

Work Experience or Placement Policy

OAKLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Work experience is defined as:

'A placement on employer's premises in which a person 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.'

At Oaklands Community School we recognise that work experience offers pupils and students a work and learning opportunity and is a valuable and essential part of their personal and professional development. It supports the principle of work experience as a means of working closer with the community it serves.

School/College work experience placements

We work closely with our local secondary schools and college and take a maximum of 2 pupils for work experience at a time, usually during the autumn and summer terms. This is generally for a period of two weeks.

Students under school leaving age may take part only in schemes for which the arrangements have been made as part of a student's education by the Local Education Authority or the school's governing body on its behalf.

University student work experience placements

We regularly support training teachers from our local Schools Direct (Wessex Teaching School) for placement. In addition and on occasion we may take work experience students from universities who have a local connection and are looking toward a teaching career. These placements are usually for a longer period and therefore requires a larger commitment from the school.

The Teaching School or University will contact the school for a placement, which is for students undertaking a relevant degree for which a work experience placement is required.

Definitions

A young person is someone under the age of 18 years. A child is anyone who has not yet reached the official age at which they may leave school, just before or just after their 16th birthday (minimum school leaving age). Oaklands Community School are legally required to take particular account of the young person's lack of experience of workplace safety and the additional problems that may be caused by stress, strain or fatigue.

Pupils under 16 are not required to be cleared via the DBS disclosure; however anyone coming into school to work with children unsupervised who are over the age of 16 must be cleared prior to the start of their work placement. Generally the college, 6th form or university that the pupil/student attends would organise this.

Selection

We have a large number of Year 11 pupils requesting a work experience placement at our school. Pupils are requested to apply for a placement in writing to the Deputy Headteacher. Selected applicants are invited by return letter to a semi-formal interview. We hold the interviews well in advance of the expected period of Work Experience to allow the applicant to find an alternative placement if necessary. We feel that this projects the level of maturity and commitment we expect the pupils to attain if they are successful in completing their work experience at Oaklands. We will select the pupils according to their commitment and enthusiasm and not discriminate against race, religion or disability. However we have made it policy **not to include ex pupils** as we feel it is in the best interest of the student to experience a placement other than at a school they attended as a pupil. We believe this gives a more rounded experience of school and work life and gives the pupil a fresh approach in a new environment.

Risks

The obligation to undertake risk assessment and act on the findings rests primarily with Oaklands Community School. This risk assessment is designed to highlight any potential risk that could present a danger to the health and safety of a young person who is entering the School for work experience. This is in addition to any other risk assessment carried out during standard health and safety procedures. Young persons are considered to be particularly at risk because of their lack of maturity, experience and awareness. There is evidence that the young are more likely to expose themselves to risk not only through ignorance but also by deliberate intent. Their lack of physical and psychological development means that they are more susceptible to workplace hazards. Examples of such hazards include musculoskeletal problems through manual handling and poor ergonomics. In essence, it is

important to remember that young people will not be able to undertake the same work as an adult and appropriate allowances must be made.

Our School undertakes a variety of work, the majority of which can be classified as low risk. The School does however undertake some higher risk activities such as maintenance and facilities work. Additionally, within the Schools buildings certain higher risk tasks are undertaken by contractors including catering and cleaning. Under no circumstances is a young person permitted to undertake any of these higher risk tasks.

Please see Risk Assessments for Work Experience:

RA work experience pupils - High Risk 2 Site work

RA work experience pupils - Low Risk 1 TA - Admin

Induction

A member of the Senior Leadership or Management Team will carry out an initial induction prior to commencement of the work placement. During the induction the senior member will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out and advise the student of health and safety issues and complete all relevant documentation. The induction will also cover hours of work; confidentiality; data protection; Child Protection: expected standards of behaviour and who is responsible for supervision and mentoring. An escorted walk of the emergency fire evacuation procedures including the locations of the nearest exits and the assembly point should be undertaken. Information on the accident reporting system and location of First Aider should also be given. This will also include a brief induction with the student concerning the mentor the student will work with, the school team, working environment and type of work they may be involved in. They must ensure that the student is accompanied at all times and should not be left alone and not put in any danger, e.g. climbing ladders.

Training

The mentor is responsible for any relevant training, e.g. use of a computer, Photocopier, caretaking equipment etc and will co-ordinate a programme of work and experience for the period of the placement. Once the young person commences work regular checks should be made to ensure that the young person is able to cope with the workload given and the hours of work required.

Manual Handling

Movement of heavy objects is carried out by the Site Manager and should not be undertaken by young persons. Young Persons will be protected from exposure to tasks involving lifting or carrying.

Impairment

If the young person has a physical or mental impairment we need to take account of this in order that additional and suitable measures are taken to safeguard the individual's safety. A physical or mental impairment includes visionary or audible problems, epileptic seizures or a restriction on an individual's mobility e.g. wheelchair bound, walking aides, etc. We recognise our duties under the Disability Discrimination Act and will undertake all reasonable measures to accommodate these needs. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ascertain any additional measures required necessary to accommodate for the physical or mental impairment of the young person e.g. fire evacuation procedures.

Date: 05.10.2020

Date of Review: Autumn 2023

Signed: _____K Parr_____ (Headteacher)