



Work Experience & Volunteering Policy 2025/26

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Work Experience & Volunteering Policy 2025/26



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Purpose of the Policy	3
3. Scope.....	3
4. Aims of Work Experience & Volunteering	3
5. Roles and Responsibilities	3
5.1 Academy Leadership	3
5.2 Work Experience Coordinator	4
5.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	4
5.4 Placement Providers Must:	4
5.5 Parents/Carers	4
5.6 Students	4
6. Safeguarding Requirements	4
• The Open Door Academy retains ultimate safeguarding responsibility for all students on placement.	4
7. Health & Safety	5
Before a placement begins:	5
During the placement:	5
• The Academy will maintain regular contact.....	5
• Any incidents must be reported immediately	5
8. Attendance & Monitoring	5
9. Placement Suitability	5
10. Behaviour & Conduct	5
• Serious incidents must be reported to the Academy immediately. The Academy may withdraw a student if behaviour or safety becomes a concern.	5
11. Review & Evaluation	6
12. Data Protection	6
13. Policy Review	6

Work Experience & Volunteering Policy 2025/26



1. Introduction

The Open Door Academy is committed to providing meaningful, safe, and aspirational work-related learning opportunities. Work experience and volunteering placements help students develop confidence, independence, employability skills, and a sense of purpose. This policy outlines how placements are identified, assessed, monitored, and reviewed to ensure they are safe, inclusive, and beneficial for every learner.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy ensures that all work experience and volunteering opportunities:

- Promote student safety, wellbeing, and personal development
- Provide real-world learning experiences aligned with individual needs and aspirations
- Comply with statutory guidance including KCSIE, Health & Safety at Work Act, and local authority expectations
- Maintain strong oversight and communication between The Open Door Academy, families, and placement providers

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students undertaking work experience or volunteering as part of their curriculum
- All staff involved in arranging, supervising, or reviewing placements
- All external organisations offering placements to students
- All short-term, long-term, part-time, or block placements

4. Aims of Work Experience & Volunteering

The Open Door Academy aims to:

- Develop employability skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving
- Build confidence, independence, and resilience
- Provide insight into real working environments
- Support career exploration and future planning
- Offer meaningful experiences linked to EHCP outcomes where applicable

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Academy Leadership

- Approves all placement arrangements
- Ensures compliance with safeguarding and health & safety requirements
- Maintains strategic oversight of placement quality and outcomes

Work Experience & Volunteering Policy 2025/26



5.2 ASDAN tutor/Head of Centre:

- Identifies suitable placements
- Conducts risk assessments and site checks
- Ensures all safeguarding and insurance documentation is in place
- Acts as the main point of contact for providers
- Monitors attendance, engagement, and progress

5.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Ensures providers meet safeguarding expectations
- Oversees information sharing and reporting procedures
- Responds to any safeguarding concerns arising from placements

5.4 Placement Providers Must:

- Provide a safe, inclusive environment
- Offer meaningful tasks appropriate to the student's age and ability
- Report attendance daily
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately
- Provide feedback on progress and conduct

5.5 Parents/Carers

- Support attendance and punctuality
- Share relevant information with the Academy
- Attend review meetings where required

5.6 Students

- Follow provider expectations and workplace rules
- Engage positively in tasks and learning
- Report concerns to Academy staff or trusted adults

6. Safeguarding Requirements

- All placement providers must:
- Have appropriate safeguarding policies
- Ensure staff supervising students have enhanced DBS checks where required
- Provide safe supervision and clear arrival/departure procedures
- Report concerns to the Academy DSL immediately
- The Open Door Academy retains ultimate safeguarding responsibility for all students on placement.

Work Experience & Volunteering Policy 2025/26



7. Health & Safety

Before a placement begins:

- A full risk assessment must be completed
- The provider must confirm appropriate insurance (Employer's Liability & Public Liability)
- Students must receive a workplace induction covering safety procedures
- Students to complete a Work Experience Agreement Form

During the placement:

- The Academy will maintain regular contact
- Any incidents must be reported immediately

8. Attendance & Monitoring

- Providers must report attendance daily
- Unexplained absence must be reported to the Academy within 30 minutes
- Staff will conduct check-ins and site visits as required
- Persistent absence will trigger a review of the placement

9. Placement Suitability

Placements must:

- Be age-appropriate and safe
- Offer meaningful learning opportunities
- Align with the student's interests, needs, and EHCP outcomes
- Be accessible, inclusive, and supportive

Placements will not be approved if:

- The environment is unsafe
- Tasks are inappropriate or exploitative
- Safeguarding standards are not met

10. Behaviour & Conduct

Students are expected to:

- Behave professionally and respectfully
- Follow workplace rules and instructions
- Represent The Open Door Academy positively
- Serious incidents must be reported to the Academy immediately. The Academy may withdraw a student if behaviour or safety becomes a concern.

Work Experience & Volunteering Policy 2025/26



11. Review & Evaluation

Placements will be reviewed through:

- Weekly check-ins
- Provider feedback
- Student self-reflection
- Parent/carer input
- Final evaluation report
- Findings will inform future placement planning and provider suitability.

12. Data Protection

- Only relevant information will be shared with providers
- All data will be handled in line with GDPR
- Providers must store information securely

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier if:

- Statutory guidance changes
- Placement procedures change
- Safeguarding requirements are updated