



ORMISTON
DENES ACADEMY

Work Experience Guide For Students, Parents and Carers

What is a work experience placement, and when will it take place?

A work experience placement is primarily an educational activity which gives students an insight into the world of work in Year 10. All students at Ormiston Denes Academy are expected to undertake work experience during the week of Monday 29th June to Friday 3rd July 2026.

It is the responsibility of the student to source and organise their placement. Students will be guided through the process, however they are responsible for the organisation and follow-up. Not only is the actual work experience invaluable, but the process of organising your own work experience is incredibly beneficial.

The aims and benefits of work experience

- To give students a chance to find out what being at work is like, and to experience a new real-life working environment in a structured and supervised way.
- To add relevance to the school curriculum, and provide useful work skills that are recognised in the workplace.
- To help build confidence, self-esteem, communication, life and problem-solving skills, and learning to accept challenges.
- It can provide a new referee to add to a CV, and a future employment opportunity.
- It allows young people to:
 - 1.Experience the organisation of the workplace, work processes, social relations at work and work expectations.
 - 2.Experience differences in work patterns compared to school.
 - 3.Experience the disciplines of work - timekeeping, regulations, the importance of teamwork, commitment and the chance to use initiative.
 - 4.Experience the conditions of work - the environment, longer hours, the fringe benefits.
 - 5.Experience the roles performed by management and other staff.
 - 6.Understand how our academy values of Ready, Responsible and Respectful are important in any working environment.

Students will have the following responsibilities in organising work experience

- approach a business about the possibility of undertaking work experience at their company.
- follow-up with prospective employers.
- communicate with their parents about work experience.
- **only when a placement has been agreed by the employer**, can students then upload and log their placement through Unifrog (link can be found on school website).

School Contacts:

Name	Role	Location	Email
Mrs Richings	Work Experience & Projects Manager	Careers Office	jrichings@ormistonden.es.co.uk
Mr Cooper	Careers Lead	S3	ocooper@ormistonden.es.co.uk
Miss Smith-Howell	Head of Year 10	Year Team Office	HaSmith-Howell@ormistonden.es.co.uk

Work experience process and timeframe:

Date	Item	Responsibility
July 2026	'Preparation for Year 10 Work Experience' workshop as part of Enrichment days	Careers Department
September 26	INSET Work Experience session	Careers Department
September 26 to 27th March 27	Students identify and make contact with employers of interest Work Placement confirmed by employer Upload and log placements onto Unifrog. https://www.unifrog.org/	Student Parents/Carer Employer Please note it is the student responsibility for finding a placement, and not the parent/ carer.
27th March 2027	Application deadline	Students Parent/Carer
September 26 to April 27	Work Placement confirmed	Mrs Richings
June 2027	Preparation for Work Experience: Behaviour and Expectations	Careers Department Year 10 team
28th June to 2nd July 27	Work Experience week	Student Employer Parent/Carer
July 27	Debrief, evaluation and thank you letters	Year 10 team

Students: Finding and Choosing Work Experience

ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING:

What am I interested in?

What might I like to do when I leave school?

What do I want to find out more about?

Remember this does not have to be something that you definitely want to do when you leave school – it maybe something that you are interested in and want to investigate more such as nursing, engineering, veterinarian, hospitality.

What do I need to think about when choosing an employer?

- Am I really interested in this?
- What sort of activities am I going to participate in?
- Do I need specific clothing.
- How am I going to get there every day?
- Did the company seem interested in having a work experience student?
- Some companies have application closing dates so you may need to apply early.

Students: Finding and Choosing Work Experience

Ways to find companies:

- Search for the type of company and area on the internet eg. engineering in Lowestoft.
- Research company websites online.
- Ask friends or relatives for advice, or are they able to offer work experience?
- Some companies have work experience programmes – contact their HR department (Human Resources Department).
- Write or email the company an introductory letter or phone them (see examples on following pages).

Students: How to Approach Prospective Employers?

Phone, email, letter or in person are the ways to approach employers.

Keep these tips in mind:

- Make sure you have done your research before making contact.
- Know who you need to make contact with.
- Know about the business, know the work experience dates.
- Where do you want to work within in the business.
- Are you happy to experience different departments.

You will need to find out who to address your correspondence to so make an initial phone call and find out who within the business deals with work experience placements, more often than not it is the Human Resource Department.

If you decide to email or send a letter, state that you will follow-up with a phone call in the following days.

If you do call, make sure to offer if there would be a more convenient time to talk, if they are too busy. Whoever you talk to, write down their name so you have a contact with who you can follow-up with.

A personal phone call at some point in the organisation is the way to go. An email may initially break the ice – but you should follow that up with a phone call a few days later.

The following pages have information about how to make those phone calls, or write emails and letters.

If you need help or want to practice a phone call, come and see a member of the careers team.

Once you have made contact, there is nothing to do but wait. However, make a diary note to follow up with the company after a few days e.g. a week. Be prepared for some companies to say no – some will be unequipped to handle work experience placements, others may be too busy. This is not uncommon and is nothing personal. It's also common for a company simply not to reply.

We would always advise to contact a number of organisations so, if one says no, another may agree to the placement.

It is also really important not to delay in trying to find your placement, as many other students in other schools will also be looking for a placement in the same week as yourself.

Phone Calls

To maximise the success of the call, consider the time and day when you phone. For example, a restaurant will be busy between 11am – 3pm so avoid calling during these time. Be prepared to call more than once if needed as the person you need to speak to may not be available – don't give up after the first attempt.

You can't rehearse a whole conversation, but you can be prepared.

- Practice your introduction – don't rush, be clear, be concise, be engaging.
- Why have you contacted them, why do you want to go there?
- Have a connection – you have read about their company, your parent knows someone there, a teacher/careers adviser recommended them etc.

Phone Conversation Example

Good morning/afternoon (depending on time of day) I am not sure who I need to speak to but my name is [give your name] and I am a Year 10 student studying at Ormiston Denes Academy in Lowestoft. Either..... I was given your details by [state who your contact is] or I read about your company “say how you read about them” or I know [e.g. David Smith] in the [e.g .Marketing] department. I wondered if your company offers Year 10 work experience placements. I am looking for a placement my school's allocated work experience week, which is from 29th June to 2nd July 2026. I am very interested in pursuing a future career in _____ and am looking to experience a range of opportunities within that area, especially _____ If you would prefer I can ring back at a more convenient time, or I could also call in and talk to you about the possible placement at a mutually convenient time. Thank you for your time today and for the information you have given me.	<i>Use their name. If they didn't give one, ask</i> <i>Be clear and speak slowly</i> <i>What is your connection?</i> <i>If you use someone's name, they must give you permission to mention them</i> <i>Purpose of phone call</i> <i>Give examples of why you would like to work at this organisation.</i> <i>Be polite and respectful</i> <i>Finish the conversation by thanking them for their time.</i>
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Make sure you write down people's names, especially the person who is agreeing to your placement, as you will need their details to enter on Unifrog, and you will need to contact them again before the work experience takes place.

Example Email - Requesting a Work Experience Placement

To: [email address] cc: jrichings@ormistonden.es.co.uk Subject: Possible Work Experience Placement Dear [contact name] My name is [your name] and I am a Year 10 student at Ormiston Denes Academy in Lowestoft. I would like to enquire about the possibility of a work experience placement at [give name of company]. I am very interested in [e.g. library and information services] and would like to investigate all that the [e.g. library] has to offer. My hobbies and interests are [refer to anything that will help your application] and I am a member of [e.g. Army Cadets, Guides]. I am more than happy to provide a CV and my school's careers team will be happy to answer any questions you may have concerning the placement. Our work experience week runs from Monday 29th June to Friday 3rd July 2026. Thank you for taking the time to consider my request for Work Experience. I'll be in touch with you again in a few days if I don't hear from you in the meantime. Kind regards, [your name] [your school email address]	<i>Contact person's email address</i> <i>Make sure you know the name of the person you are emailing. If you don't, refer to Dear Sir/Madam</i> <i>Introduce yourself and where you go to school, and the purpose of your email</i> <i>Make sure you express a genuine interest for your chosen company and area of work, which should coincide with your career ambitions</i> <i>Give information about any experiences you have had, or your interests and subjects that you study, perhaps mention some of your skills and qualities</i> <i>Let them know, if they need more information, they can ask you questions</i> <i>State when work experience takes place</i> <i>Thank them for their time and that you will follow up in a few days if you haven't heard from them</i> <i>End with your name and school email address</i>
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Don't forget—for emails and letters:

- Presentation is very important
- Double check your spellings, especially things that don't show up on spell check e.g. names and addresses
- Ask someone else to check your letter before you send it
- Always double-check to make sure you've got the right address and name, and don't forget to customise it for each organisation you send your letter to. Because (unsurprisingly), work experience letters addressed to the wrong person won't impress any employer.
- As it's likely that many local organisations receive a large number of work experience requests, you'll need to place emphasis on your enthusiasm if you want to land your perfect placement.
- To really stand out, show you've done your research, and express an interest in the company's recent developments and successes – you can find this out on their company website.

Example Letter - Requesting a Work Experience Placement

[Your Name] [Your Address] [Your Postcode] [Date] [Contact Person] [Position] [Company Name] [Address] [Postcode] Dear [contact person e.g. Mr Smith] or Sir/Madam, I am a Year 10 student from Ormiston Denes Academy, studying GCSE's in English, Maths and Science alongside my chosen subjects [list options subjects]. I would like to enquire about a potential work experience placement at [company name], which I will be available to carry out for five days in the week commencing 29th June 2026. I would like to work at [company name] because [give reasons for pursuing the placement]. I'm [relevant skills and attributes e.g. reliable, friendly and trustworthy] which can be shown in my [real life examples that demonstrate your skills e.g. paper round, babysitting]. My hobbies and interests are [refer to anything that will help your application] and I am a member of [e.g. Army Cadets, Guides]. As an enthusiastic student with a keen interest in what your organisation does, and to learn and expand my skills, I would be very grateful to be considered for an opportunity at [name of company]. Thank you for taking the time to consider my request for Work Experience. I'll be in touch with you again in a few days if I don't hear from you in the meantime. Yours sincerely [if you know the name of the contact] Yours faithfully [if using Sir/Madam] [Your signature] [Print your name underneath your signature]	<i>Make sure you give your contact details</i> <i>Know who you are writing to</i> <i>Address the name of the person you are writing to</i> <i>Introduce yourself, where you go to school and the purpose of the email</i> <i>State the dates</i> <i>Make sure you express a genuine interest for your chosen company and area of work, which should coincide with your career ambitions</i> <i>Mention some of your skills and qualities and give real-life examples to back each of them up</i> <i>Also mention your hobbies and interests and explain the value they add to your application</i> <i>Thank them for their time and that you will follow-up with a phone call</i> <i>Leave enough space for your signature</i>
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Once you have sent your email/letter, there is nothing to do but wait. However, make a diary note to follow up with the company after a few days. Be prepared for some companies to say no – some will be unequipped to handle work experience placements, others may be too busy. This is not uncommon and is nothing personal. It's also common for a company simply not to reply. Although it's not very pleasant, getting no response is something to prepare for. You can follow up with a call after waiting a reasonable amount of time, but be ready to speak to someone at length about yourself, and be equally ready for them to tell you that they cannot take you on.

Struggling to find a placement? Got any questions?

If you need some advice to help secure your own placement or if you have any questions about work experience, please contact the careers team.

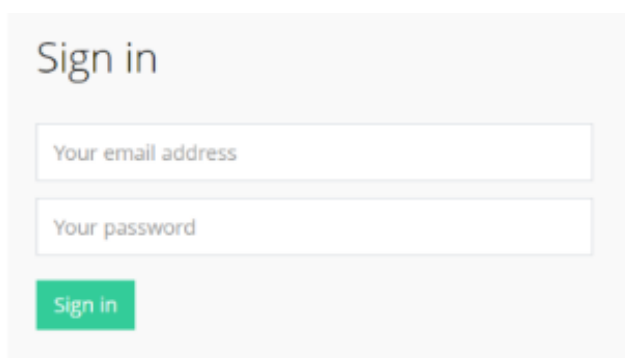
What to do once you have secured your placement:

Once you have found your work experience placement, you then need to enter the information onto Unifrog.

How to confirm your work experience placement on Unifrog:

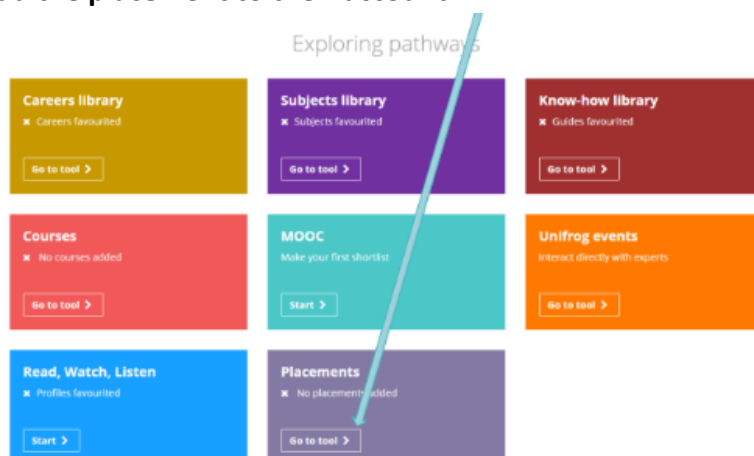
SIGN IN

Log into your **Unifrog** account using the following link <https://www.unifrog.org/sign-in>. Sign in with your school email address and password (if you cannot remember your password speak to Mrs Richings or Mr Cooper).

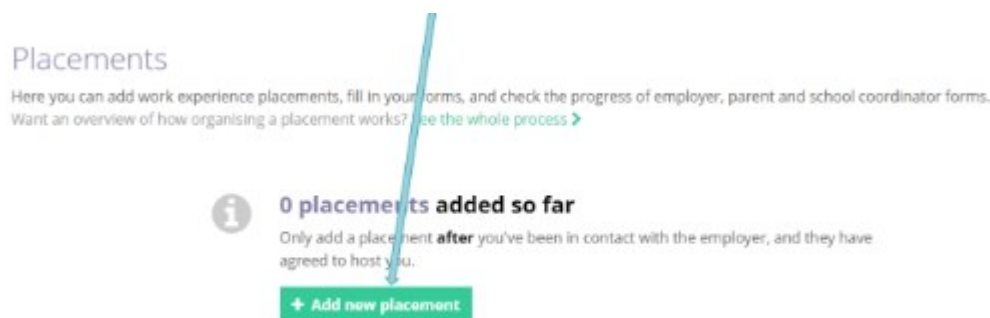
A screenshot of the Unifrog sign-in page. It features a light grey background with the text 'Sign in' at the top. Below this are two white input fields: 'Your email address' and 'Your password'. At the bottom of the form is a green button with the text 'Sign in' in white.

Scroll down the home page to the 'Exploring' section and select the 'placements' tool.

A reminder that, before adding a placement to the placements tool, the placement **MUST** have been agreed with the employer, for example by email, letter or over the phone. Only when this has been confirmed and the employer has agreed to host you, you will then add the placement to their account.



To start the process on the Placements tool, the first step is for the students to add the details of the placement to the tool. Click on the 'add new placement.' **Remember you can only do this once you have your placement confirmed, and not before.**



The first question is to confirm that you have already agreed the placement with the employer.

You will then see your Student Initial Form, here you will be able to enter important details about your placement. This has various sections, and this is what you will need for each section:

Basic Details:

- Name of business/organisation.
- Placement start date.
- Placement end date.
- Placement Co-ordinator (Mrs Richings).

Logistics:

- Time Commitment—enter the days and hours you will be working.
- Will you meet the employer in person at any point during the placement (Click yes).

Your objectives:

- What are your objectives for this placement—consider what skills you would like to develop, what you would like to learn, any questions you may have. This has a **minimum** of 25 words, and the employer will see this, so think carefully before completing.

Employer contact details:

- Name of contact person at employers.
- Email of contact person at employers (you need to input this twice).

Do you agree to:

- Unifrog sending your details to the employer email you've provided.
- Abiding by the confidentiality, data protection and data security policies held by the employer.
- Observing all safety, security and other policies laid down by the employer.
- Informing the employer and school as soon as possible of any absences.

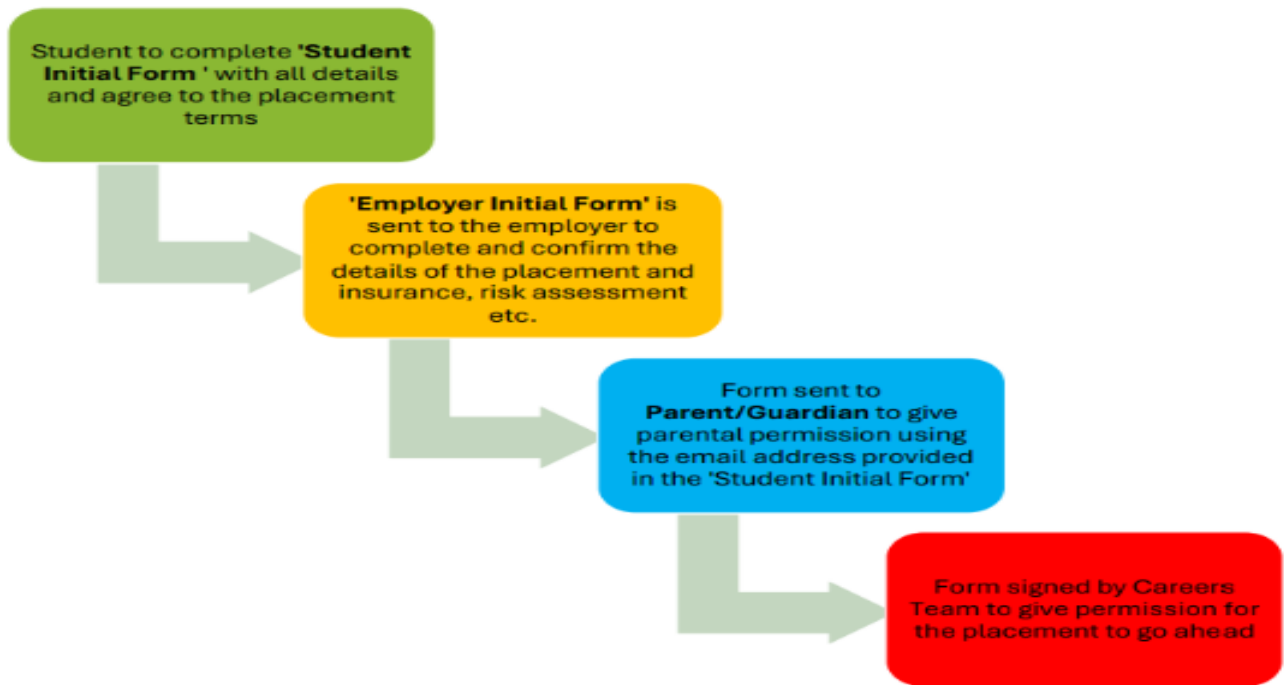
You have to agree to all 4 points, before then also ticking to confirm that the form is complete, and clicking on the 'Add placement' button.

NB: If a student needs help adding the placement to Unifrog, they can book an appointment with a member of the Careers team who can offer support.

The Stages of Work Experience

Once you have completed the 'Student initial form' and agreed to the Unifrog terms and conditions, the system automatically follows a step-by-step process as outlined below.

For example, the next step would be that the system automatically emails the employer inviting them to fill in the 'Employer initial form'.



In order for your placement to go ahead, all steps above must be completed.

What happens at each stage:

Form Name	What is it?	When?
Employer Initial Form	The employer details what the placement will consist of, and confirms Risk Assessment, Health and Safety, GDPR compliance, safeguarding, and insurance.	As soon as the student marks the Student Initial Form as complete, the employer is notified by email and the employer initial form is emailed to the employer. It is important therefore that the employer must have agreed to the placement before the receive this form.
Parent/Guardian Agreement	Parent/Guardian agreement for the placement to go ahead.	As soon as the employer marks the Employer Initial Form as complete, this form is emailed
Permission	The placement co-ordinator (Mrs Richings) reviews the Information provided by each party and gives consent for the placement to	As soon as the parent/guardian marks the parent/guardian agreement as complete, this form is emailed to the school placement co-ordinator (Mrs Richings)

Form Name	What is it?	When?
Logbook	Student records the hours of the placement and the employer confirms the hours.	After the student saves the record, the employer is emailed to complete the confirmation.
Employer Review Form	Employer reviews how the placement went, and gives student advice for the future.	Employer will complete this at the end of the placement.
Student	Student reflects on what they have learnt.	The student will complete this at the end of the placement.

All of the forms are sent by email, so it is really important that everyone involved in a placement has the correct email address entered for them, and that everyone checks their emails regularly. For further information and FAQ's, please have a look at the Placements Tool Guide in the Unifrog 'Know How' library.

<https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/placements-work-experience/how-to-use-the-logbook-on-the-placements-tool>

If you have any questions or require any help completing the work experience placement form on Unifrog, please come and see Mrs Richings in the careers office, or email on jrichings@ormistondenes.co.uk.

Supporting Information:

What type of work can students do?

There are a wide variety of placements available to students, locally and further afield. In some cases, legislation and health and safety conditions can impose restrictions on the type of work students can undertake, for example working in a factory or garage. However, some organisations may allow students undertake work experience but with more work observation rather than undertaking main tasks, for example working in a hairdressers, garage, or hospital.

Although most placements are sourced locally, students can travel further afield if they have the means to do so. For example, a placement with a family friend or relative who lives further afield.

It is to be noted that students must not be paid whilst on work experience, as it is part of their educational curriculum. Any payment made may invalidate insurance arrangements.

How many hours can a student work whilst on a placement?

The number of hours worked, and the pattern of work is something that is agreed between the placement, school and student. Some organisations may even ask students to operate a 'split shift' to get the best experience, or work evenings or weekends. The general guidance is that students should not work excessively long or unsocial hours, more than 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week.

Health, Safety and Insurance Considerations

Young people on placement will be regarded as employees and must be provided with the same health, safety and welfare requirements as any other employees. Students are required to comply with the safety regulations of the organisation, and it will be their duty to take care of the health and safety of themselves and those around them. Failure to comply may mean the work experience placement will be withdrawn, and students would be required to return to the academy.

Parents and carers should inform the academy of any medical condition which might influence the type of placement that a student may choose or might affect the student whilst on placement. This supports the student whilst on placement.

All employers should hold a current Employer Liability Insurance and are recommended to also hold Public Liability Insurance. This means sole traders may not hold the appropriate insurance to offer a placement or may have to take out further insurance to support a student.

What next?

Students have already received an assembly which has informed them about the work experience process, and further information in a PSHE lesson. Once a student has sourced a placement, and fully completed the Unifrog form, this will then be processed, and the appropriate safety checks made, through the aforementioned process.

The vast majority of students find work experience an interesting, enjoyable, and rewarding process. They learn a great deal which helps them make a successful transition from the world of education to the world of work. We have had students gain weekend and holiday work, apprenticeships and employment following a successful placement, and the experience is something that can be placed on college and job applications.

Please contact Mrs Richings at the academy for any queries regarding work experience, by emailing jrichings@ormistonden.co.uk, or by telephoning 01502 574474 EXT 110.

Unifrog Support

Unifrog offers a number of support options, from courses to videos to explain elements of work experience:

- Getting work experience ready. www.unifrog.org/student/courses/featured/preparing-for-the-world-of-work
- Work Experience Quiz. www.unifrog.org/student/help/direct/the-work-environments-profile
- Placement tool explanation video. www.unifrog.org/student/help/direct/the-placements-tool
- The work experience log book video. www.unifrog.org/student/help/direct/the-logbook-on-the-placements-tool
- How to add a placement video. www.unifrog.org/student/help/direct/add-a-placement
- Additional virtual work experience can also be found on www.unifrog.org/student/search?search=work+experience

How can parents/ carers help?

- **Read all of the documentation that has been sent home.**
- Students need to be motivated and determined to find a placement and benefit from the work experience.
- We would encourage parents/carers to think about the type of placement would like, and to research, and support them in finding it.
- Ensure your child knows where their placement is and how they are going to get there.
- Help to encourage your child to adopt positive work habits - for example: punctuality, appropriate dress and behaviour, and an understanding of their position in an adult environment.
- Sympathise if things are not going as expected but without being too protective. Some of the lessons learnt may be a little hard, but they are finding out about the real world, and this should be a valuable experience to help their personal and social development.
- Talk to your child about subjects they like and dislike, and why they prefer certain subjects over others. This can help the decide on the type of placement they would like.
- Talk about the skills they are good at and skills they would like to improve – how can these skills be used in the workplace?
- Talk to them about the benefits of work experience and the opportunities it could lead to.
- Encourage students to speak to their form tutor, year team or careers team (Mrs Richings, Mr Cooper and Mrs Gibbons) regarding work experience.
- Pass on any contacts you feel may help your child.
- Encourage them to start their research early to consider where they may go, supporting them as needed. Get them to compile a list of possibilities.
- Support them in preparing a letter, email or what they might need to say in a phone call (they would also have had help in school for this).
- Remind them to set deadlines, the earlier they can get a placement the better it will be for them. If they leave things until last minute, other students may have already secured the placement they wanted.
- Support them so they arrange their own work experience (instead of parents and carers making the contacts to employers) as this will help develop independence.
- Rehearse any phone calls they might like to make (see hints and tip pages)
- If they choose to contact by letter or email, proof read them before sending out (see hint and tips pages).
- Before the placement starts make sure that they:
 - Know how they are going to get there.
 - Know how long it will take to get there.
 - Have contacted the employer for the final details.
- Make sure they have any required clothing, uniform or personal protective equipment.
- Encourage them through work experience week.

How can I make the most of my experience?

You may find that once your placement gets underway, that it was not what you expected it to be. Or maybe you are on a placement which was not your first choice. There are 2 ways to deal with this.

The wrong way - You can lose interest and give the impression that you don't want to be there. This will mean that both you and your employer have negative outcomes from the experience.

The right way - You can lean into the work and prove to them, and to you, that you are able to adapt and learn from any situation. Think about...

- Asking questions & showing interest.
- Volunteering to carry out tasks.
- Showing enthusiasm & commitment.

How can I present myself well?

You should ask questions to show interest and be aware of negative and positive body language.

Examples of positive body language are:

- Making eye contact.
- Sitting up straight.
- Paying attention.
- Relaxed posture.
- Keeping hands out of pockets.

Examples of negative body language are:

- Staring.
- Slouching.
- Yawning.
- Crossed arms and legs.
- Looking at your watch.

What about my smartphone?

Use of mobile phones will not be allowed during the placement 'working hours'. You may be asked to place phones in bags or lockers or as a minimum, phones should be turned off or placed on 'silent'. Mobile phones are not permitted in childcare/school placements due to safeguarding procedures. Inappropriate content and use of social media whilst on placements may result in placements being terminated.

Will I get paid?

You will not be paid whilst on work experience, as it is a learning experience and not employment.

What will my working hours be?

This will vary and will be agreed before your placement starts. You should not work for more than 5 days in any consecutive seven-day period, and it is a requirement that students should not work more than a standard eight-hour day or forty hours in a week. You will get appropriate breaks. You will be informed of the exact times of the placement by your employer.

What do I do if I can't go in?

If you are going to be late for your placement, then you should:

- Contact the employer.
- Apologise to say that you will be late and explain the reason.
- Provide an expected arrival time.

If you are unable to attend the placement.

- Contact the employer.
- Explain the reason for absence.
- Provide an expected return date.
- **You should also contact the academy attendance department to let them know.**

How can I reflect on my placement afterwards?

Work experience should be treated as a 'learning experience' and not just a week out of school. Therefore, you need to reflect upon your placement to consolidate what you learnt and apply it to your future career planning and goal setting. You should ask yourself;

- Did you enjoy the placement and was it beneficial?
- What new skills did you learn and develop? What did you learn about how a workplace operates?
- Do you now have an idea of what employers require from their employees and how staff interact?
- Has it given you a better idea of what career path you want to take?
- **You will also complete the Student Reflection Form on Unifrog.**

If you didn't enjoy the experience this is also a positive thing! Now you can investigate other career paths which may be of interest. We will help with this process during careers-related activities and meetings in school.

Above all, use the experience to learn about yourself and help you make informed choices about your future.

If you would like a careers appointment to discuss your future plans, please email jrichings@ormistonden.co.uk.

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Work experience should be treated as a 'learning experience' and not just a week out of school. Therefore, you need to reflect upon your placement to consolidate what you learnt and apply it to your future career planning and goal setting. You should ask yourself;

- Did you enjoy the placement and was it beneficial?
- What new skills did you learn and develop? What did you learn about how a workplace operates?
- Do you now have an idea of what employers require from their employees and how staff interact?
- Has it given you a better idea of what career path you want to take?
- **You will also complete the Student Reflection Form on Unifrog.**

If you didn't enjoy the experience this is also a positive thing! Now you can investigate other career paths which may be of interest. We will help with this process during careers-related activities and meetings in school.

Above all, use the experience to learn about yourself and help you make informed choices about your future.

If you would like a careers appointment to discuss your future plans, please email jrichings@ormistonden.co.uk.



ORMISTON DENES ACADEMY

