

Thorpe St Andrew School

PSHEE, Citizenship and Careers
Information, Advice and Guidance

Getting Started with Work Experience

A Guide to Securing the Best Placement for You

2011

Getting Started

We expect your two-week Work Experience this coming October to be a very positive thing, giving you an insight into the world of work. It might give you a chance to try out a career; to help with coursework; or for you to get a part-time or Christmas job afterwards.

When is Work Experience?

Monday 10th October to Friday 21st October 2011
- two weeks before the October half-term holiday.

What do students hope to get from doing Work Experience?

Lots of students last year felt that Work Experience gave them the chance to develop their confidence in working with new people and unfamiliar surroundings.

When asked if this year's Year 10 students should have the same opportunity, a sample of Year 11 and 12 students said 'Yes'; it was a worthwhile experience.

Don't forget to return the Parent/Carer Consent Form

Have a clear reason for where you want to go and why you want to go there?

"I want to work at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital because I'd like to be a nurse – particularly helping children."

"I'm choosing to apply to Anglia Television because I'm studying GCSE Media and I'm hoping by doing Work Experience there; it'll help me with my course."

"I want to work at Boots, 'cos I'm interested in Retail and would like a career in Retail in the future. I'd also like a Christmas job too, as I'll be 16 in November!"

"I'd like to work in a garage dealing with trucks. For that reason, I'm choosing to go to Orwell Trucks where they work with Mercedes Benz."

"I'm on a course at Easton College working with animals and would eventually like to be a Veterinary Nurse, that's why I'm choosing to go to the Anchorage Veterinary Hospital".

How can a placement be arranged?

Self-Generation Applications – All students will be asked to organise a placement themselves with the help and support of family and friends, as well as Lynda De Sousa and Graham Fish in school.

Students will need to contact an employer giving reasons why they would like to complete work experience with their organisation. You will find examples of letters and CVs at the end of this booklet.

Help and Advice

Lynda De Sousa
Work Experience Coordinator
497723 workexp@thorpe-careers.org.uk

Graham Fish
Careers Coordinator
497711 gfish7nrj@nsix.org.uk

www.thorpe-careers.org.uk website

Job Club

Monday to Thursday
lunchtimes in the
Careers Resource
Centre, South Site, for
burning questions,
help and advice.

Lynda DeSousa is
also available at
breaktimes too, to
answer any questions.

Self-Generation

There are no fixed rules about the way to organise your own placement. Students last year sorted out their placements in a number of ways:

- **Popping into shops, hotels, nurseries and asking staff directly**
- **Writing letters to potential employers, sending a CV**
- **Asking a family member to enquire at work**
- **Telephoning or emailing companies or organisations**
- **Choosing a placement from a list of previous years' Work Experience placements**

Some students will be asked to attend an interview. Some of these will be in a formal setting; some informal, by way of a look around the premises, introduction to other workers, followed by a chat with the Boss.

Once you get a firm offer – either in writing or verbally – simply send to your employer a copy of the Self-Generated Placement Insurance form (enclosed in this pack) for them to complete and return to Lynda De Sousa at school.

Pros about Self-Generation

You're in control, as you can start organising your placement now

You have the total freedom to choose where you want to go for your placement

People who Self-Generate tend to have a better time because after all the hard work getting the placement, it's a real sense of achievement and they own their placement!



Cons about Self-Generation

You might not get the placement you want because the company doesn't do Work Experience

You might have to send several letters; make many telephone calls or visit lots of places in order to get the placement you want

It can be disappointing if you don't hear from the employer having sent them a letter



How to Contact Employers in Writing

When writing a letter of application or sending an email enquiring about Work Experience placements, try to follow these basic rules:

- **Write clearly, stating exactly what you want; don't waffle.**
- **Write in paragraphs.**
- **Draft your letter or email in rough first.**
- **Check spelling and grammar; ask someone to proof-read it.**
- **If hand-writing a letter, use black ink and write on plain A4 paper; use a piece of lined paper underneath; never use paper with holes down the side – it looks cheap!**
- **Say why you'd like to do Work Experience with the organisation; state what skills and interests you have that would make you the best person for the placement! Why should they choose you? Don't be big-headed though!**
- **If sending a letter, write your name below your signature.**
- **Avoid slang names.**
- **Avoid contractions such as 'I'm', 'don't', 'can't' or 'won't'; write the full versions 'I am', 'do not', 'cannot' and 'will not'.**
- **Never use text language.**
- **Make sure you know the name, job title (and full address, including the postcode – if writing a letter), of who and where you're writing to, otherwise your letter could be lost.**
- **Letters should be folded into three, put into a clean envelope and posted using the correct name, job title and address; make sure you use a stamp – employers won't want to pay for your letter.**

Remember that you can always telephone the organisation to find out who you should send a letter/email to. Get the person's job title and address of the organisation.

Remember no two letters/emails should be the same. If you're applying to several organisations, each of your letters/emails should be tailored to the individual organisations. Do some research about the organisation and refer to it in your letter/emails.

Remember to keep a copy of your letters/emails.



This sample letter can be altered to suit you and then posted or emailed as an attachment...

Check out www.thorpe-careers.org.uk website to download a copy.

John Travis
12 Davey Road
Norwich
NR4 3DF

You can decide whether to include your home and mobile number, and email address.

01603 498890
07770 542443

jtravis@bsinterweb.co.uk

Monday 3rd March 2011

Mrs J Edwards
Personnel Manager
W Stores
Bloomberg St
Norwich
NR1 3DR

Do make sure you have the correct name, job title and full address.

Dear Mrs Edwards,

I am currently a student in year 10 at Thorpe St Andrew School and I have been given the opportunity to organise my own Work Experience placement for two weeks in October – Monday 11th October to Friday 22nd October 2009.

State why you'd like to do your placement there; could you relate it to a future career, or school project?

I would like to do my placement with W Stores as I have an interest in retail and study GCSE Business Studies. I am hoping to use the opportunity to help me with my GCSE coursework. I already have a part-time job in a local shop and enjoy working with employees and customers.

I've enclosed a copy of my CV.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

J Travis
J Travis

A sample CV that can be altered to suit you and then posted or emailed as an attachment...

Stick to two sides maximum and avoid overlapping a section where possible. You want your CV to stand out for the right reasons if you want to get the job you're after. Keep it easy to read and tidy looking...it subliminally says a lot about you that you want them to think!

Name: Mr John Luke Travis
Date of Birth: 12 February 1993
Age: 15
Address: 12 Davey Road
Norwich
NR4 3DF
Home: 01603 498890
Mobile: 07770 542443
Email: jtravis@bsinterweb.co.uk

Check out www.thorpe-careers.org.uk website to download a copy.

Key Skills

- Noted ability to work well with others, including customers, and have had leadership experience
- Experience of using Microsoft Office software: Word, Excel and PowerPoint

Education and Qualifications

2005- present	Thorpe St Andrew School, Laundry Lane, Norwich NR7 0XS GCSEs (*current levels of performance)
	English C PE C
	Maths B Ethics C
	Science B Catering C
	History B
2008- present	City College Norwich, Ipswich Road, Norwich NR2 2LJ Construction NVQ Level 1
2008	St Johns Ambulance, Norwich First Aid Qualification
2007	Associated Board of Music Piano, Grade 5

Work Experience

2008 – present JT's Newsagent, Borrofield Road, Norwich NR4 4DE
General Assistant
Responsible for helping customers, stocking shelves and checking current stock

CV continued...

Hobbies and Interests

I enjoy listening to a music, ...

Think about what your hobbies say about you. Enjoys socialising can sound like an out-going person but also like one who is always out with their friends drinking! Sound varied and so you can emphasize the personal skills you have acquired doing that hobby ie rock climbing means you can talk about keeping fit but also the concentration involved and determination to reach goals set. Include dates of how long you have been doing a hobby and any qualifications obtained.

Referees

Mr G Jones
Form Tutor
Thorpe St Andrew School
Laundry Lane
Norwich
NR7 OXS

Ms J Garrett
Piano Teacher
45 Wensum Drive
Norwich
NR3 2DT

Place these at the end of your CV and near the bottom. It's ok if they are in a smaller font. Just ensure the main info is a decent size.

Do everything you can to make your CV readable and that it maintains the employer's interest. Give them the truth but in an attractively written way but which leaves plenty for you to add to in the interview

So you've got an interview?

First impressions count, so attend the interview on time and appropriately dressed – smart clothes, no jeans. Guys – you don't have to wear a suit; a shirt and tie with trousers will be fine. Girls – something comfortable and smart will do just fine. No trainers and if shoes can cope with polish, use it.

Be prepared to talk. A simple yes or no to a question will not do. The interviewer wishes to obtain information from you, sometimes of a factual nature and sometimes in order to know your views and simply answering questions with yes or no will not help him or her form an impression of you. The interviewer might ask you about your ambitions, or hobbies and interests, and any other work experience you've had.

Answer questions fully but briefly. Almost as bad as giving yes or no answers to questions is to ramble on aimlessly.

Speak clearly. Do not mumble or speak so quietly the interviewer cannot hear you.

Refer to the interviewer by name – this is polite (make sure you catch the name when you are introduced).

Smile occasionally and try to appear cheerful – no-one wants to take on a miserable person!

Look at the interviewer. It irritates interviewers when candidates continually look at the floor or the ceiling. If there are several people interviewing look at the person asking the question but occasionally glance at the other members of the panel.

Answer questions honestly.

If you do not understand a question say so and ask if it could be put another way – the interviewer will not mind doing this.

Take a moment to think about questions – this demonstrates that you are taking the questions seriously.

At the end of the interview thank the interviewer for seeing you.



Worried about telephoning employers?

This can be really daunting at first, but as long as you're prepared, you'll do fine. Keep calm.

Make sure you have the right number – check directory enquiries or the organisation's website. If you're worried about calling and you ring the wrong number, it'll dent your confidence; so get it right first time!

Saying that, it is important that you take care with telephone calls – your interview may begin the moment you are through to the Personnel Department!

Before you ring, make a note of all the points you wish to bring up, and have a pencil and piece of paper handy so that you can make notes – particularly if you're ringing about a name or an address.

Speak clearly and try not to sound timid or over confident.

Ensure that you're put through to the right person. If you don't know the name of the person you need to speak to, ask to be put through to the Personnel Department and then make it clear you are phoning about Work Experience.

If you do not know the area in which the organisation is located ask how to get there – you will immediately create a bad impression if you arrive late for an interview.

Be polite throughout the telephone conversation – at this stage the employer has nothing to go on but the way you sound.

Always thank the employer for speaking with you.



FINALLY... Remember there is help available in school about everything to do with Work Experience... Job Club, email contacts and website advice. Do get in touch if you have any worries or concerns.

Space for your Notes

Have any initial ideas about where you might like to go and who you could contact?

Try the Yellow Pages or a local search on Google for ideas.

Think about your travel arrangements before you start contacting employers. Would you be able to get to the organisation? Take a look at www.transportdirect.info which is a website that allows users to plan journeys using public transport should you not be able to rely on family, friends, your own bike or feet!

