



## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

### WORK EXPERIENCE STATEMENT

#### **Introduction**

This statement should be read in conjunction with Learning Opportunities Careers Education and Guidance policy statement.

Students have different career guidance needs at different stages. Advice and support are therefore tailored to the needs of each student. Careers and work experience embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.

Learning Opportunities approach to work experience is an ongoing process that requires flexibility, as programmes need to adapt to the changing cohort of students. We believe that it is essential that students with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) are provided with experiences to increase their opportunities and help them gain belief and confidence in their abilities.

Despite additional challenges in securing placements, we are committed to ensuring that high quality placements are accessed. We believe that it is essential that we equip students with the skills to help them progress onto post 16 education / training providers, gain meaningful employment and which will ultimately facilitate independent living. Raising awareness of the options available and supporting students in accessing these opportunities is essential.

Work related learning forms part of our personalised curriculum for students in Key Stage 4 where it offers students a valued opportunity to practise key skills learned in other areas of the curriculum. Programmes are either arranged as a block, or where more suited to a student's needs, an extended placement is agreed. Experiences can either include, work shadowing, volunteering roles and / or a degree of supervision to support the student to access the placement in order to develop their confidence.

We strive to tailor programmes from a highly structured programme delivered on a 1:1 basis, to a more pastoral approach which may be more appropriate for our students with identified communication & Interaction / cognition & learning needs. Both offer development of confidence and self-esteem. Whichever route, preparation is key to achieving a successful placement. Planning includes, ensuring that the student is well supported and has time to plan and consider the placement making sure there is understanding, and that expectations are acknowledged and agreed.

Intrinsic to our programme is to prepare and debrief the employer. We always arrange an introductory visit with the student. Communication continues throughout the placement, which can help encourage the employer to host again and to improve planning for future placements.

#### **Legal requirements and best practice**

There are certain legal requirements and recommended best practices that are in place to ensure the safety of all parties involved in a work placement. The main areas are:

- The Health and Safety (Training and Employment) Regulations 1990 which state that all those receiving training or work experience from an employer in the workplace are deemed to be 'employees' for the purposes of Health and Safety legislation. This legislation imposes responsibilities on the employer but also on the student as an 'employee': - To take responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do or do not do. - To co-operate with the employer and to follow instructions on Health and Safety.

- Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, an employer has a responsibility to ensure that young people are not exposed to risk due to: - lack of experience - being unaware of existing or potential risks and/ or - lack of maturity
- Risk Assessment - The employer will be asked to confirm that a risk assessment will be completed for the duties being undertaken by the student, taking into account the age and limited experience and that the key findings will be communicated to the student before the commencement of the placement.
- The employer will be informed of any medical conditions the student has, which could result in an increased risk to the student or an employee's health and safety during the placement. The employer will then be able to identify any significant risk and the necessary control measures put in place to ensure the safety of the student.
- Employer's Liability Insurance covers the firm's legal ability for injuries sustained by employees (including students on work experience) whilst at work. Confirmation will be requested and received that the prospective 'employer' does have Employer's Liability Insurance. The employer must notify their insurers that they participate in work experience placements.
- Motor Vehicle Insurance - If the student will travel with an employee or their supervisor during the placement, it is essential that the vehicle is insured appropriately to cover the work experience student for business travel.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) - In the vast majority of placements, as the employer/ employees involved will not have regular unsupervised access with the student there is no need for DBS checks to take place. However, a DBS check is required where a student will have substantial unsupervised contact with an employee or supervisor on a 1:1 basis, particularly if located in an isolated environment.

### **Safeguarding**

Our 'duty of care' extends to all students who undertake work experience. We will:

- consider the level of supervision
- ask the employer providing the work placement to ensure that any person working alone with a student is suitable to do so
- identify actions to be taken, when and by whom, if child protection issues are raised prior to, during or after placement
- provide students with clear advice on who to contact in case of concerns, issues or emergencies.
- risk assessments will be in place and control measures shared with relevant parties.