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Learning without limits

A unique, positive education for
Young people on the autism spectrum

Work Experience Policy

2024-2025

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young people on the autism spectrum



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1. Introduction

Work experience is an integral part of our students' entitlement to CEIAG (Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance) and this clearly supports Gatsby Benchmark 6 "Experiences of Workplaces" which states:

Every pupil should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing, and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.

<https://www.goodcareerguidance.org.uk/the-benchmarks>

Work experience aims to give young people vital insights into the world of work, which encourages them to aspire to great things, and helps them to prepare for their future. Work experience bridges the gap between school, college, and work and helps young people to make decisions about their future and to develop new and existing skills.

The opportunity to participate in work experience is provided to all students by the end of their compulsory years. Students are encouraged to find placements linked to career paths that suit their interests, skills, and strengths with the absence of stereotypes, which are actively challenged.

Appendix 1: Gatsby Benchmarks & LVS Oxford

BENCHMARK	Gatsby Benchmark	CURRENT PROVISION
6. Experiences of workplaces	Every pupil should have first-hand experiences* of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Experience • Voluntary placements where appropriate • In-house work experience • Trips • Students are encouraged to be active participants in the process of choosing a workplace experience • LVS works closely with placement providers to ensure the experience is as positive as possible and that student's needs can be met • Employers provide regular and valuable feedback • Students are supported by LVS staff where required

2. Our Aims

Work Experience should:

- Enhance student's knowledge of the world of work
- Develop students' employability skills
- Provide an insight into the skills, qualities, and attitudes required by particular sectors and employers
- Provide opportunities for personal and social development which includes self-confidence, time management, personal organisation, and resilience
- Help to prepare students for the world of work
- Enable students to make cross-curricular links
- Support the School's CEIAG provision
- Provide students with an opportunity for self-evaluation

3. Provision

The opportunity for a week's placement is offered to all year 10 students with one of our work experience-linked partners. Year 11 and Post 16 students attend placements 1 or 2 days per week during term time with one of our work experience partnerships. Placements may also be arranged where a student has indicated a preference in a particular sector and this will be risk assessed for suitability, safety, etc., and signed off by our work experience coordinator. Where students attend placements 2 or more times per week the curriculum can be personalised, so that the most advantageous balance of academic and vocational experience, and qualifications for each individual are achieved.

4. Links with Employers

LVS Oxford continues to expand its excellent relationships with a plethora of local businesses. A good variety of businesses are prepared to offer our students Work Experience placements each year. In addition to this our Work Experience partners

generously give their time and resources to assist with mock interviews, employability support and career talks.

5. Legislation

There are a range of legal responsibilities in relation to the organisation and delivery of work experience.

Education Act 1996

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- Provide work experience in industrial and nonindustrial settings but not on ships or other water-based placements, for students who are in their final two years of compulsory schooling; •
- Enables students in Year 10 and 11 to assume the temporary status of a Young Person in employment law

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

An employer has a responsibility to ensure that young people employed by them are not exposed to risk due to: lack of experience; being unaware of existing or potential risks and/or lack of maturity.

- An employer must consider the layout of the workplace; the physical, biological, and chemical agents students will be exposed to; how students will handle work equipment; how the work and processes are organised; the extent of health and safety training needed; and risks from particular agents, processes, and work. These considerations will be straightforward in a low-risk workplace, for example, an office. In higher-risk workplaces, the risks are likely to be greater and will need more attention to ensure that they are properly controlled.
- A child must not carry out work if it is: beyond their physical or psychological capacity; involves harmful exposure to substances that are toxic, can cause cancer, can damage or harm an unborn child, or can chronically affect human health in any other way; involves harmful exposure to radiation; involves risks of accidents that cannot reasonably be recognised or avoided by students due to their insufficient attention to safety or lack of experience or training; has risk to health from extreme cold, heat, noise or vibration. •
- There are other agents, processes, and work that should be taken into account – refer to <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/law/index.htm>

Education Act 2002

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people within the School/Academy/Learning Centre

Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009

- Encourage post-16 students to undertake work experience.

Other legislation that are adhered to includes:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 – including amendments.

Working Time Regulations 1998

Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

Disability Discrimination Act 2005
Gender Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2006
Human Right Acts 1998
Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
Equality Act 2006
Equality Act 2010
Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

6. Management and Coordination

Approval of work placements is the responsibility of the School, and the School manages all documentation for placements.

National Legislation from the HSE and DfE will be followed to ensure the health, safety, and safeguarding of students whilst they are at their Work Experience Placements. The Work Experience Placements have met all of our Safeguarding requirements.

7. Considerations for School

[For] those organising placements, [they] should simply ask sensible questions, in proportion to the level of risk, to satisfy themselves that those arrangements are in place. They should not be second-guessing employers' risk assessments or requiring additional paperwork. This means that schools do not need to complete extensive health and safety checks or risk assessments of their own, nor do they need to hire third parties to do so." HSE Guidance on Work Experience.

8. Considerations for the Placement Provider

Under HSE guidance (the Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990), students on work experience are treated as employees for health and safety purposes. The placement provider has the same duty of care to the students as it does to its own employees. The provider must ensure that any young person on placement is protected from any risks that are a consequence of their lack of experience or an absence of awareness of existing or potential risks or the fact that a young person has not fully matured. Employers' existing workplace risk assessments may already cover the risks that work experience students may be exposed to. Their existing Employer's Liability Insurance will cover such placements.

9. Assessing the Risk

Employers are required to have risk assessments for their employees, although small employers (with fewer than five employees) do not have to have them written down. We will ask placement providers to carry out an appropriate workplace induction, which may include undertaking the risk assessments with students, in accordance with the HSE guidance:

- For placements in low-risk environments, such as offices or shops, with everyday risks that will mostly be familiar to the student, we consider that existing arrangements for other employees should suffice.

- For environments with risks less familiar to the student (e.g. in light assembly or packing facilities), we will ask the placement provider to make arrangements to manage the risks. We consider this should include induction, supervision, site familiarisation, and any protective equipment needed.
- For a placement in a higher-risk environment such as construction, agriculture and manufacturing we will ask the provider to consider what work the student will be doing or observing, the risks involved and how these are managed and to satisfy themselves that the instruction, training, and supervisory arrangements have been properly thought through and that they work in practice.
- In addition to this, we will ask that the risk assessments take into account the student's potential inexperience, lack of awareness of risks and their stage of development. Where it is appropriate to do so, relevant information (such as a care plan) may be sent to the employer to allow them to consider how best to provide safe methods of working. The advice of SMT, School Nurse and other relevant staff shall be sought in such cases before information is sent from the school.

Briefing our students in school:

All students will be informed prior to attending a placement which will reiterate the importance of work experience and its benefits. Students will have explained to them the importance of health and safety in the workplace and confirm the procedure for raising health and safety, including safeguarding concerns.

- The school will reinforce these messages in the final few days before the students go out on placement, through (tutor time).
- We request that the placement provider brief students on their first day of induction on health and safety; how to identify hazards and control measures that can be put in place to reduce risk of injury or accident.

In addition to Employers' Risk Assessments (If applicable) following a pre-check visit, LVS will put in place its own Risk Assessment for each placement provider that will work in conjunction with those set out by the specific Placement. This will also include specific information pertaining to individual students that is appropriate for the placement the individual student is on. Parental consent is given in writing for any information sharing that is relevant to the placement that their child is on.

LVS will hold on file up-to-date Employers' Public Liability & Employers Liability insurance Certificate.

10. Safeguarding our students

10.1 Guidance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Department for Education in the document "Keeping Children Safe in Education" indicates:

- Pupils below the age of 16 cannot have a DBS check undertaken.
- It may be appropriate for barred list checks to take place on individuals who supervise such a placement. Consideration should be given to whether the person providing the supervision will be unsupervised and how frequently they are

providing the supervision. If it is more than 3 days in a 30-day period then it is likely to require a check. This check can be in the form of a barred list check

- For students aged 16 or over, where the placement is in a “specified place” (such as a school, children’s home, childcare premises), the placement provider “should consider whether a DBS enhanced check should be requested.”
- Separate government guidance suggests that students aged 16 and over, who will be undertaking a placement in Health Care, or the Early Years sector should have an enhanced DBS check. Time should be allowed for this to be undertaken in advance of the placement commencing. (This refers to “Post-16 work experience as a part of 16 to 19 study programmes and traineeships” published by the DfE in March 2015). It is recognised that the issue of safeguarding refers both to the pupils undertaking the placement as well as service users who attend such specified places. Whichever way it is viewed, the advice of maintaining “reasonable supervision” should be considered central to protecting both parties

All placement providers will be given guidance prior to the commencement of the placement (see Appendix 1) which highlights good practice for safeguarding staff and how to report a safeguarding concern.

10.2 The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy applies in all work experience arrangements that take place during term-time only in line with the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, paragraphs 311-314, September 2023.

Young people must know they will be listened to and believed if they report any concerns. They must know that when on work experience, they can report to a DSL in their school or any member of staff by phone, email, text, or in person, at any time. The member of staff arranging the work experience must ensure this is understood by the student beforehand. (Pupils will attend a preparation session with the careers advisor)

10.3 Schools must ask employers/providers to provide a signed agreement to the following:

If, whilst on work experience, a student discloses anything that gives you reason to suspect that they may be at risk of harm, you should:

- Listen carefully and take what is being said seriously.
- Tell the student you have a duty to report concerns;
- Tell the student you cannot promise confidentiality.

Write down what the student says in their own words and record the date of the conversation

- Contact the student’s school or college as soon as possible.
- The school will ask you to follow this up with a written report with details of the time, date, and what happened

Work Experience Providers will sign a Employers Agreement of Disclosure.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

All students who attend work experience will be asked to evaluate and reflect on their experiences. This is in the form of a work experience journal. In addition, the work experience programme is reviewed by SMT and the Careers Guidance Adviser who is responsible for work experience. This review is based on evidence from students and placement providers.

Other Policies and Documents that are relevant to this policy:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2023

Appendix 1 Employer Guidance

Positive role models: During the work experience, the employer acts in a mentor capacity and therefore needs to act as an appropriate role model with due regard for appropriate conduct with learners. It is therefore important to:

Act as an appropriate role model

- Value a learner's contributions and opinions
- Encourage them to reach their desired goal and
- Listen to the learner and discuss relevant topics
- Ensure the learner feels supported and safe in the working environment

It is also important that work experience supervisors are not put in a vulnerable position, so it is suggested that where possible liaison with learners should:

- Take place in an open space with other people present where possible
- Be within appropriate working hours
- Consider if questions asked about personal or family life are of an appropriate nature.

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