

# THE WEALD COMMUNITY SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY (2023-2024)

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Signed by Chair of Governors:	

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## Introduction

This policy statement sets out The Weald Community School and Sixth Form's (the 'School') arrangements for student work experience placements.

Work experience placements can be classified as either:

- **'Block'**: taking place over consecutive days. The School's Year 10 and Year 12 work experience programmes are examples of block work experience placements.
- **'Extended'**: taking place on one or more days per week over a period of time (*for example, a school term or year*).

Both block and extended work experience placements are defined as a period of unpaid work (*as opposed to a temporary job*) that is arranged to support a student with gaining an insight into, and participating in, the workplace.

## Commitment

The Weald Community School and Sixth Form (the 'School') is committed to delivering work experience programmes in Year 10 and Year 12, alongside extended work experience placements to be identified and recommended by the senior leadership team or a delegated member of staff, to help students make well-informed and realistic decisions about their next steps after secondary and further education, successfully transition into the world of work, and achieve their full potential.

Additional opportunities to gain work experience and have meaningful encounters with employers and employees are available through the School's wider student leadership, extra-curricular, and super curricular programmes. Information about additional work experience placements, including those delivered by employers virtually, is shared with students and parents via the careers section of the School's website ([click here](#)).

## Aims

We aim that our work experience programmes provide the following benefits to students:

- Enhancing their knowledge of the demands and expectations of working life.
- Preparing for the world of work, including developing their employability skills.
- Granting an insight into the competencies (*e.g. knowledge, skills, and qualities*) required for particular jobs, industries, and employers, and how their studies are relevant towards developing these.
- Providing an opportunity to experience success in a workplace environment (*and outside of the classroom*).
- Enabling opportunities for professional, personal, and social development, including self-reflection and -evaluation of performance and learning.
- Equipping them with work experience and a potential referee for their CV and future education, training, and employment applications.
- Allowing them to try a vocational preference to support realistic and informed post-16 and post-18 decision making.

As part of the School's wider careers programme, our work experience programmes are mapped to the Gatsby Benchmarks of good careers guidance<sup>1</sup> and the Career Development Institute's (CDI) Career Development Framework learning aims<sup>2</sup>. Our careers programme can be accessed via the School's careers website ([click here](#)).

Students are encouraged, with support from the School, to independently source a work experience placement suitable for them; we believe this provides them with an important opportunity to practise approaching employers and develop their networking skills. The designated careers lead is available for additional support for those students who may find this challenging, including but not limited to those with special education needs and disabilities (SEND).

### **Statutory Requirements**

This policy complies with our statutory obligations and guidance under:

- The Department of Education's 2017 Careers Strategy and its accompanying statutory guidance for schools and guidance for sixth form colleges<sup>3</sup>.
- The Education and Skills Funding Agency's guidance on delivering 16 to 19 study programmes<sup>4</sup>.
- The Health and Safety Executive's guidance for work experience organisers<sup>5</sup>

### **Student Entitlement**

Students are entitled to receive:

- Information to help them find and prepare for their work experience placement.
- Opportunities to set and reflect on individual learning and development targets for their work experience placement.
- Assurances that the School has taken reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that their placement provider is taking primary responsibility for their health and safety and managing any significant risks during the work experience placement.

### **Staffing**

The School's work experience programmes are led by the School's designated careers lead, Miss Kelly O'Brien, who can be contacted via [wex@theweald.org.uk](mailto:wex@theweald.org.uk) or **01403 787200 extension 260**.

Teaching and pastoral staff support the designated careers lead with helping students prepare for and reflect on their work experience placement, including providing

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Education (2017) 'Careers Strategy: Making the Most of Everyone's Skills and Talents', [ONLINE]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents>

<sup>2</sup> Career Development Institute (CDI) (2021) 'Launching the New Career Development Framework', [ONLINE]. Available at: <https://www.thecdi.net/New-Career-Development-Framework>

<sup>3</sup> Department of Education (2022) 'Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Guidance for Further Education Colleges and Sixth Form Colleges', [ONLINE]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-provision-for-young-people-in-schools>

<sup>4</sup> Education and Skills Funding Agency (2021) '16-19 Study Programmes: Guide for Providers', [ONLINE]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-study-programmes-guide-for-providers>

<sup>5</sup> Health and Safety Executive (2021) 'Work Experience Organisers', [ONLINE]. Available at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/organiser.htm>

information about health and safety in the workplace and employee and employer rights and responsibilities. Staff across the School support with telephone and in-person visits.

### **Resources**

There is a financial cost attached to the School's work experience programmes and the offering of extended work experience placements so that we can resource the required administrative tools and reviewal time. Parents are asked to make a voluntary donation towards these costs to support the continued and ongoing viability of this offer. The suggested donation amount will be communicated to students and parents directly.

Students in receipt of pupil premium grant (PPG) or the Sixth Form's 16-19 bursary are entitled to have the financial costs of arranging their work experience placement reimbursed by the School as part of our targeted careers support provision.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **The Weald Community School and Sixth Form**

- Providing permission for a proposed work experience placement go ahead if they can satisfy themselves that the placement provider will, in line with the Health and Safety Executive's guidance for work experience organisers, take primary responsibility for the student's health and safety and manage any significant risks associated with the work experience placement based on the information provided about the proposed work experience placement by the student, their parent(s)/carer(s), and the placement provider on the student's Unifrog placement form.
- With regards to extended work experience placements, the School will also ask the employer to inform us of any significant changes to the placement activities over the placement period and of any extra health and safety measures they have put into place to control any new risks as a result of these changes.
- Providing students, parents, and placement providers with the information required for the safe and successful completion of the work experience placement.
- Where possible, delivering a telephone call or in-person work experience placement visit from a member of School staff for each student undertaking a work placement.
- Providing students and parents with an out-of-hours School contact in the event of an emergency relating to a student's work experience placement.
- Considering the approval of a disclaimer acknowledging a parent's full legal responsibility for their child's work experience placement in the event that the School cannot provide permission for the work experience placement to go ahead. This parent disclaimer would remove all of the School's

responsibilities, including those of a legal nature, for the student's work experience placement.

### **Placement Provider**

- Acknowledging that they have primary responsibility for the health and safety of their work experience student(s) and should be managing any significant risks associated with the work experience placement.
- Co-operating with and providing true and accurate information and documentation as part of the School's risk assessment processes (*whether delivered internally or via our external suppliers*), including sharing details of their employer's liability insurance where applicable and required.
- In accordance with normal practice, observing and abiding by all current relevant legislation, including approved codes of practice relating to health and safety, equal opportunities, and child protection.
- Identifying whether any of their staff or the work experience student(s) require a DBS check for the purposes of the work experience placement, making suitable arrangements for these checks to be undertaken where needed, and notifying the School of any records identified as a result of the process.
- Declaring, as part of the risk assessment process and in accordance with the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, if any of their staff are disqualified from working with children.
- Accepting and insuring themselves against liability for loss, damage, or injury caused by the student in the same way as for other employees.
- As per the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, preparing and sending the student's parent(s) a comprehensible risk assessment and relevant information on the risks that have been identified by the assessment (*including preventative and protective measures*).
- Providing the work experience student with a safe system of work, facilitated by induction, supervision, site familiarisation, and any protective and operational equipment needed.
- Contacting the student's parental contact(s) and the School if the student:
  - Does not attend their work experience placement (*one notification for each day of absence*).
  - Discloses confidential information to a work colleague that gives rise to a concern for the student's physical or emotional safety.

## Parents

- Co-operating with and providing true and accurate information and documentation as part of the School's risk assessment process (*whether delivered internally or via our external suppliers*).
- Taking responsibility for notifying the placement provider if their child (the 'student') has any health issues, such as medical conditions, learning difficulties, physical disabilities, or behavioural needs, that could result in unnecessary risk to their health or safety, or to the safety of another person, during the work experience placement.
- Agreeing that the School may also disclose details about their child requiring special attention with the placement provider in order to secure a successful work experience placement.
- Supporting their child with the safe and successful completion of their work experience placement, including assisting with:
  - Sourcing and contacting suitable placement providers.
  - Arranging transport to and from the work experience placement.
  - Agreeing working hours (*including break and lunch arrangements*) with the placement provider.
  - Providing the School and placement provider with timely notification of any absence(s) (*whether planned or unexpected*).
- Taking responsibility for their child observing the conditions of their work experience placement as described by the placement provider.
- Accepting responsibility for any charges accrued should their child cancel their work experience placement after it has been confirmed.
- Providing the placement provider with the name and contact details of at least one parent so that they may share the child's work experience placement risk assessment and notify them of any concern(s) or issue(s) (*e.g. student absence*).
- Notifying the School of any:
  - Question(s) or issue(s) their child has raised about their work experience placement which cannot be resolved internally between the child, parent(s), and placement provider.
  - Information the child has passed on that may affect their personal health, safety, or welfare whilst on the work experience placement.

## Students

- Independently sourcing, with support from the School, a work experience placement suitable for them.
- Arranging and attending a work experience preparation interview with the placement provider at least three weeks prior to the work experience placement start date.

- Fully cooperating with and demonstrating respectful and professional behaviour towards their placement provider, including observing and abiding by all health and safety, security, and other regulations as directed.
- Applying the School's guidance on health and safety and rights and responsibilities in the workplace during their work experience placement as provided during personal development lessons.
- Completing their work experience logbook to support their professional, personal, and social development, including self-reflection and -evaluation of performance and learning.
- Holding in confidence any information about the placement provider's business which they may obtain during their work experience placement and not disclosing such information to any other person without the placement provider's permission.
- Providing timely notification to the School and placement provider of any absence(s) (*whether planned or unexpected*).
- Passing on to their parent(s) any:
  - Question(s) or issue(s) regarding their work experience placement that they cannot resolve independently with their placement provider.
  - Information given to them by the placement provider which may affect their personal health, safety, or welfare whilst on the work experience placement.

## **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks**

### **Placement Providers**

As outlined in paragraphs 312 to 314 of the Department for Education's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'<sup>6</sup> statutory guidance, enhanced DBS checks with barred list information may be required for staff supervising work experience students under 16 years of age. Placement providers are reminded of this requirement when completing their section of the Unifrog placement tool.

Paragraph 315 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' states that schools are not able to request an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for placement provider staff supervising children aged 16 or 17 who are undertaking a work experience placement.

### **Students**

As outlined in paragraph 333 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', persons below the age of 16 cannot be subject to a DBS check.

Depending on the type of work experience placement, and the amount of staff supervision the placement provider arranges, students over the age of 16 may

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<sup>6</sup> Department for Education (2021) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', [ONLINE]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>



require an enhanced DBS check<sup>7</sup>; this is at the placement provider's discretion. Placement providers should identify and action any required DBS checks in accordance with their internal risk assessment and working procedures and notify the School of any records identified as a result of the process.

### **Extended Work Experience Placements**

As part of our targeted careers support, the senior leadership team may recommend that a student undertake an extended work experience placement as defined earlier in this policy; the designated careers lead can support with the arrangement of this.

### **Restricted Work Experience Placements**

The Weald Community School and Sixth Form reserves the right to decline any proposed work experience placement deemed inappropriate, unsafe, or in potential breach of Health and Safety Executive guidance and/or relevant legislation.

The headteacher has final authority regarding the suitability of any work experience placement.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements**

All arrangements for work experience placements are monitored by a senior leadership team member responsible for the School's careers provision, with delegated responsibilities as follows:

- **Designated careers lead:**
  - Monitoring adherence to careers statutory guidance for schools and sixth forms.
  - Monitoring adherence to the Health and Safety Executive's guidance for work experience organisers.
  - Monitoring adherence to the School's Work Experience Policy.
  - Evaluation of work experience placements.
- **Head of Sixth Form:**
  - Monitoring adherence to the Education and Skills Funding Agency's guidance on work experience placements delivered as part of 16-19 study programmes.

Processes for evaluating work experience programmes include students reflecting and providing feedback on their work experience placement, such as via their work experience logbook during personal development lessons. Staff, parents, and employers will also be invited to provide feedback. These sources of evidence will be considered when planning the work experience programmes for the following year.

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<sup>7</sup> Department for Education (2015) 'Post-16 Work Experience as a Part of 16 to 19 Study Programmes and Traineeships: Department Advice for Post-16 Education and Training Providers', [ONLINE]. Available at: <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/post16-work-experience-as-a-part-of-16-to-19-study-programmes-and-traineeships-departmental-advice-for-post16-education-and-training-providers>

This policy will be reviewed by the designated careers lead every two years, or at an earlier date in the event of relevant statutory updates. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Body.

### **Links with Other Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

- Careers Education, Information, Advice, and Guidance (CEIAG) Policy
- Managing Abusive Parents/Carers and Visitors Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Vexatious Complaints Policy