of compulsory school age to participate in schemes of work experience where arrangements have been made by the LEA, or school governing body on its behalf, with a view to providing work experience as part of a student's education. Section 560 as amended applies to students at any time in the last two years of compulsory education. (DfES, Work Experience; a guide for secondary schools, 2002)

<sup>17</sup> The Education Act 1996 (Section 560) as amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 112)

## Part C: Planning Guides

### a) Planning check list

This will help you to design processes in your school for the management of work experience

			Key dates	People
1	First steps	Work experience		
		Planning starts		
		Launch / assembly date for learners		
2	Inform parents/carers	Letter to parents		
		Return of letter from parents / approval or queries		
3	Learner choice	Learner choice form issued		
		Learner choice form returned		
		Learner consent returned to share personal data		
4	Identify vulnerable learners	Liaise with heads or year, SENCO, head of Child Protection or other key staff		
		Vulnerable learners identified		
5	Find placements	Obtain confirmation from employers used previously		
		Placement database established		
6	Initial matching	Deadline for initial matching		
7	Review matches	Meeting with school team / key staff to review matches		
8	Health and safety clearance	Final deadline for health and safety visit notification		
9	Safeguarding clearance	Final deadline for CRB notification		
10	Informed consent	Consent form issued to parents (with job description and risk assessment)		
		Deadline for return of consent form		
11	Confirmation to employers	Deadline for confirmation letter or e mail to employers		
12	Final approval	Deadline for final approval		
		Contingency for learners who cannot be placed		
13	Confirm visit schedule			
14	Thank you letters			

## b) Employer Guide

You may use this information to create your own customised employer guidance.

### Work Experience: Guidance for Employers

This information will help you to manage a work experience placement. It includes your responsibilities, some common sense guidance and contacts for further information.

Work experience is the most important factor in shaping young people's perceptions of the world of work. By offering a work placement you have the opportunity to help a young person with their education, influence the future workforce and give your employees the chance to develop management skills. Getting involved in work experience shows your company is committed to helping your community.

### Preparation

- Make sure that you inform staff that you are offering work experience and the dates.
- Assign a competent and approachable person to supervise the placement.
- Think about what work you can give the learner to do - a project designed for work experience can be very useful.
- Give your commitment to safety, equality and child protection.
- Give all information to a young person in a clear and understandable form.

### Health and safety duties

1. All employers have a duty of care to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all their employees *so far as is reasonably practicable*. This includes young people on work experience.
2. You must have in place a risk assessment which includes all the significant risks in your workplace and how these are controlled. For a work experience placement you must include any general restrictions for the age of the learner which can be as young as 14.
3. You must ensure that young people are not given tasks beyond their physical capability or maturity.
4. If a young person considered by their school to be 'vulnerable' is coming to your workplace they will require an individual risk assessment, usually completed by their school. You must make sure that you are aware of these needs and adapt your risk assessment accordingly.
5. You must have adequate Employers' and Public Liability insurance for the duration of the placement.
6. In order to approve your placement you may be asked to allow a health and safety visit in your workplace from a suitable qualified and competent person. Please allow this; it is designed to help you not to find problems.

### Data protection

Personal data is any information which is about living, identifiable people. It does not have to be sensitive in nature to be personal. It includes information in writing, on computer databases or pictures. Personal information relating to work experience learners is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998, which prohibits its misuse. Keep any personal information securely and only for as long as you need it.

You should also make learners aware of the need to respect the confidentiality of your business data. Do not allow them unlimited access to any records relating to people or business sensitive information.

## Child protection (safeguarding)

There is no legal requirement for CRB checks in the vast majority of cases. You may have to undergo a CRB check if you have a specific job role that includes the management of young learners. You may also be asked for a CRB check if the placement involves substantial one to one work or a vulnerable learner. As a volunteer you should not be charged for this.

You must also comply with the requirements of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) which state that:

- ✓ Any person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults will be breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to, with those groups
- ✓ Any organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law

It is good sense to advise your employees about appropriate speech and behaviour around young people so that they do not unintentionally cause offence:

- Do not use inappropriate language with young people.
- Avoid physical contact, where this is necessary for the job explain why first.
- Look out for signs that a young person is feeling uncomfortable in the work environment.
- Be friendly and supportive but not over familiar.
- Do not leave young people alone, particularly if the environment contains hazardous or confidential material.
- Do not use language likely to cause offence such as swearing, sexist or racist terms or those displaying derogatory terms towards disability or other cultures.
- Do not exchange mobile phone numbers or addresses with a young person.
- Young people must not be subject to bullying or horseplay such as initiation ceremonies.
- Do not allow unrestricted access to the internet.
- Where possible avoid being alone with the young person in an enclosed or isolated environment.
- If travelling alone with a young person ensure there is a known destination and check-in time and take a mobile phone.
- Do not deviate from an agreed programme of activities or locations without prior notification to the school.

## The School's Responsibilities

1. The school will agree with you beforehand the job role, hours, and location(s).
2. The school must inform you of any medical, learning needs or other issues which could affect the learner's participation in this placement and which may require you to review / amend your Risk Assessments.
3. The school will also discuss your use of first aid or other emergency procedures if these become necessary
4. The school should undergo some preparation with students to prepare them for work and monitor them when they are with you (by telephone or a visit).
5. Schools / parents should provide any safety clothing (PPE) which you specify before they start.

## Parents'/Carers' responsibilities

Parents / carers give consent to the placement and for the communication of medical information.

## The Learner's Responsibilities

Learners must follow your instructions particularly health and safety instructions.

They must report any absences to you.

They must follow appropriate codes of conduct for dress and behaviour.

They must respect the confidentiality of your business and not disclose any information of a business-sensitive nature.

## Managing the Placement

1. Keep a record of your consent and acknowledgement of any additional learning needs the young person has, with a record of your risk assessment.
2. Make sure you have contact information for the school, including out of hours contact.
3. Let the school / young person know before the start if PPE is required for the job and who will supply it.
4. Give a full induction on day one (e.g. job roles, hours of work, health & safety).
5. Keep a record of attendance. If the young person is absent without notice please contact the school, as soon as possible, so they can check on their whereabouts.
6. Notify the school (and / or parents) before making any changes to their agreed working hours.
7. Young people on work experience are not entitled to receive payment. You can make small voluntary contributions to travel or meals.
8. Working hours should not exceed 8 hours in a day.
9. If the young person feels unwell contact the school before sending them home.
10. Agree with the school beforehand about permission to administer first aid for minor accidents. If a more serious accident occurs you will be expected to secure medical assistance as soon as possible and inform the school as soon as you can.
11. Supervision is essential, but schools and parents accept that some break times and lunch times will be part of the working day and give consent to this. You must never leave the young person alone in a potentially dangerous environment such as a workshop unsupervised.
12. Travel to and from work is the responsibility of the young person but if your work involves travelling between locations you must include this in your risk assessment and make sure that all drivers / vehicles are fully insured to take passengers for business travel.
13. Do not hesitate to contact the school, during the placement, to discuss any concerns including behaviour etc.

Finally... thank you! Your support for work experience is greatly valued and appreciated.



## C) Parent/carer Guide

You may use this information to create your own customised guidance for parents.

Your child will be taking part in work experience this year as part of their school curriculum.

Work experience is the most important factor in shaping young people's perceptions of the world of work. It helps them learn about a particular occupation and gain valuable skills and independence, including:

- Introducing them to the knowledge, skills and attitudes that future employers will look for such as punctuality, reliability and attendance
- Practice in making job applications, writing letters of application or CVs, telephone and interview techniques
- Developing personal skills including communication and teamwork

In order to ensure that your child gains the maximum benefit from work experience the following will help you to understand and support the process.

### How is work experience organised?

Work experience is organised by the school in conjunction with local employers.

Without their goodwill and effort, it would not be possible.

All placements and companies go through a strict approval process to check they have sound arrangements for child protection and health and safety and all must have adequate insurance in place.

### The employers' obligations

All employers have a duty of care to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all their employees *so far as is reasonably practicable* which extends to young people on work experience. They must complete risk assessments for the placement and communicate these to schools and to parents/carers.

All employers must demonstrate a commitment to child safety through their work practices and management of young people (in some cases this includes CRB checks) and to comply with the law on handling personal data.

All employers must supervise young people properly and ensure they are not given work which is beyond their mental or physical abilities. They must give a full induction on day 1 and clear instructions at all times, making sure these are understood.

All employers will be asked to give individual consent for every young person on work experience. If your child has additional learning or medical needs the employer will need to know about these and agree with schools/parents on how these will be managed.

### The school's obligations

Schools can only use placements which have been fully approved as safe and appropriate.

If they do not approve somewhere your child wants to go, please be aware that there will be good reasons for this.

Schools ensure young people have adequate preparation for work including the job role, staying safe and reporting problems.

School staff aim to visit students at least once during the placement wherever possible. Due to time constraints some may receive a phone call instead.

### What your child will be expected to do

1. Work with the school coordinator and database to make choices and carry out the steps needed for approval.

2. Complete any coursework or project work on placement which they have agreed to do.
3. Complete a work experience diary if this is issued, to record information about the placement.
4. Comply with the safety regulations and other rules of the company that they are working in, including dress codes and acceptable behaviour.
5. Let the placement know if they are unable to attend at any time.

### How can you help?

You will be asked early in the year for permission to pass on any medical information about your child *if it is relevant and necessary for the safe care of your child on placement*. Your refusal could affect where your child is placed or whether they participate at all.

Help your child to think about what it is they would like to get out of the experience and make realistic choices. Remember some placements are very popular and cannot accommodate everyone who wants them. Your child may not get their first choice, which can be disappointing.

Be supportive and remember that the main benefits of work experience like confidence and communication can be gained in a wide range of situations.

You will be asked to give written consent for the placement once it is agreed. This should be specific to the job role and location and include information about potential risks and how these are controlled. Your child cannot go to the placement without it.

Help with practical arrangements like travel.

Encourage punctuality and appropriate dress.

Take an interest in work experience and discuss what has happened each day.

Contact the school if there are any difficulties with the placement, which your child cannot resolve themselves.

Inform the placement and school if your child is unable to attend or there is a real emergency.

**Placements are processed on a first come - first served basis so as with any job application your child will need to make sure they have completed all of their actions in good time if they want to succeed.**

### After work experience

As companies give up a lot of their time to make this programme work it is always appreciated if students sent a letter of thanks.

Your child will have the opportunity back in school to discuss how their placement went. We encourage you to also let us know how you think it went.

If you have any other issues or concerns you want to talk about you can call the school coordinator at any time.

### Significant information to note:

Date of work experience placements	
Last date for finding your own placement	
Last date to return your consent form	
School contact for more information	