



Work Experience Policy

2026 - 2027

Last reviewed: June 2026

Next review: June 2027

Our Commitment

There has never been a time when careers guidance has been as important for young people as it is today. At Chatten Free School, we have a critical role to play in preparing our pupils for the next stage of their lives. Pupils within our school are statistically the least likely to gain any form of employment and face significant barriers to being included in the local community. We seek to change that.

We seek to understand what our pupils enjoy and their strengths and find opportunities for them in the local community and working world. We seek to ensure that our pupils have the skills and opportunities to have a life filled with happiness and meaningful activity, including the chance to experience employment and community-based opportunities. We also want to ensure that our pupils have their voice heard and have the skills to communicate their preferences as they transition into adulthood.

The governing body have therefore adopted this policy to provide a clear commitment to a framework for Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance that includes work experience placements. This is completed in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Employer engagement and enrichment activities

Improving the opportunities for our pupils to be included in the local community and raising the aspirations of our pupils and families is extremely important to us. Many of our pupils begin their journey with us unable to access the local community in a safe and meaningful way. Community inclusion is our initial goal, embedding employer encounters into meaningful community trips, such as to the local shop or local leisure centre. For those pupils it is meaningful for, this will develop into work experience opportunities in school and in the local community as they progress through the school. We are continuously working to engage local businesses and educate employers to understand that our pupils can access employment and volunteering with the right support.

These experiences form part of our Vocational Pathway for pupils in KS4 and KS5 and can include industries such as hospitality & catering, animal care, and horticulture.

Our offer

Our Careers Programme is personalised to every pupil and is made up of 2 different pathways depending on the strengths and needs of the pupil (community inclusion and vocational profile), however, where meaningful and appropriate, we aim to offer:

	Community inclusion pathway	
KS3	1 community trip a week	
	Community inclusion pathway	Vocational pathway
Year 10	2 community trips a week	Internal work experience taster sessions
Year 11	2 community trips a week	Internal work experience taster sessions
Year 12	3 community trips a week	1 internal/external work experience opportunity across the year
Year 13	3 community trips a week	2 internal/external work experience opportunities across the year
Year 14	4 community trips a week	Weekly/regular external work experience with the view that this could continue post-19

Organisation of work experience

All placements are completed in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest statutory guidance)

1. The Careers Lead and Class Leads liaise with local businesses to secure a variety of work experience placements for pupils.
2. Visits to potential new work experience providers are completed to ensure all regulations are met. Risk assessment forms are completed and uploaded onto Evolve and Provider Statement forms are completed, including a question regarding the placement's public liability insurance.
3. Employer liability insurance certificates are checked for every placement.
4. Pupils are allocated a placement and communications are promptly sent out to all parties involved to inform them of logistical requirements including, but not limited to: placement location, dates and interview details. Updates are provided via Class Dojo/email or a letter may be sent home.
5. Where pupils/parents find a specific placement and arrange this themselves, a visit must still be conducted to ensure suitability. In cases of a lone employer, the parent/carer must sign a waiver acknowledging the employer has no employer liability insurance. This confirms the parent/carer is happy for the pupil to attend that

work experience placement and to work with that person. All placements are expected to hold appropriate employer liability insurance. Exceptions will only be considered following a thorough risk assessment and approval by senior leadership.

6. If transportation by Chatten Free School is required, the correct insurances will be in place for all drivers and vehicles. Risk assessments will be undertaken for all students being transported together by Chatten Free School.
7. Pupils will always be accompanied, at least initially, by staff from Chatten Free School and for most pupils, this support will likely continue. If a pupil has reached criteria to fade this support out, this will be gradually faded to ensure the pupil is successful. Any placements where pupils are not accompanied by Chatten Free School will require DBS checks and parental consents.
8. Pupils on individual placements will be visited by their teacher. This will be to review progress and to provide any necessary support.

Payments on placement

During the work placement pupils are classified as children in education, not as employees, and therefore have no right to expect or receive payment in any form. Pupils on work experience are usually covered under: Education Act 1996 and Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990. Consequently, pupils must not be used in place of regular employees.

Hours of work and breaks

The hours and days of work will be agreed in advance of the placement, and this will be agreed based around the strengths and needs of the pupil. Meal and other breaks will be negotiated prior to the commencement of placement based on the individual needs of the pupils.

Issues arising in the workplace

Any issues should be immediately reported to the Careers Lead. In line with the appropriate safeguarding procedures, issues will be addressed and resolved as soon as possible.

Leadership and Management

The work experience programme is designed by Nicola Knights (Careers Lead) and Millie Backhouse (Assistant Head) and is supported by the Head of School.

Evaluation

Pupils' progress during work experience will be monitored by the tutors supporting them in line with their education programme and reporting systems. This will be fed back to the Class Lead and Careers Lead to evaluate success of placements.

Equal opportunities

No student is denied a placement for any protected characteristic covered by the Equality Act 2010. The individual needs of each pupil is taken into account when placements are allocated to ensure a positive experience for both pupil and employer. The employers will be informed of any reasonable adjustments required prior to the start of placement and pupils will always be initially supported by Chatten Free School staff who know the pupils and their needs well.