



# Getting ready for Work Experience

## A guide for Parents and Guardians

"79% of businesses say  
**work experience develops  
effective skills for the workplace."**

British Chambers of Commerce Business and Education Survey, 2015



**Helping your child prepare for work experience should be an exciting activity. It doesn't need to be hard work but it is worth spending time preparing together so the experience is easy and valuable for everyone.**

### Work Experience Works

Your **child** will have learnt many valuable skills at school, helping them understand and enjoy life. However, the world of work is starting to get closer and initially whilst this may be a paper-round or a weekend job we need to ensure that they are equipped with the skills required for today's workplace. Work experience will provide an opportunity for them to spend time with an employer where they will carry out a range of tasks in the same way as an employee with the emphasis on learning. Work experience will help them put classroom skills into practice so they can develop the "Employability Skills" that employers look for. **This is a big step towards a successful career that can be rewarding and fulfilling.**

## What are Employability Skills?

These are the skills that employers seek in any member of staff whether they are new to the working environment or have years of experience.



## How do we choose what to do?

For many, choosing what to do on work experience is the hardest part. Remember, work experience is not always about choosing a career for the rest of your life, it is about gaining experience in the world of work.

The decision of where to apply should be led by **your child and** not you. Your role is to encourage, support and also to help when they get rejections from applications. Like any job application, rejection is not personal; the employer may just not be in a position to help at that time.

## Work Experience Preparation Tips

- Does your **child** already have a plan? Listen to their ideas. Remember, this is their work experience. Help them, but don't be tempted to complete the tasks for them.
- Encourage them to consider their interests, favourite subjects in school and after-school clubs. Is there a local employer you know linked to these interests that could be approached?
- Think about accessibility of the placement. How are they going to get there and the cost?
- The school has access to a database of employers who have previously taken work experience students. These are not guaranteed placements but it is worth contacting them for a potential placement in your area.
- The school will have a trained careers advisor who can offer help and advice.
- Help them prepare a letter/email to send to employers to request a placement.
- Practice a phone call with them so they are comfortable and confident when they call an employer.
- Some employers may require a pre-placement meeting. It would be useful to practice interview skills to help with their confidence.
- Encourage them to complete all paperwork required by the school promptly.
- Inform the school of any medical/health conditions that the employer should be aware of prior to the placement.
- The placement does not have to be local, some schools support placements further afield but always check first to ensure it is possible.





## They've got a placement, now what?

Now that **they have** secured a placement, it is essential that some preparation is done prior to the start of the placement to reduce their nerves on their first day. If you think about these key things before the day, any worries can be minimised. Observe the current legislations relating to health and safety, equality and safeguarding.

- **Communication** – Encourage your **child** to phone the employer at least a week prior to the placement to get any last minute requirements. It also acts as a gentle reminder that they are coming.
- **Transport** – Ensure transport arrangements have been confirmed and bus times known if necessary.
- **What to wear** – Ensure your **child** has checked with the employer what they should wear.
- **Lunch** – Do they need to take a packed lunch or is there somewhere they can buy lunch? Remember lunch breaks can be taken off-site at some places of work.
- **Contact** – Do they have a contact number for the school and for you? Remind them that mobile phones are to be used outside of work only.
- **Working hours** – If the placement finishes late in the day, are the transport arrangements appropriate?

The school will be able to provide a job description for the placement which will provide an overview of the placement together with any important information.



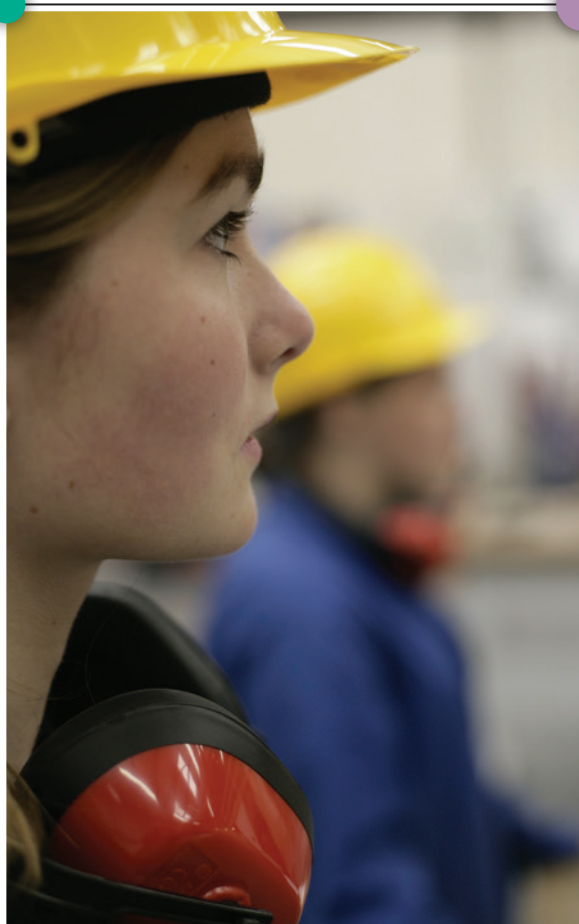
## Safeguarding

The safety of your **child** is very important whilst on work experience, so all placements undertake a "Duty of Care" check completed by CSW Group Ltd.

**They** provide advice and guidance to the employer so they can deliver a quality experience. Your **child** will be classed as an employee for the period of their work experience and covered by the employer's policies and procedures, including having up-to-date Employers Liability Insurance, at the time of the placement. The employer is required to provide an induction to include health and safety and risk assessments.

Employment law restricts certain types of activity depending on age and this will be discussed with the employer during the duty of care check.

If an Employer does not fulfil the requirements of a Duty of Care check, **CSW** will not approve the placement and will take no responsibility for the placement. The school will be informed and **CSW** will recommend that they do not send the student.



## What to do during the placement

- Be supportive, your **child** may have some tough days; work is very different to school so they might need some encouragement from you.
- If you have any concerns about their placement, contact the school.
- If they are ill during their placement ensure both the school and employer are informed that they will not be attending.

## The placement is over, is that it?

It's really worth spending time with your **child** at the end of their placement reflecting on their experience.

- Ask about the best bits, the tough bits and if they have any career ideas after their work experience.
- Encourage them to send an email/letter to the employer thanking them for the opportunity.
- Make sure they complete their work experience work book that their school would have given them.



"66% of employers say **work experience is a significant or crucial factor** in their recruitment."

Catch 16-24, UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2015

