



Mighty Oaks Academy Trust

Work Experience Policy

Review Date: September 2022



Introduction

Work experience is defined as: 'A placement on employer's premises in which a person carries out a particular task or duty, or a range of tasks or duties, more or less as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.'

At Mighty Oaks Multi-Academy Trust we recognise that work experience offers pupils and students a work and learning opportunity and is a valuable and essential part of their personal and professional development. It supports the principle of work experience as a means of working closer with the community it serves.

School/College work experience placements

We work closely with our local secondary schools and colleges and take a maximum of 2 pupils per year group for work experience at a time, usually during the autumn and summer terms. This is generally for a period of two weeks. Students under school leaving age may take part only in schemes for which the arrangements have been made as part of a student's education by the student's school on behalf of their governing body.

Definitions

A young person is someone under the age of 18 years.

A child is anyone who has not yet reached the official age at which they may leave school, just before or just after their 16th birthday (minimum school leaving age).

Mighty Oaks Multi-Academy Trust are legally required to take particular account of the young person's lack of experience of workplace safety and the additional problems that may be caused by stress, strain, or fatigue.

Pupils under 16 are not required to be cleared via the DBS disclosure; however, anyone coming into school to work with children unsupervised who are over the age of 16 must be cleared prior to the start of their work placement. Generally, the college, 6th Form or university that the pupil/student attends would organise this.

Selection

Pupils are requested to apply for a placement in writing to the Head of School, stating the dates required and any particular areas of focus they would like to assist with i.e. Physical Education. We will select the pupils according to their commitment and enthusiasm and not discriminate against race, religion or ability.

Ex-pupils, although familiar to the academy, would still be subject to this application procedure.

Risks

The obligation to undertake risk assessment and act on the findings rests primarily the school accepting the work-experience candidate. This risk assessment is designed to highlight any potential risk that could present a danger to the health and safety of a young person who is entering the School for work experience. This is in addition to any other risk assessment carried out during standard health and safety procedures. Young persons are considered to be particularly at risk because of their lack of maturity, experience and awareness. There is evidence that the young are more likely to expose themselves to risk not only through ignorance but also by deliberate intent. Their lack of physical and psychological development means that they are more susceptible to workplace hazards. Examples of

such hazards include musculoskeletal problems through manual handling and poor ergonomics. In essence, it is important to remember that young people will not be able to undertake the same work as an adult and appropriate allowances must be made.

Our Trust undertakes a variety of work, the majority of which can be classified as low risk. The School does however undertake some higher risk activities such as maintenance and facilities work. Additionally, within the Trust's buildings certain higher risk tasks are undertaken by contractors including catering and cleaning. Under no circumstances is a young person permitted to undertake any of these higher risk tasks.

Please see Risk Assessments for Work Experience.

Induction

A member of the Senior Leadership or Management Team will carry out an initial induction prior to commencement of the work placement. During the induction, the senior member will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out, advise the student of health and safety issues and complete all relevant documentation. The induction will also cover hours of work; confidentiality; data protection; Child Protection; expected standards of behaviour and who is responsible for supervision and mentoring. An escorted walk of the emergency fire evacuation procedures including the locations of the nearest exits and the assembly point should be undertaken. Information on the accident reporting system and location of First Aider should also be given. This will also include a brief induction with the student concerning the mentor the student will work with, the school team, working environment and type of work they may be involved in. They must ensure that the student is accompanied at all times and should not be left alone and not put in any danger, e.g. climbing ladders.

Training

A 'mentor' will be assigned to each work experience student; in effect this will usually be a member of the team they are working alongside. The mentor is responsible for any relevant training, e.g. use of a computer, Photocopier, caretaking equipment etc and will co-ordinate a programme of work and experience for the period of the placement. Once the young person commences work regular checks should be made to ensure that the young person is able to cope with the workload given and the hours of work required.

Manual Handling

Movement of heavy objects is carried out by the Site Manager and should not be undertaken by young persons. Young Persons will be protected from exposure to tasks involving lifting or carrying.

Additional Needs

If the young person has a physical or mental additional needs we need to take account of this in order that additional and suitable measures are taken to safeguard the individual's safety. A physical or mental additional need includes visionary or audible, epileptic seizures or a restriction on an individual's mobility e.g. wheelchair user, walking aides, etc.

We recognise our duties under the Disability Discrimination Act and will undertake all reasonable measures to accommodate these needs. It is the responsibility of the Head of School and/or Trust Business Manager to ascertain any additional measures required necessary to accommodate for the physical or mental additional needs of the young person e.g. fire evacuation procedures.