

WORK EXPERIENCE GUIDANCE

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INTRODUCTION

As a significant employer in Lincolnshire, the Council is committed to encouraging and promoting good quality unpaid work experience placements to children and young people age 14 – 19, (and up to age 25, where the expression of interest is for a care leaver).

Work Experience is a vital key in bridging the gap between education and the world of work. When done effectively, it can showcase careers to young people that they may never have considered, and help to impart the attitudes and behaviours required in the workplace.

As young people in Lincolnshire are the future workforce, it is both essential and advantageous to the Council to encourage and support them by providing good quality work experience opportunities that allow them to develop and learn.

BENEFITS OF WORK EXPERIENCE TO THE COUNCIL:

- Provide a fresh pair of eyes and different ways of thinking, often coming up with innovative ways of approaching projects
- Raise the profile of the Council in the community
- Help to further develop existing staff skills by offering the opportunity to mentor work placement students
- Raise the profile of career opportunities
- Help by offering extra resource for short term projects
- Opportunity to meet and informally test for potential future recruits

SCOPE OF THE GUIDANCE

It is envisaged that service areas will fully contribute to offering children and young people the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and gain a better insight of the work and careers offered by the Council.

This guidance has been developed to ensure that there is a consistent approach to offering work experience placements to children and young people, and that all staff involved in the process fully understand their roles and responsibilities.

All placement opportunities for young people should be forwarded to the digital team in order that they can be uploaded to [Work Experience Placements in Lincolnshire](#) on the Council's external website. Education providers, i.e. schools, colleges or organisations specifically supporting young people i.e. Barnardo's, will be required to complete and submit an expression of interest form directly to the appropriate service area.

It is acknowledged that the Council receives lots of different requests for unpaid work experience placements; however, this guidance is specifically for children and young people. Applications that fall outside of these parameters should be handled separately by the appropriate service area.

KEY PRIORITY

Service areas are expected to give priority to work experience opportunities for looked after children and care leavers where the placement is deemed appropriate to their requirements and aspirations. As the 'Corporate Parent', the Council has

specific and additional responsibilities and duties in relation to children who are 'looked after', including those who have left care (up to the age of 25).

DEFINITIONS

Work Experience is described by the Department for Education as:

"The key to bridging the gap between education and the world of work. At its broadest and best, work experience can open young people's eyes to jobs they have never thought of, help inform career decisions, offer a chance to prove themselves to an employer, and help to instil the attitudes and behaviours expected at work."

Work experience in this policy is classed as unpaid work experience.

Health and Safety Executive define children and young people as:

- A child is anyone who has not yet reached the official minimum school leaving age (MSLA). Pupils can leave school on the last Friday in June provided they are 16 by the end of the summer holidays (gov.uk website).
- A young person is anyone under 18.

For the purpose of this guidance only, a young person will refer to a person up to the age of 25.

PRINCIPLES

- It is the Council's commitment that all work experience placements for children and young people will be covered by this corporate Work Experience Guidance, which is in line with the Council's Strategic Objective: Readiness for Adult Life.
- To provide a consistent and reliable approach to offer effective work experience placements to children and young people, with requests for placements coming through one single channel.
- To ensure compliance with the Council's legal duty towards the safeguarding and risk assessment arrangements for children and young people.
- To minimise risk by providing clear guidelines on responsibilities of all those involved in work experience placements.
- To ensure monitoring and accurate reporting of work experience placements for children and young people throughout the Council.
- To ensure all children and young people applying for work experience placements are not subject to direct or indirect discrimination, and will not receive any less favourable treatment on the grounds of their gender, sexual orientation, civil partnership, marital status, colour, race nationality, ethnic origins, creed, religion/belief, disability or age.
- To ensure that children and young people on work experience placements are supernumerary, unpaid and are not substituted for any establishment vacancy or backfill.
- The minimum age that a school aged child can carry out work experience is 14. Anything under this age would have to be run as a school education visit and can only involve shadowing or observing.
- To ensure a child/young person gains the full benefit of work experience, a student should not be under the supervision of a parent, close family member or friend.

- All services are asked to consider offering short term work experience placements each year, with priority being to offer a placement for at least one looked after child where possible.
- All work experience opportunities for children and young people will be uploaded on [Work Experience Placements in Lincolnshire](#) to allow fairness and transparency to all children and young people.
- All requests for work experience placements for children and young people will be through the education provider or organisation specifically working with children and young people.
- Managers of service areas will be responsible for ensuring that this guidance is disseminated and implemented, in order that work placements for children and young people are conducted in a consistent manner and can be monitored corporately.

APPROPRIATE LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The Council is accountable under the following specific legislation requirements to ensure that any child or young person is fully protected from any risks to their health or safety.

- Management of & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety (training for employment) regulations 1990 (2)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (3)
- Education Act 1996 (amended by the Schools Standard and Framework Act 1998)
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Protection of Children Act 1978 & 1999
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Working Time Regulations 1999

DURATION OF PLACEMENTS

The duration of any work experience placement will be by mutual agreement to suit all parties.

PROCESS

Please also refer to ([Appendix 1](#)) flow chart process.

- Services areas will be required to complete the template, [Work Experience Placement Request Form \(Appendix 2\)](#) and send to digital@lincolnshire.gov.uk to be uploaded onto [the work experience webpage](#).
- A named service area supervisor should be nominated who will take overall responsibility for the student once on placement.
- Service areas will need to identify an individual who will take responsibility for receiving email expression of interest forms and liaising with the appropriate education provider to facilitate any work placement arrangements.
- It is recommended that a generic email inbox is created rather than using a personal email address. This can be set up by contacting the IT helpdesk on 55555.
- Service areas will be asked to complete an annual monitoring form showing the number and breakdown of work experience placements they have offered or that have taken place, in order that an overall corporate monitoring report can be produced.

- Consideration should be given as to what placements can be offered for school children and young people from September to August each year.

CONSIDERATION FOR WORK PLACEMENTS

In many cases, a work experience placement could be the first time a child/young person has been in a real work environment. There are a number of basic guidelines that should be followed when considering offering a placement:

- Identification of whether the placement/s will be in one place or whether there could be any possible travel implications.
- Ensure the length of time for the placement is appropriate to suit both parties.
- Consider how you may be able to offer a variety of duties to be undertaken.
- Ensure that a named supervisor is available for the duration of the placement.
- Ensure due care is given to provide an induction into the service area which includes monitoring of the student's health and safety.

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) AND SAFEGUARDING

All service areas will be required to ensure that work experience placement students have a nominated named supervisor within the area who will ensure that they are being placed into a safe environment. For children under 16, work experience is classed as regulated activity; therefore, supervision should be shared where possible. In areas where this is not possible, the named supervisor will require an enhanced DBS with a children's barred list check if they are likely to be supervising in a one to one situation for more than three days within a 30 day period. A DBS check is not required for supervision of work placements where the student is over the age of 16.

Where a DBS check is required, this must be done through the DBS admin team at disclosures@lincolnshire.gov.uk and an enhanced DBS with a children's barred list check must be requested. The work experience placement should not take place until this check has been carried out and certified by the manager of that team. Service areas should be advised that the DBS check process could take up to 4 weeks to be processed, and so this time factor must be built into the planning process for any placements.

The DBS status would be classed as a volunteer application for the purpose of work experience supervision only.

For further guidance, refer to the Council's [Criminal Records Check Policy](#).

All staff that come into contact with children and young people have a responsibility to ensure that their welfare and safeguarding is promoted and adhered to. Any young person on placement (under the age of 18) should always be suitably supervised to ensure they can carry out their placement in a safe manner, and are not left unsupervised for any prolonged length of time.

For further guidance on safeguarding children and young people, please refer to the Council's [Safeguarding Children Policy](#).

HEALTH AND SAFETY

All individuals on work experience placements are regarded as employees under health and safety legislation, and therefore must have the same protection as all other staff.

The Council is required by health and safety law to give special consideration to the risks that may be faced by children and young people, particularly because of their potential inexperience, lack of awareness and/or immaturity. Any accidents resulting in injury, ill health, damage to property or any other loss must be recorded by completing an accident form and investigated in line with existing Council procedures.

The duty of care including carrying out risk assessments for all students is the main responsibility of the education provider, i.e., school/college, therefore expression of interest forms should not be accepted from individual students. This duty of care includes placements both within and outside term times. Placements should not go ahead until the education provider has either carried out a risk assessment or an existing risk assessment has been reviewed. Copies of new or reviewed risk assessments carried out by the education provider should be given to the nominated contact within the Council service area.

The education provider will also be required to inform the appropriate service area contact of any medical conditions/concerns/potential issues that may affect the placement in any way. This is so any appropriate support and reasonable adjustments can be made. This information should be kept confidential and adherence should be kept with [the Council's protecting personal data policy](#) to ensure there is no breach of the student's personal information, and to ensure that students are given as much opportunity as possible to have a positive and enjoyable placement opportunity.

WORK LOCATION RESTRICTIONS

There are actually very few work activities that a young person cannot do due to health and safety law; however, it is important to remember that service areas have primary responsibility for the health and safety of that student, and as such should manage any significant risks. This can easily be done by explaining the risks to the student and checking that they understand what they have been told and who to talk to if they feel they have any concerns. Further guidance can be sought from the corporate Health and Safety team or the HSE website.

INSURANCE

For the purpose of insurance, work experience placements are covered by the Council's joint employers' liability and public liability insurance policy. If required by the education provider, service areas can request a copy of the Council's Employer and liability insurance certificates by emailing insurance@lincolnshire.gov.uk

CONFIDENTIALITY

As the Council holds a great deal of sensitive and confidential information, all work experience individuals should be asked to sign a [work experience confidentiality and indemnity form \(Appendix 3\)](#) on their first day, which indemnifies them against any claim made against them or the Council. Once the form is signed, the student should be given a copy, and a copy should be kept in the service area.

WORK PLACEMENT HOURS

Work placement hours for young people under 18 should not exceed more than 8 hours in any 24 hour period, and no more than 37 hours per week. There should be at least 12 hours break between each working day and two days of rest per working week. Children under 16 should not work longer than 4 hours without a 1 hour break

and should not work Sundays, Bank Holidays or between the hours of 10pm and 6am.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR A WORK PLACEMENT

To ensure a valuable and quality work experience opportunity, it is important that the placement is well planned in preparation for the person starting. For both parties to gain benefit from the placement, the considered duties should be noted down and put into a plan of action which can be given to the student for them to follow. The following points should also be considered:

- Ensure that the agreed placement area is fully prepared for their arrival, remembering to give their name to reception where appropriate.
- Using the induction checklist mentioned below, ensure they are given the opportunity to be fully aware of their surroundings and be introduced to staff that they may be working with, as well as what to do in case of fire or emergency.
- If they are expected to use equipment such as a laptop/computer, ensure the log on details have been arranged with the IT helpdesk.
- Ensure they are clear regarding the tasks/duties that have been prepared for them and give them an opportunity to discuss any questions they may have.

INDUCTION

Even though work placements are unpaid, a short informal induction should still be conducted to emphasise the importance of health and safety, fire and emergency exits, toilets, expectations regarding behaviour and dress code etc. It is the responsibility of the nominated work placement supervisor to ensure that the student on the placement is given an effective introduction into the area.

The [Induction day one checklist](#) contained within the corporate induction programme can be followed as a guide where appropriate and adapted to suit local and placement arrangements.

SICKNESS/ABSENCE OR CONCERNS DURING THE PLACEMENT

For school/college students, including looked after children and/or care leavers, any cases of absence or concerns should in the first instance be reported to the appropriate education provider. Service areas should report any absences within the first hour of the scheduled starting time.

AFTER THE PLACEMENT

Many education providers will actively seek feedback on behalf of the child/young person. Service areas are encouraged to participate as this information can help to enhance the student's learning experience and further development.

Appendix 1 – Flow Chart Process for Work Experience Placements

