

Before your Placement starts

Make contact with your employer

You should contact your employer before the placement starts: some employers state in the Placement Details how far in advance they want to meet you so make sure you read your Placement Details carefully. A polite phone call is usually enough to set the ball rolling. Don't leave it until the last minute.



Make sure you plan what you need to say and that you have plenty of time and are somewhere quiet. If you are using your mobile ensure that you have sufficient battery life and credit.

Go for an interview/meeting if they request this

Check that you know how to get to the placement and make sure you can get there on time. If you are using public transport make sure you have the up to date timetable and carry it with you. If the journey is unfamiliar it might be an idea to have a trial run.



Ensure you are dressed appropriately – make sure you are neat and tidy.



Arrive on time for the meeting, shake hands with the employer and introduce yourself. First impressions are important. Try to maintain eye contact – adults tend to like this as it gives them the impression that you are self-confident and interested.

The interview or meeting is usually quite informal – a chat, maybe an introduction to some of the other people who work there, and a look at where you will be working. You might also be given some more information about what you will be doing and at some places you might be given some items of uniform.

Try to have some questions ready so that you can show you are interested in the company and what you will be doing.



The employer might ask you what you are interested in, why you want to do your work placement with them, and whether you have any relevant experiences or knowledge. Try to have some answers ready, and if you are unsure ask for the question to be repeated or explained further – don't try and muddle through.

Make sure you are clear about the arrangements for your placement

- what times you will be working
- who you report to on your first day and where you meet them
- whether you need any items of uniform
- whether you should take a packed lunch
- ask for the phone number you should contact if you are ill or delayed getting into work

During the Placement

Arrive on time – phone in if you are sick or running late. Ring the school's absence line as well if you are ill.



Always ask questions if you are unsure about something.

Always obey safety instructions – make sure you have a Health and Safety induction at the start of the week. If you do have an accident report it immediately to a member of staff

Remember that your attitude is important. You cannot be expected to smile constantly but you should be pleasant to colleagues, be prepared to discuss things, and look people in the eye when talking to them.

Remember that some things that happen or information you are given at work experience may be confidential; don't gossip with your friends, either verbally or especially on-line, about what goes on at work experience. This is particularly important if you are working with children (eg school, nursery) or in any caring or health related setting.

Make sure you read and follow the advice about safe and appropriate use of mobile phones and social network sites in relation to your work experience.

Keep your Work Experience Journal with you and fill in the relevant parts. Ask your supervisor to complete their section at the end of the week as well.

A member of staff from school will either visit, or phone your employer during the week to see how you are getting on. They will do a short report, and the employer will also be asked for feedback at the end of the week – we will keep this information in case it is needed in the future for references for you.

If you feel the placement is not going well and for example you don't have much to do – try to resolve this first yourself with your supervisor. You can contact school but the first question we will ask is 'What have YOU done about it?' Obviously if there are real issues we will get involved but you should try and sort it out first. If you have any concerns about your safety, about things that are being done or said around you, or that you are being asked to do things that you feel are not appropriate then please raise this with your supervisor and let school and/or parents know.

Remember to enjoy your placement. It's a great opportunity and should be approached with real positivity and motivation. It will give you an idea of the world of work, and may even help you get a job in future – either a Saturday job, or a future career.

