ST. MARY'S
MENSTON

POLICY

Work Experience

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ST MARY'S MENSTON
A CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

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Our Purpose

We are a pilgrim school and we journey with Mary to become the person God intends us to be.

This procedure was approved by the Headteacher on behalf of the Academy Council

Signature:

Miss M Hattersley, Headteacher

Date: 1 July 2025

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SECTION A

Sixth Form Work Experience Policy

Purpose
The purpose of this Work Experience Policy pertains to work experience placements for sixth form students only (16 to 19 years old). The school is committed to providing every young person with high quality careers guidance to help them make informed decisions about their future. It is accepted that good career guidance is also necessary for social mobility. In 2013, Gatsby commissioned Sir John Holman to set out what career guidance in England would be like if it were good by international standards, resulting in the Good Career Guidance report. The eight benchmarks set out in the report serve as a framework for improvement in careers provision and have been adopted as part of the Government's Careers Strategy and statutory guidance for schools and colleges.

The Eight Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance are:
1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

Work experience is a key component of 16 to 19 study programmes. The term work experience refers to all forms of work-related activity including work tasters, running a student enterprise, participation in social action, volunteering or a work placement taken with an external employer. It aims to give young people the opportunity to develop their career choices, get a first taste of work, and develop those critical employability skills needed for real working conditions. All students are expected to undertake work experience or work-related training as part of their study programme, and for some students it can be the core aim of the study programme. The fifth and sixth Gatsby benchmarks highlight the importance of ensuring students have encounters with employers/employees and experience of workplaces. For this reason, during Year 12, students have the opportunity to undertake a work placement with a suitable employer. It must be noted that this experience is not an isolated careers provision experience at the school. The Personal Development Time (PDT) programme that is embedded in the school curriculum allows for careers education from Years 7 to 13. In addition, provision has been made for pupils to have met with our Careers Advisor by the end of Year 11 and additionally during their time in sixth form. Careers advice is a statutory requirement as part of the Gatsby Benchmarks, therefore those students transferring to St Mary' Sixth Form from a previous school should have been afforded the same opportunity previously. This forms the foundations for the consideration of work experience placements, readiness and conduct in the workplace, and informing future careers pathways.

Common Principles of a High-Quality Work Placement are that it:
- Is purposeful, offers challenge and is relevant to the young person's study programme and career aspirations
- Allows the student to apply the technical and practical skills learned in the classroom/workshop
- Is managed under the direction of a supervisor to ensure the young person obtains a genuine learning experience suited to their needs
- Has a structured plan for the duration of the placement which provides tangible outcomes for the student and employer
- Has clear roles, responsibilities and expectations for the student and employer
- Is followed by some form of reference or feedback from the employer based on the young person's performance.

With these common principles in mind, this policy aims to:
- ensure processes are in place to promote the safeguarding and welfare of all students when completing a work experience placement
- outline the process of finding a suitable, high quality work placement and preparation for it
- explain the placement vetting process
- explain the reviewing of placements
- clarify the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders
- support the needs of SEND and vulnerable students
- explain how contact is maintained.

SECTION B

Finding, Vetting, Finalising and Reviewing Placements

Finding Placements

Before the work experience cycle begins in Year 12, the sixth form and inclusion team, as appropriate, will consider and discuss the following in relation to the cohort:

- the age and maturity of the students
- learning, SEND, medical or behavioural needs
- past history including any potentially unsuitable settings
- the likelihood or opportunity for contact with unsuitable adult role models
- the working environment including non-contact time
- the level of preparation which will be provided
- parental wishes.

Following this, a decision may be taken that a selected number of students will be given individual support and guidance in terms of securing appropriate placements. In some circumstances, it may be considered that virtual work experience is more appropriate. (Please see section E of this policy)

The majority of students are responsible, in the first instance, for finding their own work experience placement. They are encouraged to make use of connections and contacts that they or their wider family and friends may know. They are encouraged to carefully consider the type of placement they undertake in terms of their interests, higher education or apprenticeship applications and future career pathway intentions.

Students are guided through the process by the sixth form team in terms of the following:

a) Launch Assembly
This takes place in the Autumn term of Year 12. The rationale behind work experience and the process for securing a placement is shared with students. Students receive a paperwork pack comprising an explanatory letter from the sixth form team summarising the launch assembly, The Work Experience Consent Form (Appendix A), and The Work Experience Employer Safeguarding Agreement (Appendix B). Students are directed to work with potential work placement employers to complete the paperwork and to obtain parental consent, before returning all paperwork back to the school (to the Work Experience Administrative Assistant) for checking procedures.

b) Form Time
As form tutors see their tutees every morning, there is provision for continuity of advice and monitoring in form time. Form tutors are able to track which students have secured placements and completed all relevant paperwork through a centralised electronic record and via communication with the Work Experience Administrative Assistant.

c) Work Experience Administrative Assistant
Once a week, the Work Experience Administrative Assistant will be available in the Sixth Form Office for students to talk to about their placement, and to look through the database of previous years' work-placement providers. Some students may be directed to work with the Work Experience Administrative Assistant if they are struggling to organise their placement.

Provision is made for those students who are unable to either secure a placement or whose placement is deemed not to be suitable following checks and completion of paperwork or the lack thereof, in the form of virtual work experience organised by school.

Vetting Placements

The completion of paperwork by students, employers and parents includes the following:

1. The Work Experience Consent Form (Appendix A), this includes acknowledgement and agreement from the employer to the letter of understanding which pertain to issues in respect of health and safety in the workplace, safeguarding, and risk assessment.

2. Checks are made by the Work Experience Administrative Assistant that all paperwork for each student is completed, including that consent has been given by parents and that employer Public Liability Insurance details are recorded.

Checks are made to ensure that students are clear about expectations during the placement in terms of the following:

- the nature of the business or employer offering them the placement
- their role and responsibilities/duties

- days and hours of work
- duration and timings of breaks (including lunch breaks)
- the name and contact details of the person they will report to during the placement
- how to report an issue of concern (see section 4 of this policy)

Students may also be subject to Enhanced DBS checks if they are undertaking work in the care or education sectors with pupils under the age of 16.

Finalising Placements
The Work Experience Administrative Assistant will ensure that all completed paperwork for each student is retained and filed within school and that details have been uploaded onto the centralised system.

The Work Experience Administrative Assistant will telephone any placement to check details and confirm placements with employers where necessary.

Communication will be made with the sixth form team to ensure that there are no other causes for concern.

The placement will be approved by school once it is satisfied that it is a suitable placement.

Reviewing Placements
During the placement, students will complete a work experience booklet to record their reflections and experiences.

Students may be visited on placement by a member of staff from the school. The number of visits or contact by telephone may be increased if it is deemed necessary. This should also include time for feedback from the employer to school.

Following work experience, and consideration of student feedback, placements will be reviewed and analysed by the Careers Leader and the sixth form team. Employers may be contacted to discuss them being added to the school database in order to provide future placements for students.

SECTION C

Roles and Responsibilities

Students:
Students are responsible, in the first instance for finding their own work experience placement. They are encouraged to make use of connections and contacts that they or their wider family and friends may know. They are encouraged to carefully consider the type of placement they undertake in terms of their interests, higher education applications and future career pathway intentions.

Students are guided through the process by the sixth form team in terms of a launch assembly, PDT and regular monitoring during form time. Prior to the commencement of placement, they should have a clear understanding of the following:

- employer expectations, including days and hours of work, dress code, conduct, details about break times and lunch times
- travel to and from the placement.
- health and safety in the workplace (This may form part of their induction on the first day of placement)
- how to communicate issues of concern, both within the employment establishment and to school. The PDT (personal development) programme also provides opportunities for students to learn about unacceptable/acceptable behaviour and keeping safe.

Students will also be expected to be proactive and transparent in communicating any learning, SEND or medical needs they may have to the employer, in order that appropriate measures can be put into place. This may be done with the support of the school.

During placement, they should be punctual, register their attendance with their line manager and undertake duties appropriate to the placement as directed.

Post placement, all students will have the opportunity for debrief which may include:

- letter of thanks
- reviewing learning objectives
- peer review
- immediate and longer-term reflection on skills development or learning aims
- contributions to CVs or portfolios.

Parents:
Parents/carers will be crucial in guiding their child and discussing suitable placements with them. They are encouraged to discuss with their child any connections and contacts that they, or their wider family and friends, may know who may be able to offer a suitable work experience placement.

Parents should encourage students to be proactive and transparent in communicating any learning, SEND or medical needs they may have to the employer, in order that appropriate measures can be put into place.

Parents must give consent by completing The Work Experience Consent Form (Appendix A), before any placement can be approved. Parents should be aware of any risks in terms of duties undertaken on placement and during travel time to the place of employment.

Parents should be aware of the name and contact details of the student's line manager during their placement and of the appropriate way to contact school with any concerns during the placement.

Employers:
Employers are responsible for the completion of the section that pertain to placements on The Work Experience Consent Form (Appendix A).

Employers are requested to ensure students are aware of the following:

- employer expectations, including days and hours of work, dress code, conduct, (PPE if necessary), details about break times and lunch times
- health and safety in the workplace. (This may form part of their induction on the first day of placement)
- how to communicate issues of concern whilst on placement
- the name of their person of contact/ line manager and the methods by which to communicate with them during placement.

In signing The Work Experience Consent Form (Appendix A), employers also agree the following:

- an acknowledgement of individual medical, SEND or learning needs as communicated by the student and/or the school and an agreement to put any additional measures into place during the placement as appropriate.
- adherence to safeguarding measures, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory document.
- the completion of a health and safety checks within the workplace pertaining to the role that the student will undertake
- students must be given appropriate working hours and be afforded the same amount of time for breaks as other employees
- to ensure that any accidents or incidents are reported. Contact details for the school are on The Work Experience Consent Form (Appendix A) that employers sign.

Employers should report any issues of concern or issues relating to absence to the school immediately as they arise.

Employers will also be required to participate in feedback during the placement visit by school and to complete an evaluation post-placement. The purpose of the evaluation will also enable the establishment links between school and the employer in terms of future placements.

School:
The school will follow the process outlined in Section B of this policy. The school is responsible for the collation and checking of completed paperwork and the recording of such, electronically on the centralised notebook.

The school will approve the placement once the paperwork and any checks with the employer have been made and are found to be satisfactory. Completed paperwork will be retained in school.

A representative from the school may visit the student during the course of their placement. The number of visits or contact by telephone may be increased if it is deemed necessary.

Any incident, accidents or concerns, including concerns relating to absence, should be reported by the employer to the school who will then follow established procedures and policies to investigate further.

SECTION D

Due Diligence Checks

At least one member of staff involved in the initial discussions surround suitability of placements and students of concern should have child protection training.

The employers are asked to complete and sign The Work Experience Consent Form (Appendix A). This includes acknowledgement and agreement from the employer to the letter of understanding which pertain to issues in respect of health and safety in the workplace, safeguarding, and risk assessment, before any placement can be considered or approved. It also requests information in respect of public liability insurance.

Parental consent must be provided by the completion of The Work Experience Consent Form (Appendix A) before any placement can be considered or approved.

Employers are made aware of any medical, SEND or learning needs by the students prior to the placement.

Final checks may be made via a phone call from school to the employer before the placement is approved.

A visit may take place from a representative of school during the placement. This may be increased if it is deemed necessary.

Students are made fully aware of how to report any issues of concern, which may include safeguarding, health and safety, issues of bullying in the workplace via pre-placement guidance delivered in school.

Any concerns that are reported will be investigated following the usual school policies.

Students, parents and employers are clear as to how to contact school if necessary, with contact details on the Work Experience Consent Form (Appendix A).

Adapted provision may be required for some students who have additional needs, are considered vulnerable following initial discussions between the sixth form and inclusion teams, or at parental request. (See section E of this policy)

SECTION E

Provision for Vulnerable and SEND/Disadvantaged (DA) Students (if appropriate)

Vulnerable students, those with additional needs and DA students should be identified as early as possible in the process.

During an initial meeting between the sixth form team/Careers Leader/the inclusion team, the background to individual cases will be discussed, including:

- student background
- home / school friendship groups
- awareness of relevant information e.g. medical or learning needs, behavioural needs
- awareness of looked after children and previously looked after children and students with a social worker
- awareness of any CPOM reports, early help plan, child protection plan, child in need plan, risk assessment that are already in place for students within the school
- awareness of any SEND support plans or EHC plan that are already in place for students within the school
- outside agencies already involved.

An agreement will be made for cases where placements may not be suitable in a particular occupational area or where additional support and monitoring will be required on placement.

Additional support may be needed to complete the necessary paperwork or find suitable placements. The Careers Leader should work in conjunction with the sixth form team on a case by case basis to facilitate this.

Additional help required by such students whilst on placement should be agreed with the provider lead on child protection, recorded and communicated and agreed with parents/carers. Relevant information must be communicated to the employer to enable them to complete an individual young person's risk assessment (if deemed necessary). If an employer feels unable to adequately support the student, the provider should discuss any additional support they can offer or the school should help the student to find an alternative placement. All placements for vulnerable students should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and be subject to increased safeguarding provision (including, where necessary, increased arrangements for monitoring).

All stakeholders need to be clear about potential barriers/adaptations before paperwork is signed off so that a support plan can be put in place.

There may be a need for funding relating to additional travel costs to the placement. Cases will be referred on an individual basis to the Senior Leadership Leader responsible for 16-19 funding.

SECTION F

Contact and Support Visits

Students may be visited while they are on work placement. The visit should be made by someone who knows the student and can assess their progress. The visit is important for assessing general welfare and the quality of supervision and experience provided by the employer.

During the visit, the following will be discussed:

- record of attendance
- joint review of attitude, and quality of work with student and employer in placement
- areas of celebration/praise
- issues of concern.

It may be deemed appropriate to conduct a second visit or to have further ‘check-in’ phone calls during the placement for vulnerable students.

Paperwork in respect of work experience placement visits will be filed in school, along with other retained documentation.

On rare occasions, it may be necessary for the early withdrawal of a student from a placement, either by the student, parental, school, employer or mutual request. In such instances, students would return to school, and the reasons behind the withdrawal would be investigated (if necessary) in line with school policies, and documented.

Appendix A

WORK EXPERIENCE CONSENT FORM 2025: ST MARYS MENSTON

STUDENT DETAILS

SCHOOL: ST MARYS, MENSTON **WEX DATES** ...../……/…… **to** ...../……/……

STUDENT NAME …… **DATE OF BIRTH** ……/……/……

GENDER M / F **YEAR** ……. **TUTOR** …….

STUDENT CONTACT NUMBER……

I agree to participate in the work experience scheme and confirm that I have read and understood the form. I will not disclose any information confidential to the employer, which I obtain during this period of work experience. I will obey all safety security and other instructions given by the employer.

Do you have any medical conditions? [Please provide details]

…….. ……..

Student Signature:	

EMPLOYER DETAILS

COMPANY NAME …… **CONTACT NAME (inc. title)**……..

ADDRESS……..

…… **POSTCODE** ……..

TELEPHONE NO…… **MOBILE NO**……..

WEBSITE…… **EMAIL**…….

WEX JOB TITLE/BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF TASKS……..

…….. ……..

DOES THE STUDENT REQUIRE A DBS CHECK? Y/N

DRESS CODE…….. ……..

DAYS OF WORK…… **HOURS - From**…… **To**…… **Lunch Details**……..

Is this placement exclusively with one member of staff? YES/NO

As a representative of the above employer I agree to the student named above working on my premises in accordance with the Letter of Understanding (see overleaf) and acknowledge my responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act. The student's age and inexperience will be taken into account when agreeing tasks, and I understand that the student must not undertake prohibited activities. I also sign to confirm that:

- The company has **employers' and public** liability insurance (ELI & PLI)
- I have confirmed with the insurer the student is covered by this insurance
- I am willing to produce this certificate for the H&S visitor if necessary
- I agree to a health & safety check if needed

ELI Policy Number:		**ELI Expiry Date:**	
Signed:		**Position:**	
Name (Printed):		**Date:**	

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE EMPLOYER PROVIDING A WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT

The learner will carry out meaningful work, as described in the agreed job description. The employer will ensure that the work will be planned by a responsible person and the learner will receive appropriate instruction and supervision during the work experience.

The employer understands that the learner is to be treated as an employee with respect to Health and Safety legislation. The employer will ensure that the learner does not operate any hazardous machinery, or carry out work of an unsuitable nature, and that any protective clothing/equipment is supplied when necessary with appropriate instruction for its use. Any animals that may cause harm to a learner must be appropriately restrained.

The employer understands their duty of care to the learner on the work of placement, particularly in respect of the principles described in the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). The employer also understands that staff members who are disqualified from working with children should be disclosed, as appropriate, in accordance with The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

The employer understands that s/he must carry out a risk assessment of the placement and this must be communicated to the parent/carer of the learner who is to undertake the placement, before the placement commences. The employer also undertakes to monitor the placement in the light of the learner's capabilities and to modify the risk assessment if necessary.

The employer will arrange for Employers' Liability Insurance, Public Liability Insurance and vehicle insurance, as appropriate, and will confirm that the learner on the work experience placement is covered by the appropriate policies. The employer will accept, or insure against liability for loss, damage or injury caused to or by the student, while on the placement, just as for paid employees. The employer will notify their insurer of the learner's participation in work experience.

The employer will observe the relevant legislation laid down in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and the Equalities Act 2010. In case of learner absence, accident or sickness, the employer will immediately notify the school. The learner will be allowed to use whatever first aid facilities the employer provides.

The employer will allow representatives from the appropriate educational establishment to visit the placement for monitoring purposes.

The employer gives permission for the educational establishment or its representatives to process employer personal details for the purposes of work experience and Education Business Link Activities, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Learners' personal details are confidential and should be safeguarded in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

The learner will not receive any payments for this work in accordance with the Education (Work Experience) Act 1973. The employer may choose to make a contribution directly to the learner towards the cost of meals and travelling. Details will be included in the job description.

The learner will work the hours shown on the agreed job description. These must conform with employment regulations as they apply to Young Persons.

The learner agrees that he/she will not disclose any confidential information to the employer and will obey all safety, security and other instructions given by the employer. The learner will be required to sign an agreement to these terms and the learner's parent/carer will ensure that the learner adheres to this agreement. The learner's parent/carer will confirm that he/she is not suffering from any complaint which may cause a hazard either to the learner or those working with him/her. The school will advise the employer of any known details concerning the learner which may require special attention to ensure a successful placement.

The employer can contact the school using the telephone number 01943883000, the Work Experience Administrative Assistant at c.hawkins@stmarysmenston.org or the Director of Personal Development at j.trickett@stmarysmenston.org

PARENTAL CONSENT

As parent/guardian of the learner I confirm that I have read the placement details and I am willing for him/her to participate in work experience with the employer for the agreed period of time. I also confirm that s/he is medically fit to undertake the placement, and s/he does not suffer from any medical condition which could result in unnecessary risk to his/her health and safety, and/or that of the other people (if in doubt please contact the teacher prior to signing this form).

I confirm that if he/she leaves the employer's premises during lunch break periods, no liability can be accepted by the *employer* or the *School* for any incident that may occur. Once on the placement, parents should discuss the arrangements for lunch and break periods with their child and make sure they are suitable.

Signed:	
Name:	
Date:	