



25 March 2019

Dear Year 11 Parents, Carers & Pupils,

I am writing to offer some advice surrounding work experience and volunteering in the time between GCSE exams and returning to Post 16 studies.

In Learning for Life lessons, students have been advised, since the early part of the year, not to let their brains addle during the long summer break but to engage in work experience or volunteering. In fact, we are proud of the number of students who have signed up with the National Citizenship Service this summer. We are confident they will enjoy an amazing experience, valuable to their next steps in education and work. There will also be a number of students thinking further ahead and attending university open days.

Work experience is something else that students should engage in during this summer period. The preparation for writing CVs and mock Rotary interviews should give them confidence in reaching out for opportunities to learn about the world of work. This may be to explore a potential future career or just to gain experience of the working environment. It may also lead to a part time job! Even without formal work experience, a shadowing day can give a valuable insight into the world of work.

At the start of the process of finding work experience, we would advise students to begin by deciding on the kind of work experience they want. To provide some focus, making a list of different industries and within this list a number of potential companies may be helpful. Looking at these companies' websites is a good way to find out what opportunities are available. It may be that students are not always able to organise a work experience placement which meets their exact needs, and we would advise that some settings such as medicine and law, do not accept under 16s, so thinking about *types* of work (for example, corporate, social, creative) maybe useful. It is often worth sending a speculative letter, along with a CV, requesting work experience, including a clear focus on why this particular organisation has been chosen. Being able to address your letter personally to a *named* employee also increases the chances of it being read! It would be sensible to follow the letter up with a phone call after a week.

However, we also know that, in reality, work experience is often gained through existing contacts. It's useful to make a list of anyone in the family, friends, neighbours, acquaintances who might be able to provide contact details. Finally, we would like to remind parents and carers that it is your responsibility to reassure yourselves of the appropriateness of any placements including Safeguarding and Health and Safety policies.

If you do have any further questions then please do contact Mrs M Wilson (Careers and UCAS advisor in the UCAS office) or Mrs J Hobday (Head of Learning for Life and Career Leader).

We hope that this letter will help to create the opportunity for parents to build upon the conversations from LFL lessons at home and at the right moment. Whether this is during study leave or after the final exam, we are sure you'll agree that it must be an appropriate moment to avoid adding a burden to this important time in their lives.

As always, we wish Year 11 the very best for the forthcoming exams.

Yours faithfully,

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Assistant Head Teacher

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