

OWLS Academy Trust



Work Experience Policy

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Statement of intent

At OWLS academy trust, we believe that work experience is an important learning experience for young people. Work experience at our schools allows individuals to experience the social interaction, professional values, daily routines and general demands that typify a role in a school.

As well as benefitting the young person who undertakes work experience, at our schools we believe that this opportunity can also benefit our pupils. Young people on work experience can bring enthusiasm, practical help and increased engagement to the classroom.

The benefits of work experience to both the young person and our schools mean that our trust is committed to providing opportunities for work experience within the school wherever this is possible and practicable, and where this does not interfere with the quality of teaching and learning provided to our pupils.

This policy sets out the practices and procedures which will be followed when young people undertake work experience at our schools. This allows our schools to provide a safe environment and positive educational climate for pupils.

1. Contacts

1.1. The main contacts for the young person undertaking work experience are:

- The headteacher
- The class teacher

2. Activities

2.1. Young people undertaking work experience may be engaged in the following activities:

- School visits/trips
- Activities during lessons
- Assisting practically during events in the school, i.e. assembly
- Working with individual children
- Reading clubs
- Cooking clubs
- Supporting staff to run breakfast and after school clubs

3. Safeguarding children and child protection

3.1. The schools will have regard to the DfE statutory guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. This states that a supervised volunteer (i.e. an individual carrying out supervised work experience) does not require a barred list check but should obtain an enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) check where they are over the age of 16. All young people undertaking work experience at our schools must be supervised at all times and made aware of our child protection policies.

4. Procedures

a) Consideration stage

4.1. Before a young person is accepted to undertake work experience, the following procedures must be completed:

- The young person must provide suitable documentation/references from their secondary school/education provider regarding their suitability for work experience.
- The teacher who will be supervising the young person must accept this responsibility after taking into account their upcoming lessons and tasks.
- The young person must meet with the headteacher and/or the teacher who will supervise their work experience so that the young person's suitability can be assessed. The headteacher has the power to either refuse or end a young person's work experience at any time.

b) After consent is given

4.2. After the headteacher has consented to the young person undertaking work experience, the requisite documentation should be completed. This should include:

- Notification via phone or a letter offering a work experience placement and outlining the dates and times this will occur.

- Appropriate risk assessments.
- Written information to assist the young person during their placement (i.e. a school map, timetable, staff handbook, etc.).
- The visitor's badge the young person will be expected to wear.

c) The first day

- 4.3. On the first day of their work experience, the young person must sign-in at the office and then report to the headteacher.
- 4.4. The headteacher must ensure that the young person has read and understood the schools Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, as well as all relevant parts of the Staff Handbook. Pertinent points in the handbook should be raised and discussed as necessary.
- 4.5. The young person must sign a declaration that they have read and understood this policy.
- 4.6. The young person will then be escorted to the classroom where they will be completing their work experience.
- 4.7. The young person will also be escorted when moving around the school, for example, between classes and during breaks.
- 4.8. Work experience may comprise a number of weeks or days, or could be arranged for a number of days per week for a set number of weeks.
- 4.9. Pupils will be given experience in as broad a range of activities as possible.

5. Welfare and safety of pupils and those undertaking work experience

- 5.1. The schools aims to ensure that activities are planned properly and safely, and that young people undertaking work experience are informed of these plans. We strive to ensure that young people completing work experience at our schools have access to a member of staff, should they wish to discuss difficulties or report on issues that may arise.
- 5.2. All staff, visitors and volunteers are required to be identified and located at all times. For this reason, all those undertaking work experience should:
 - Sign-in and out of the building at the office/reception.
 - Wear the visitor's badge at all times.

6. Health and safety

- 6.1. Young people on work experience are required to comply with the schools Health and Safety Policy. They should be made aware of emergency procedures (e.g. evacuation) and safety aspects of being involved in a particular task (e.g. while in a cookery class).
- 6.2. Risk assessments must be undertaken before the young person begins their period of work experience.

- 6.3. The young person should also read and sign the schools Health and Safety Policy to certify that they have understood and will comply with this document and or school application form.

7. Absence

- 7.1. If a young person completing work experience is unable to attend for any reason, they are required to inform the school by calling the office before 8.00 a.m.
- 7.2. If, for any reason, a work experience volunteer is called away while working at the school, they should inform their class teacher and the office before leaving the premises.

8. Confidentiality

- 8.1. All information on individual pupils and members of staff is confidential and the sharing of data is protected under the Data Protection Act 1998. Anyone undertaking work experience is not permitted to discuss children's or staff members' personal information with other professionals in the school. In addition, such information should never be shared with anyone outside of the school. Any individual who breaks this confidentiality rule will be asked to leave the school.
- 8.2. There may be instances where work experience volunteers must pass information to the headteacher or class teacher. These include incidents where a child is bullied or when a child discloses that he or she is being harmed in any way. Volunteers are advised not to report this to the child's parents/carers but to instead inform the class teacher and/or designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible.

9. Internet use and social networking

- 9.1. Young people on work experience are expected to behave in an ethical and lawful manner with regard to the use of the internet and emails. The school ICT Policy should be complied with at all times.
- 9.2. Care and attention should be taken while using social networking sites. Use of these sites should not involve communication regarding employment at the schools or any activities which may bring the school into disrepute and/or may cause questions regarding the individual's suitability to work with children.
- 9.3. Work experience volunteers must not attempt to contact pupils via social media or email, or make arrangements to meet outside of school.

10. Equal opportunities

- 10.1. At our schools, we do not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, race, ethnic background, colour, religion, gender or sexual orientation, as per the Equality Act 2010. Additionally, though not protected characteristics under the Equality Act, marital, social and financial status should never be grounds for discrimination. All work experience volunteers are required to make a commitment to this policy and treat everyone with respect at all times.

11. Code of conduct for those on work experience

11.1. All those completing work experience are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour and conduct while involved in activities at the school.

11.2. Volunteers should:

- Observe the high standards of behaviour and ethical conduct mandated by the school.
- Respect other members of the school and make them feel valued.
- Be approachable, pleasant and a positive role model for pupils.
- Adhere to all school policies.
- Maintain confidentiality of personal information at all times, unless there is a need to report something.
- Treat all children and members of staff equally.
- Report any incident of bad behaviour to the class teacher immediately.
- Dress and behave in a manner which promotes professional, healthy and safe working practices. The dress code in the Staff Handbook should be complied with.
- Accept and follow directions from the class teacher providing supervision, as well as any other staff members at the school, and seek guidance through clarification where you may be uncertain of tasks or requirements.
- Observe safe working practices which avoid unnecessary risks, apply reasonable instructions given by supervisors, and report to the supervising class teacher any potential hazards in the workplace.
- Avoid waste or extravagance and make proper use of the resources of the school.
- Conduct your work in a co-operative manner.
- Mobile phones should be turned off while work experience tasks are performed and during class time.

11.3. Young people/Guests completing work experience should never:

- Tell a child off. As a volunteer, you are not expected to discipline children. If there are any problems, tell the class teacher straight away and he or she will deal with the situation.
- Shout, hit, threaten or manhandle a child.
- Take photographs in school without the prior permission of the head teacher.
- Develop 'personal' relationships with pupils.
- Work with children when you are not in the proper physical or emotional state to do so, for example, under medication which makes you drowsy, or under extreme stress which may impair your judgement.
- Behave in an illegal, improper or unsafe manner, for example, smoking or drinking alcohol.
- Share your personal contact details with pupils or make personal arrangements to meet children outside school.
- Discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards a child.
- Make inappropriate jokes or remarks of a sexual, racial, intimidating, discriminatory or offensive nature.

- Behave in a manner which may bring the school into disrepute when representing the school.
- Present for work under the influence of drugs or alcohol, including hangovers.
- Give or receive (other than 'token') gifts.

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Reviewed annually

Approved by Jonathan Tedds, Chair of Governor