

Highfields School

Year 10 Work Experience

Preparing for Work Experience
and FAQs



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What is work experience?

Work experience is an opportunity for year 10 students to spend time in unpaid work with an employer in the workplace. It gives them an opportunity to gain experience within a business environment, learn new skills, gain confidence in their ability, relate their learning to the workplace and help them make decisions about their future.

Not only is it an opportunity to learn directly about the working environment, but it also enables students to relate their academic learning to the workplace. For some students, work experience can be the opportunity to understand what skills and knowledge they need to succeed throughout their working lives. Students will learn to communicate with people older than themselves and it will help them gain confidence and maturity before they leave school.

Contacting employers to enquire about placements

This can be done in different ways depending on the business you are contacting.

1. Letter
2. Email
3. Telephone call
4. In person visit - conversation

Whichever way you contact an employer you should do so in a formal manner and ensure you are polite and include the information that will enable them to give you an accurate response. Make sure you inform them of:

- Why you want to do work experience with them. What is it about that specific company that makes you want to go there – Is it relevant to your future career options or interests?
- They must be aware of the dates of your work experience – 4 July to the 8 July.
- Include why they would benefit from having you for the week – are you a hardworking and reliable person that would be able to bring a positive energy and enthusiasm to the work environment?
- Make sure you ask the employer to let you know if they can or cannot accommodate you and find out if they have Public Liability Insurance. Try to get confirmation of this and you offer for the placement in writing.
- Make sure you include a way they should contact you to let you know if they can offer you a place or not. You can use your school email.

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What steps does the school take to ensure the safety of my son/daughter while they are on work experience?

The safety of your child is paramount. The following systems are in place to safeguard their interests:

- All proposed work experience placements are inspected and health & safety approved by Derbyshire County Council before any student is allowed to go there on work experience. The placements are also monitored regularly to ensure that they remain a safe environment for students on work experience. Government Guidelines will be followed regarding any changes due to COVID-19.
- When your child first arrives at the work experience placement they will have a formal induction with the company. This is to make sure they understand some basic workplace rules and know how to keep themselves safe while they are on the employer's premises.
- For the time they are on the work experience placement your child will be given a named supervisor who will have responsibility for looking after them. The supervisor will ensure your child conducts themselves in a way which will help them to stay safe in the workplace.

Can you guarantee that my son/daughter will be able to go to the work placement of their choice?

The school and Derbyshire County Council will do everything possible to ensure that they can go to the work placement of their choice, but this is not always possible. The main reasons why a placement choice is denied are:

- The placement does not meet the required health & safety standard to take a student on work experience.
- The work placement request has been returned to the school too late for them to request a health & safety approval visit from Derbyshire County Council.
- The employer does not have Employers' Liability Insurance.
- The proposed placement is in an occupation which is forbidden for pre-16 work experience.
- The work placement has already been booked by another school for the particular week your child wants to go there on work experience.

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Can my son/daughter find his/her own placement?

Highfields encourages students to find their own work placements.

Does my child have to find a work placement within Derbyshire?

Yes. This is the policy of Highfields School. However, consideration will be given to placements on our borders.

Requesting an **out of county placement** for your child is a lottery. All areas work under the same pressures to get considerable numbers of students out on work experience each year. All organisations give priority to students from their own county and often requests which do not come from their own county's students are refused.

If an out of county placement is preferred, please be aware that there will be an out of county visit fee imposed by Derbyshire County Council that Highfields School cannot be responsible for.

Can my child do a work placement abroad?

No. The Local Authority policy forbids any student to do work experience abroad. Any request for an overseas placement received by Derbyshire County Council will be automatically denied.

Can my child do a placement in our family run business?

Most schools do not allow their students to work in companies that are owned by parents/carers or close family relatives. This is because it is important that your child has the opportunity to have experience of being in a different environment and meeting new people. If they are working with family members, this may limit their opportunities.

Highfields **does** allow a work placement in a family run business, but Derbyshire County Council will **not** consider approving it unless there is a current Employer Liability Insurance in place that also covers the student for the time they would be on the placement.

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If Derbyshire County Council will not approve the work placement my child wants can we send them to this employer anyway?

No. Highfields will only use work placements that have been approved by Derbyshire County Council and will not allow any student to use placements that are not approved. To do so could put your son/daughter at risk.

Transport

Unless specifically stated by the employer, there will be no assistance with travel to the placement. Please be aware of this.

Hours of work

All students will be informed of their hours of work and other relevant information. Students will be expected to work the hours stated. This can be longer than normal school hours. Please be aware of this.

Staff visits

If the placement is in Derbyshire we will try to allocate a member of school staff to contact the employer to carry out a visit whilst the student is on placement.

If the placement is out of county or on our borders a telephone call will be made to check on the student.

This process helps to support your son/daughter during their placement and is also an opportunity for your child to discuss their progress and how they are coping on work placement.

What if my son/daughter has a problem while they are on work experience?

If your child has a problem while they are on work experience please contact the school's main reception. If necessary, the school will inform Derbyshire County Council if it is a matter that needs to be taken up with the employer.

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What can I do if my child experiences problems or I am unhappy with the conditions on the work placement?

If you have any concerns about your son's/daughter's work experience please contact reception at school who will try to address your concerns. If necessary they will contact Derbyshire County Council for further investigation.

What should I do if my child is ill or due to unforeseen circumstances has to miss time at their work placement?

If your son/daughter is not well enough to go to their work placement you should contact school as you would normally and also the employer.

Where can I get more information?

For more information please email the workexperience team at:

workexperience@highfields.derbyshire.sch.uk



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GET EXPERIENCE

**STAND OUT
FROM THE CROWD**



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