



Business & Education
Together

Work Experience

Parent and Carer Guide



Introduction

This booklet offers general guidance and practical advice relating to work experience placements for students in their last years of compulsory schooling. It is intended to provide parents and carers with an overview of the work experience programme and answer some frequently asked questions.

B&E Together Ltd (B&E) is the leading organisation for delivering work experience in South Yorkshire. B&E works with over 8,000 businesses across South Yorkshire and supports them in establishing structured programmes for work experience placements. Therefore, it is intended that parents and guardians can use this guide to ensure their son or daughter maximises the benefits of their work experience placement to make certain it is a quality learning experience.

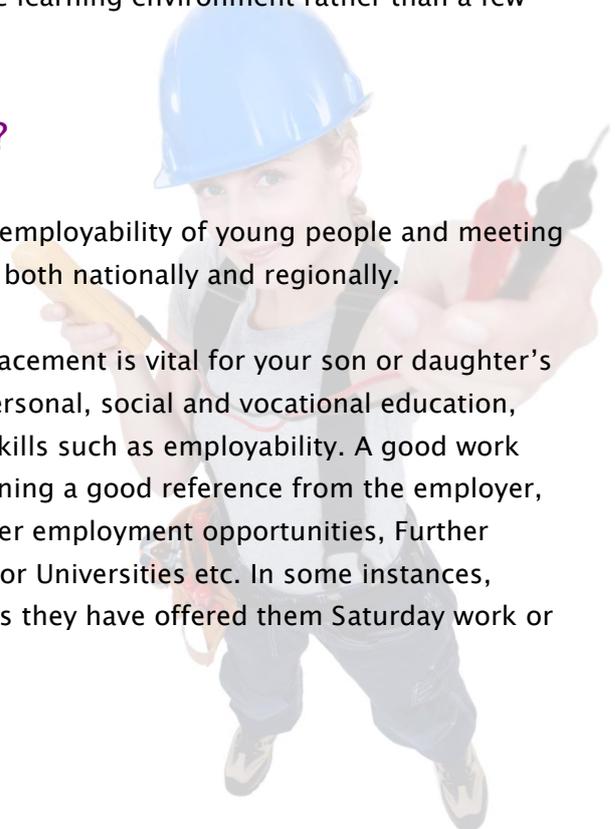
What is work experience?

According to the Department for Children, Schools and Families work experience can be defined as: a placement on employers' premises in which a learner carries out a particular task or duty, or range of tasks or duties, more or less as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience. In other words, it is experience of the world of work with specific learning aims and objectives that your son or daughters' school normally establish. Essentially, work experience is an educational activity, which is best thought of as time in an alternative learning environment rather than a few days off school!

Why is work experience important?

The Government is committed to improving the employability of young people and meeting the recruitment needs of prospective employers both nationally and regionally.

As such, having a successful work experience placement is vital for your son or daughter's future success. In addition to enhancing their personal, social and vocational education, work experience provides a solid basis for key skills such as employability. A good work experience can lead to your son or daughter gaining a good reference from the employer, which will be of good use when applying for other employment opportunities, Further Education or Higher Education such as Colleges or Universities etc. In some instances, employers have been so impressed with students they have offered them Saturday work or even an apprenticeship.



When does my son or daughter's work experience take place?

The exact dates for work experience vary from school to school, however it will always occur from year 10 to year 13 and the school will inform you of the exact dates once they have been agreed with B&E. The length of each student's work experience placement is normally 2 weeks, although some specialist placements can be significantly longer or shorter depending upon the needs of the student. As a rule, parents and carers can expect their son or daughter's placement to be anywhere between 1 and 2 weeks in length.

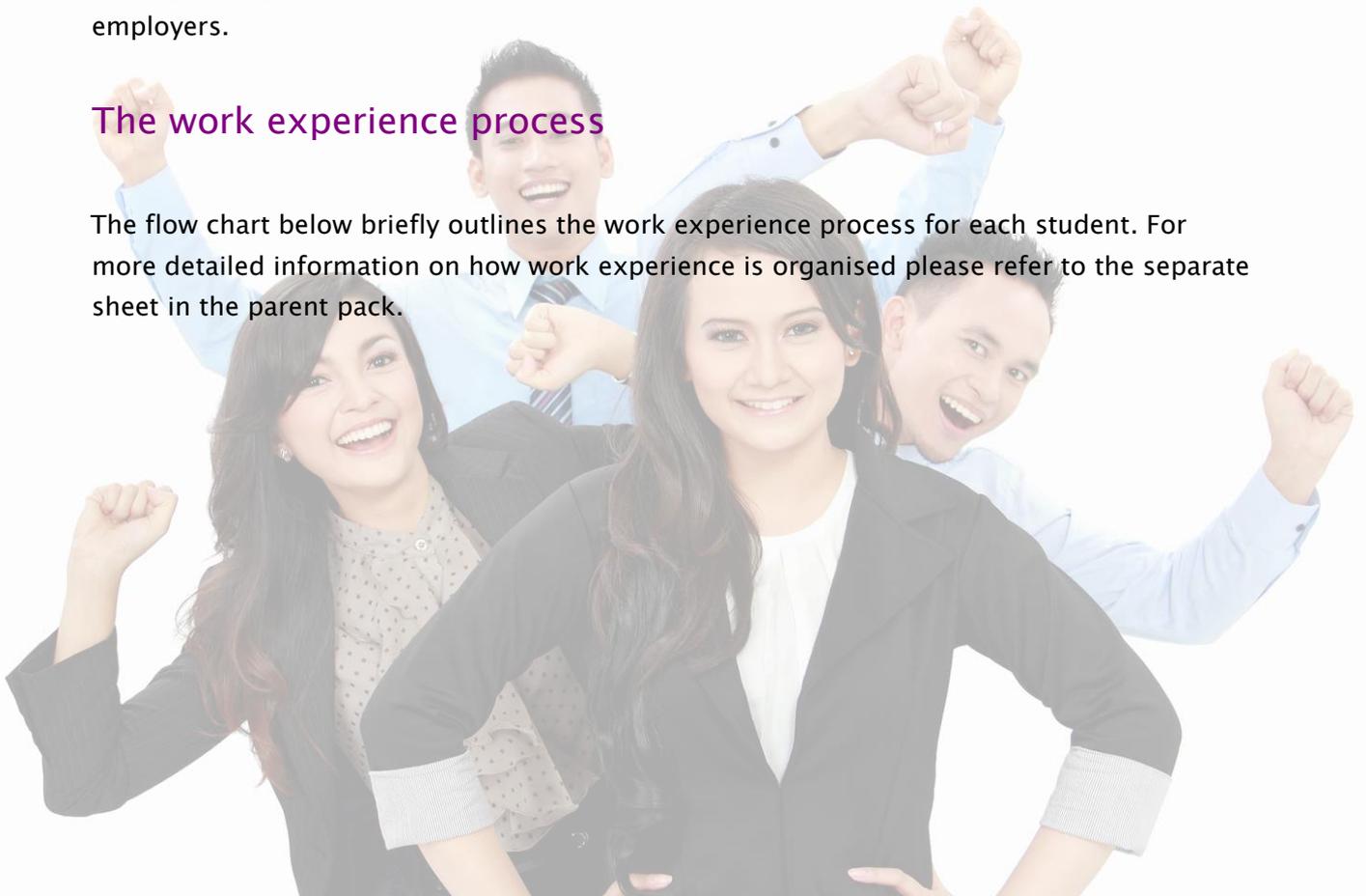
What can I expect my son or daughter to do on work experience?

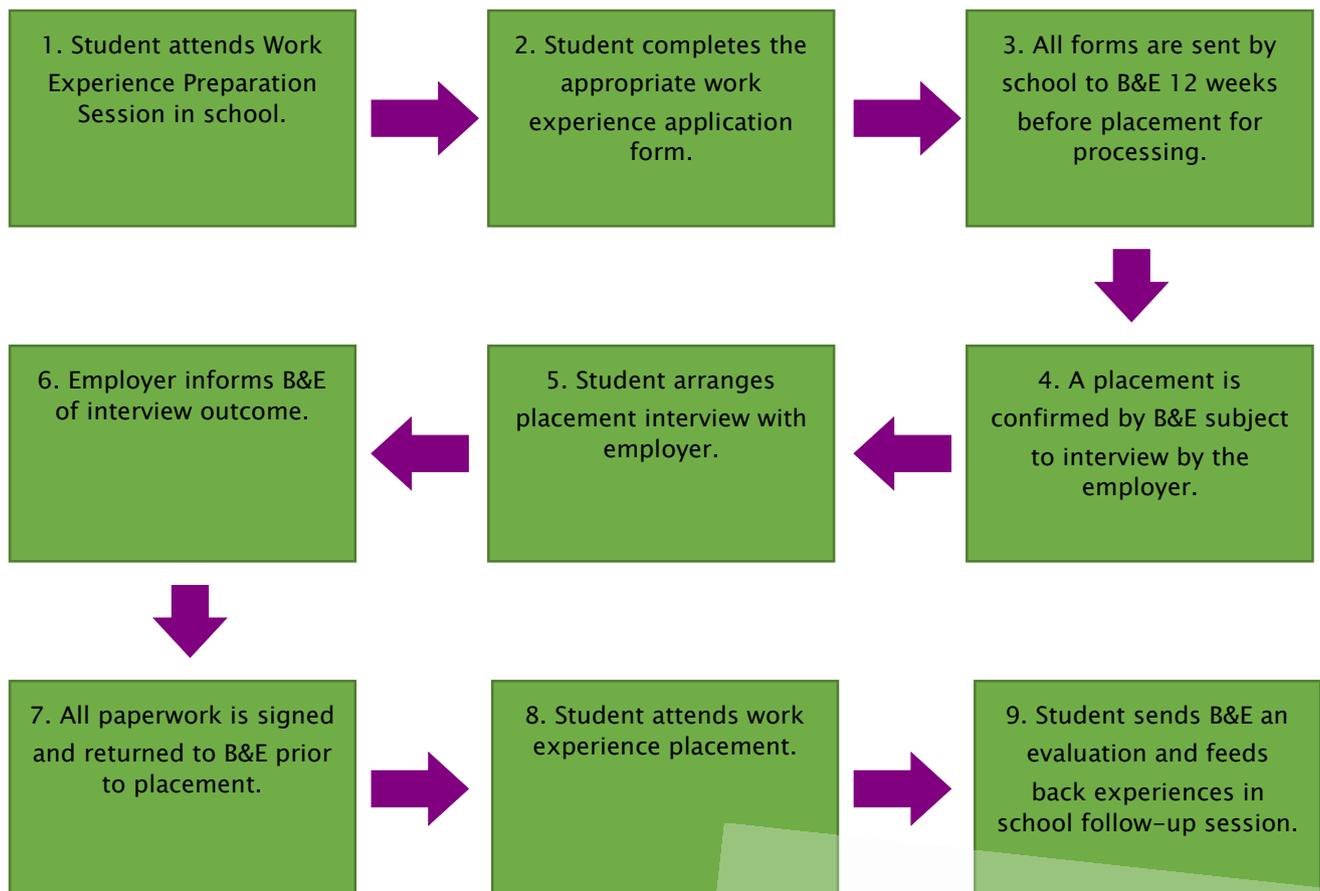
Whilst on work experience, students will normally carry out a range of tasks or duties which can involve work shadowing, work observation or visits, work-based projects, attendance to company briefings or meetings, undertake mock interviews or participate in a mentoring programme. Generally employers will treat students as though they were new employees, however emphasis is always made on the learning aspects of work experience in order to enable your son or daughter to gain a deeper understanding and therefore be better prepared for life in the adult work place.

For some industries, in the interests of your child's health & safety the majority of their role will be to work shadow. For example, if your child has a placement in an engineering firm and will be surrounded by dangerous machinery that they are not trained to use, it is more than likely that they would shadow an engineer to watch what they do and learn from them. Any 'hands-on' work would be mostly clerical. Please note that due to work experience being part of your son or daughters' education they are not allowed to be paid by employers.

The work experience process

The flow chart below briefly outlines the work experience process for each student. For more detailed information on how work experience is organised please refer to the separate sheet in the parent pack.



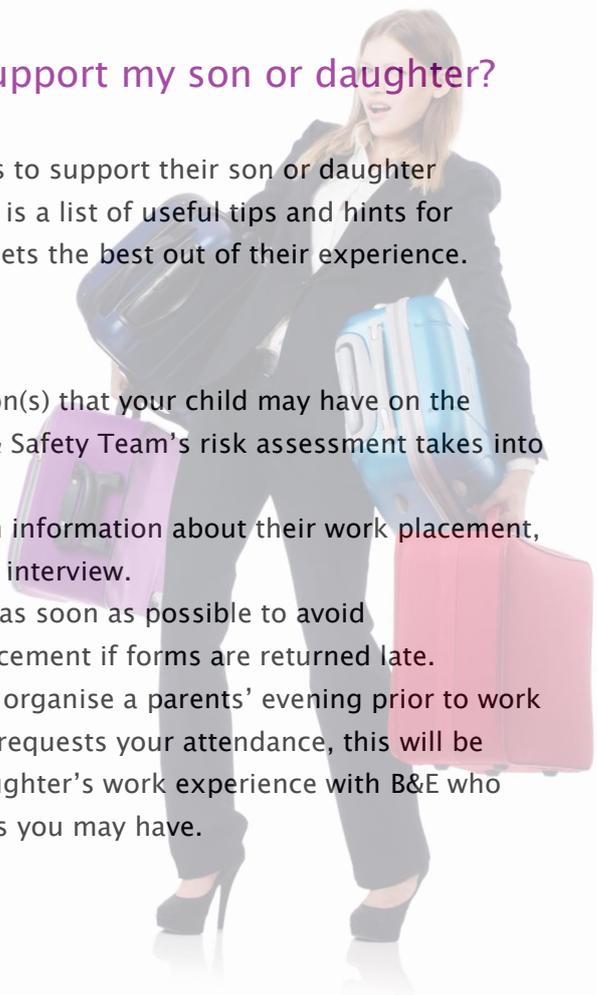


What can I do as a parent/carer to support my son or daughter?

B&E Together Ltd encourages all parents and carers to support their son or daughter through the whole work experience process. Below is a list of useful tips and hints for parents and guardians to make certain your child gets the best out of their experience.

Before your child's placement:

- Make sure you identify any medical condition(s) that your child may have on the application form – this ensures the Health & Safety Team's risk assessment takes into account your child's health issue(s).
- Encourage your son or daughter to research information about their work placement, as this will be useful when they attend their interview.
- Sign the consent form and return to school as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. We cannot guarantee a placement if forms are returned late.
- Attend Parents' Evenings; most schools will organise a parents' evening prior to work experience being undertaken. If the school requests your attendance, this will be your opportunity to discuss your son or daughter's work experience with B&E who will be able to address any specific concerns you may have.



During your child's placement:

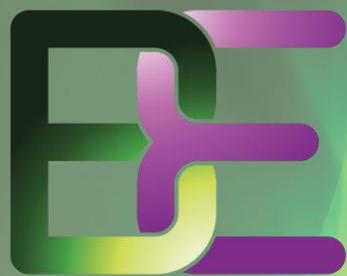
- Ensure that your child attends their work placement at the agreed times, punctuality is important to most businesses.
- Encourage your son or daughter to complete their work experience journal which will be essential if the school does a follow-up session. It will also be a valuable resource for applying for Higher Education, Further Education or future work.
- Provide emotional support and encouragement; they may not like it at first. The work environment is very different to school or they may feel overwhelmed with new experiences.
- Remember how you felt on your first day at work? Promote a positive attitude.
- Remind your son or daughter that they are guests. Businesses do not get paid to take them on work experience and accept them within their company as a goodwill gesture.
- Please contact the school and the employer as early as possible if your son or daughter is unable to attend their work experience for whatever reason.

After your child's placement:

- Encourage your son or daughter to thank the business for taking them on work experience.
- Make sure your child completes an evaluation of their experience and sends this into school as soon as possible after their placement.

Useful Websites for Parents, Carers and Guardians

Apprenticeships	www.apprenticeships.org.uk
Child Protection	www.crb.gov.uk www.isa-gov.org.uk
B&E Together Ltd	www.be-together.co.uk
Safe Learner website	www.safelearner.info/learners/index.aspx
Every Child Matters	www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
Health & Safety Executive	www.hse.gov.uk
Rospa	www.rospa.com



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