

Introduction

The Work Experience (WEX) programme for Year 10 pupils will run for 10 days from 13 June to 24 June, 2022. It is an integral part of the school's Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance, which we offer to our pupils at Sawston Village College. It is an expectation that all Year 10 pupils will participate in Work Experience.

The viability of the WEX programme will be under regular review with respect to Covid-19 restrictions and safety guidelines as the year progresses.

The aim of this booklet is to set out the framework for WEX, so that you have as much information as possible prior to and during the placement. A more detailed programme will be delivered to pupils during the spring and summer terms, through assemblies and structured mentoring times.

It is essential that both parents and pupils understand that WEX offers an insight into the world of work. It is not intended to give an insight into a chosen or particular career and, indeed, many professions, such as the emergency services and health, are unable to offer pupils under the age of 16 work experience for a number of reasons, not least health and safety and confidentiality of information.

Important Dates

Information Evening for Parents: 2 December, 2021

This is now an online information video, available to view via the school website. It can be found in the Parents section, then Careers information, advice and guidance.

Deadline for receipt of

Student Own Placement Forms: 18 March, 2022

Work Experience Placement: 13 to 24 June, 2022

Review, Debrief and Thank You Letters: 27 June to 1 July, 2022

Work experience is an opportunity to experience the world of work. It enables young people to understand the importance of key skills such as communication, working in a team, independence and reliability. It highlights the formalities of work, such as dress code, appropriate interactions and time keeping, and how these differ from the school environment. Increasingly, employers are reporting that employability skills are a key requirement in their recruitment process.

Work experience is not an opportunity to have a practice run at a chosen career or job. It is therefore imperative that the expectations on both pupils and parents are realistic: even if pupils arrange their own placement, for example at a dental practice, it is highly unlikely that there will be any opportunities to undertake anything other than administrative duties and observations of key professionals at work. Employers try very hard to give our young people a realistic view of their working environment, but they are constrained by rules and regulations appertaining to under 16s in the workplace.

Placements

There are two kinds of placement for WEX, both requiring a partnership between school, home, employers and The Employability Partnership (T.E.P.).

There is a parent section on the T.E.P. website (www.employabilitytps.co.uk) which covers frequently asked questions for parents e.g. *How can I help my son or daughter with their work experience? Can students attend a placement outside Cambridgeshire?*

T.E.P. works very hard to secure as many placements with local employers as possible. However, with literally thousands of pupils across the County out on placement every year, it is increasingly difficult for T.E.P. to offer schools as many opportunities as they need. It is therefore necessary for some pupils to arrange their own placements, but there are strict protocols that must be adhered to or the placement may not be able to proceed.

(1) School/T.E.P. Placements

In the spring term, we will circulate the work experience jobs, which have been offered to Sawston Village College via T.E.P. from employers in Cambridgeshire who have agreed to take our pupils on a WEX placement.

Booklets containing the job descriptions will be available for the pupils to read during Mentor Time and in other key locations in the school.

Pupils will be required to list 6 placements they would be interested in applying for. However, there is no guarantee that pupils will be matched to one of these placements as many roles/employers are very popular and this leads to intense competition. For example, when we were last able to run work experience, we had a high number of pupils wanting to work for IT companies and inevitably we were unable to offer exactly what the pupils were looking for. They were initially very disappointed, although all were placed in equally interesting roles in other establishments.

Pupils are matched to placements by Mr Stuart, Year 10 Lead. Once a pupil is matched to a placement, they will be sent:

1. a letter offering them a provisional work experience placement, subject to interview and the return of the signed/completed agreement form and parent consent form;
2. a job description;
3. a three way agreement form (employer, pupil and parent).

As soon as the pupil receives this pack, it is essential that contact is made with the employer. An introductory formal email or telephone call is required, which will alert the employer to the fact that the pupil is interested in/has been matched to the placement. Because employers' requirements vary from wanting nothing more than a chat on the telephone, to needing a full CV, letter of application and interview, **it is important that there is no delay in making this initial contact.**

Unfortunately, we have had situations in the recent past where employers have withdrawn offers of a placement, because a pupil has failed to make contact with them. Whilst we impress upon our young people the urgency of making contact, it would be very helpful if parents/carers could

reinforce this message at home and assist their son/daughter with this task, so that none of our young people are at risk of being left without a placement.

When pupils attend their interview with the employer, it is essential that they take the agreement form with them, signed already by themselves and their parent/carer(s). The school details on the documentation confirms to the employer that all the information disclosed on the form is true and accurate and this is needed for health and safety, insurance and supervision requirements. Pupils need to ask the employer to sign the agreement and then return it to Mr Stuart, Year 10 Lead and Work Experience Co-ordinator at Sawston Village College.

This is the most important part of the entire process as this form is the contract between all parties and puts in place essential undertakings and insurances.

No placement can proceed until the fully signed form is received by Mr Stuart at the College.

(2) Student Own Placement (SOP)

Pupils who wish to arrange their own placements follow a slightly different pathway. It is the pupil's responsibility to locate and contact a prospective employer in the first instance. In almost all circumstances, T.E.P. recommends that a young person does not work under the direct supervision of parents, guardians or carers. It is, however, usually acceptable for a young person to apply for a placement within the same company.

If a pupil is interested in securing his or her own placement, they should check with Mr Stuart first before contacting an employer in the local area. This is due to the fact that a majority of approved employers offer placements to us via T.E.P. and they have politely indicated that they often cannot cope with the large volume of direct requests that they receive from pupils and parents. We also need to ensure you are not approaching companies who have already offered placements to us via T.E.P.

If an employer is willing to take the pupil on a student own placement, the pupil must collect a SOP form from Mr Stuart. Parents and employers

then complete the appropriate sections of the form and return it to Mr Stuart as soon as possible and **definitely before** the published deadlines. T.E.P. will then visit the employer's premises to ensure compliance with health and safety and employment legislation. When T.E.P. is satisfied that everything is in order, the following documents will be sent to the pupil:

1. a letter containing the job title, the employer's contact address and telephone number;
2. the job description and risk assessment as agreed by T.E.P.

As the employer will already have met the pupil in the majority of cases, it may not be necessary for the pupil to attend another formal interview, but this is a decision for the employer.

The most important part of the entire process is the signed SOP form as this is the contract between all parties and puts in place essential undertakings and insurance.

No placement can proceed until the fully signed SOP form is received by Mr Stuart at the College.

Charges for SOPs

There is no charge for T.E.P. to process SOPs in Cambridgeshire, but there are no longer reciprocal arrangements in place across neighbouring counties. This means that if you are seeking a placement outside of Cambridgeshire you will be charged an administration fee (we pass on the fee that we are charged by the organisation who make the necessary checks in the county where the placement is located). This will be indicated clearly on the SOP form that parents are asked to complete and sign. Last year fees varied from £25 to £75 per placement and parents were invoiced for these fees in the summer term.

Deadlines for SOPs

The deadline for receipt of SOP forms is **18 March 2022**. As mentioned earlier, thousands of pupils take up WEX placements every year and deadlines are set to ensure that there is sufficient time for T.E.P. to process requests from all schools before their placements begin.

Without T.E.P. approval no placement can be authorised. Therefore, you must ensure that the paperwork is completed and returned as early as possible and by no later than 18 March 2022 **SOP forms received after the deadline will not be processed and this could result in a pupil being without a placement.**

Placement Visits and Log Book

Before the placement begins, each pupil will be given a Work Experience Log Book. These are provided to every pupil and it is their responsibility to look after it.

There are a number of sections that must be completed before and after the placement but the main body of work will be undertaken during the placement.

The log book should be taken to work every day. There are sections within the log book that will need to be completed by the employer and also by the visiting member of staff from the College. All pupils will either be visited by a member of staff, or will be contacted by telephone if they are on an out-of-county placement, during the course of the two weeks.

It is important that pupils complete their log book daily whilst their experiences are fresh in their mind. There will be opportunities when they return to school to reflect on their experiences of the world of work; the more information they have recorded the more they will benefit from it.

Attendance

Pupils are expected to attend the place of work during the hours stated on the job description. When pupils are choosing placements they must ensure that they are able to commute to and from work: if there is a genuine reason why a pupil cannot work to the stipulated hours, please contact Mr Stuart in the first instance.

Should a pupil be unable to attend work as a result of illness, parents should contact the employer and Sawston Village College immediately. However, as WEX only lasts for a relatively short period of time, it is hoped that all pupils will make every effort to achieve 100% attendance at their placement.

Mobile Phones

We wish to bring to your attention that pupils should have their mobile phone switched off during working hours unless otherwise advised. If a parent needs to contact their son/daughter urgently you will find the contact number of the employer on the copy of the job description, which will be sent to you or you can contact Mr Stuart direct.

Problems during the placement

In the unlikely event that there is any kind of issue, problem, nagging concerns etc. during the placement, please contact Mr Stuart immediately and leave a voicemail message and we will return your call as soon as possible. You can also contact by email.

Post Placement

At the end of the placement all pupils will be asked to complete an evaluation questionnaire. Every questionnaire is read thoroughly by our T.E.P. partners and any concerns or worries are followed through with employers, school and the pupil. Suggestions put forward by pupils for improvement are often adopted as part of a continuous assessment and evaluation process within T.E.P.

Pupils will also be asked to write **a formal thank you SVC card** to the employer within mentor time. We ask that the card is **handed in** so that we can ensure all employers receive them.

We appreciate that most of our young people will have thanked their employer in an informal way. However, this element is a requirement for all pupils.

We do hope you have found this booklet informative. Should you have any questions please do contact Mr Stuart.

Notes