

WEX Policy

Gatsby Benchmark 6 relates to Experience of Workplaces and states: “Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help with their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.” (Gatsby, 2014)

Students will undertake a work experience placement in Year 10. This will be for a set week within the school calendar, however there may be flexibility on dates in certain circumstances. The School also takes advantage of workplace visits when they arise for different year groups.

Aims of work experience:

- To give students the experience of life beyond school and a better understanding of the world of work
- To increase awareness of career opportunities, give a clearer sense of career aspirations, and ability to make informed choices
- To gain experience of the work environment and meeting and dealing with adults
- To gain experience of carrying out new tasks
- To understand the importance of personal and social skills including personal presentation, time management, team-working, communication/literacy, enthusiasm and commitment
- To increase self-confidence, independence and maturity
- To improve motivation to engage in education through understanding the links between learning in school and working life
- To enhance the student’s CV
- To enable an easier transition from education to work

Implementation:

Assistant Head in charge of Careers and Careers Lead oversee from a strategic level. WEX Administrator processes paperwork and deals with general student and parent enquiries. Paperwork passed to LA for relevant Health and Safety checks. All year 10 form tutors are briefed and updated regarding their learners’ placements. Students are encouraged to find their own placement to help foster a sense of independence and ready them for the world of work. Parents/ guardians are contacted for consent to placement before learners are allowed out of school.

There is a Year 9 WEX launch in the autumn term for students and parents to introduce the programme and allow them to begin looking for placements.

Careers sessions are embedded into PSHE and in Year 10 there is a focus on the world of work, including writing CVs, how to contact employers and interview skills.

If the LA does not approve a placement due to a health and safety or safeguarding issue the WEX administrator will inform the student and parent/carer of this decision.

Students will be visited or telephoned by a member of school staff during their placement. The staff member will complete a short checklist which will include key questions relating to health and safety, the findings of which will inform the school as to the suitability of repeating the placement in future. Staff will be appropriately briefed by the school before conducting visits to work placements.

For students considered to be vulnerable, the school will seek input from its Safeguarding team before approving the placement. The school may also make additional contact with parent.

Students with Special Education Needs or Disabilities

- Students with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) will participate fully in the work experience programme wherever possible.
- The school's SEND team is involved as appropriate with the placement of the students.
- The school will communicate as appropriate with students with SEND and their parents/carers to ensure appropriate information is shared with employers that may be relevant to the placement.
- The school will seek confirmation from the employer - via the Employer's Agreement - that it will take such SEND information into account, and that it will treat the information confidentially.

Practical arrangements

- Hours of work: Students are expected to work the normal hours of the business rather than school hours but should normally only work for 8 hours each day or 40 hours each week (recommendation of "Guidance on the Employment of Children", DCSE, 2009). Students who have commitments (e.g. sports, cadets) will need to negotiate hours of work with their employer. The School will ask the employer to provide details of working hours with the job description.
- Meal breaks: The school will ask the employer to provide details of lunch and other breaks with the job description. Students will be expected to observe these times.
- Payment: It is generally understood that the placement is unpaid.
- Absenteeism: Both the employer and the student will be asked to immediately inform the school if the student is absent. The School will follow-up accordingly and will record the student's attendance as normal.

Students in School

For those learners who are, for whatever reason, unable to go on placement provision will be made in school. Learners will be expected to attend school for the week if they have no placement to go to.

If the numbers are low (1-2 class sizes) of those in school we will endeavour to incorporate careers related activities into the week in school.

If the numbers are higher than the above then normal; timetabled lessons will be had.

Review Officer; Ms Sarah Froggatt

Review Date; July 2026