



Wimbledon College

Work Experience A Guide for Parents and Pupils 2012

Work Experience offers all Grammar (Y10) boys the opportunity to spend a week in a place of work towards the end of the summer term.

The aims of work experience are:

- To give your son a taste of the world of work
- To allow him to test out career aspirations he may have
- To experience first-hand the expectations and demands of the workplace
- To focus his mind on what he then needs to do in school to gain access to his chosen career

Work Experience works well when pupils and their parents take responsibility for finding the work placement (with help from the school as needed) and when pupils participate fully in the experience.

Over the past few years, Wimbledon College has developed an excellent work experience scheme which has brought much positive feedback.

Key Dates 2012

Assembly for Boys	Thursday 19 th January
Meeting for Parents	Tuesday 31 st January
Agreement Forms deadline	Wednesday 16 th May
Grammar Examinations	From Monday 2 nd July
Pre-Visit to Workplace	Friday 6 th July
Work Experience Week	Monday 9th – Friday 13th July
Boys return to school	Monday 16 th July
Term Ends	Thursday 19 th July

Finding a placement

Over the past couple of years we have asked parents and their sons to take responsibility for finding a work experience placement.

This has worked very well and parents have used their contacts to get excellent placements which were not generally available to us before.

If your son has a placement which fits his interests and provides real challenge and interest, it will be a worthwhile week.

Placements should be challenging and reflect your son's interests and career ambitions.

Boys should not usually seek a placement with parents.

Travel should not usually be more than an hour each way.

The placement will last one week (with a pre-visit the previous Friday).

Please start using your contacts and friends and relatives to find a suitable placement. You can also approach businesses, local and central government, public service providers, the armed forces, and voluntary groups.

What if I can't find a placement?

Some parents may find it difficult to find a placement for their sons.

If you think you will have difficulty, please contact the Work Experience Co-ordinator sooner rather than later. If you leave it to the last minute, it is less likely that a good placement will be found for your son.

We will support you and endeavour to provide contacts – but we do rely on parents to be very involved in making the arrangements.

If you simply do not know where to start, please contact the Work Experience Co-ordinator now.

Can you help someone else?

It may be that you, or your employer, are able to offer a work experience placement. If your own son does not want to take up that placement, we would ask you to consider offering it to another boy. Some parents simply do not have the contacts and need help finding placements.

The school keeps a list of placements. If you may be able to help, please contact the Work Experience Co-ordinator (details at the end of this leaflet).

Can I extend work experience?

Occasionally boys ask to extend their work experience beyond the assigned week. Permission will only be given for this if there are very strong reasons for doing so (as, for example, in the case of the Army which offers some tailor-made two-week placements).

Generally, if an employer is willing to offer an extended placement, we would suggest working during the summer holidays. Work experience often results in paid summer employment.

Permission for extended placements during term time will only be given where school attendance is excellent and boys are working well and meeting target grades. You should enquire about extended placements well in advance. Please contact your son's Head of Line.

Will my son be paid?

No. Work experience is not employment and therefore cannot be paid. Occasionally, a placement provider may be pleased with the work done and offer some cash at the end. This is not payment – it is a thank you and may be accepted as such.

Health and Safety

Your son's health and safety is of the greatest importance.

You must be satisfied that the placement provider (or the person who will be directly responsible for your son) is a suitable person.

The placement must offer a clear "job" for your son to do and the activities and experiences should be set out in the agreement form.

You should visit the location where your son will work and be confident that the workplace is safe and well regulated.

You should seek assurance from the placement provider that your son will receive suitable and sufficient instruction, guidance and supervision. If he needs special clothing or protective gear, you need to establish that these will be provided.

Pupils are not permitted to do work experience in certain hazardous environments. Any such proposed placements will be picked up by the school and a risk assessment made. We will discuss any concerns or legal restrictions with parents on an individual basis.

Ultimately the school, in liaison with the Local Authority, has responsibility for approving or refusing permission for any particular placement.

Insurance

The placement provider must have **Employer's Liability Insurance** and **Public Liability Insurance**. The insurers must be asked specifically whether a pupil on work experience is covered by the policies.

If the placement provider does not have cover for a pupil on work experience, it is usually easy and free for them to get their insurers to add it.

There have been issues with government departments and the courts service. If your son is seeking a placement in these places, please speak to us at the earliest opportunity.

The school's own insurers will occasionally cover work experience but have indicated they are not prepared to do so regularly.

You, as the parent, can also take out insurance to cover work experience.

It is particularly important that the placement provider is fully aware of any **disability, medical or other special needs** your son may have which might affect the work they do or the way they need to be treated. Please give this careful thought and make sure the placement provider is fully informed.

Child Protection

It is neither feasible nor required that any or every adult your son will work with on his placement need have a child protection criminal record check (CRB).

If your son will be working solely with one person and there will not be other people around, it may be sensible to ask the person to undergo a CRB check. The school will arrange this and pay for it.

Boys on work experience in places that require employees to undergo CRB checks (such as schools, hospitals, and work with vulnerable or elderly people) are not usually required to have a check. This is because they will always be working under supervision.

Please contact the Work Experience Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity if you have any concerns regarding child protection.

Work experience agreement form

This form is designed so that pupil, parents, placement provider and the school all share the key information which sets out the terms of the work experience placement.

Please fill out the form with care and ensure that your placement provider does the same.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to check that work experience arrangements are safe and properly organised. The agreement form plays an important part in this.

Once completed, a copy of the form will be sent by the school to your placement provider and to parents.

Pre-visit day

The Friday before work experience week is used to brief your son (at school) and for him to visit his placement provider (at the workplace).

Your son needs to be in school at the usual time (8.30am) but wearing suitable clothing for his visit.

He will be free to leave school by 10.00am and should make the appointment for the pre-visit allowing plenty of time for travel.

It is your son's responsibility to contact his placement provider and make arrangements to visit on the Friday before work experience week.

The purpose of this visit is to go over what will be required of your son during work experience and should include:

- The time he is to arrive for work and finish work
- What he is to wear
- What the arrangements are for food and drink
- The activities and experiences he can expect to do
- Any rules about what he can and can't do and any bounds
- Health and safety rules, fire drill, dealing with emergencies
- Expectations of standards, behaviour and attitude
- Who his supervisor is and how he can raise questions or concerns with him
- A guided tour

This pre-visit will also allow your son to familiarise himself with the route and ensure he arrives on time on the Monday morning.

Work experience week

Most boys thoroughly enjoy work experience and find it fulfilling and challenging. It is also a wake-up call about the demands of the world of work and the necessity of doing well in school if they are to get into the careers they want.

During work experience week, it is vital that your son:

- Is on time each day
- Is smartly and appropriately dressed
- Sets about the tasks he is given with openness, enthusiasm and a real desire to learn
- Takes opportunities to ask questions, gain new experiences and talk to people
- Gets enough sleep and is fit for work each day

You can help your son get the most out of work experience by being supportive and encouraging but by allowing him some space not to talk about every detail if he doesn't want to!

Problems during work experience week

If you, or your son, or his placement provider have any problems or concerns during work experience week, you should contact the Work Experience Co-ordinator or your son's Head of Line. They will be completely focussed on work experience that week and always available to visit placements and sort out difficulties that may arise.

It is very rare that a placement has to be terminated. If this does happen, your son will be expected to work in school for the remainder of the week.

What happens after work experience?

On return to school, pupils are debriefed about work experience and helped to reflect on what they have learned and the questions their week may have raised about the future. We see a marked maturing of boys following work experience. It focuses their minds on career paths and the qualifications they need to gain.

We arrange for pupils to write a thank-you letter to their placement providers.

Checklist

Parents may find this checklist useful in discussing a placement with a potential placement provider:

- What will your son be doing?
- Does the placement provider have Employer Insurance?
- Does the placement provider have Public Liability Insurance?
- Has he checked that his insurance specifically covers a school pupil on work experience?
- Are there any hazards or risks involved?
- What named individual will have immediate responsibility for supervising your son?
- What hours will your son be expected to work?
- What clothing will he be expected to wear?
- Does he need any special clothing or protective gear? Who will provide this?
- What will happen if the placement provider is not happy with some aspect of your son's work, time-keeping, attitude or behaviour?
- What arrangements are there for food and drink during the day?
- What arrangements will be made for daily feedback for your son on how he is doing?

Contacts

Work Experience Co-ordinator

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