9 February 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

CURRENT YEAR 10 - WORK EXPERIENCE WEEK: 3 – 7 SEPTEMBER 2018

As a very important part of our Work Related Learning activities, preparations are now jointly underway with Herts YC (Youth Connexions) for our Y11 Work Experience Week, which will take place at the very beginning of term for our existing Year 10 students in September 2018.

The primary aim of work experience in Year 11 is not future job selection – it is to give our young people experience of an adult working environment where they will have to cope with unfamiliar situations and where they may acquire many new skills. We hope that the week will enable the students to experience some of the challenges of work outside the classroom so that they are able to handle the transition from school to further education and work more comfortably.

Whilst many schools have cut work experience from their provision and rely solely on classroom based careers lessons, we firmly believe that work experience should continue to form an integral part of the school curriculum here at Rickmansworth. Now, more than ever, our young people need to develop their employability skills, to better prepare them for the increasingly competitive world beyond school – be that in further/higher education or employment. This is a viewpoint supported by the many employers who provide us with work placements. Extensive provision is made for the preparation of students before their placements, and later for follow-up discussion to evaluate the experience.

To minimise disruption to learning, but also to emphasise the link between their GCSE studies and the world of work, work experience this year coincides with the very first week back at school in September. Please note that students will commence their placements on Monday 4 September which is the first of two Inset days. Arrangements will be made to ensure all students receive their timetables for Y11 on their return to School on 11 September – details of which will be sent out in due course.

As work experience takes place during the normal school term, the students fall under the School’s responsibility. As such we are required to ensure that each placement is inspected for health & safety, insurance, and the provision of appropriate work by a qualified assessor from Herts YC. No student is permitted out of school on work experience unless these checks have been made. Given the withdrawal of Government funding and increased cost of these checks, we are having to ask parents to make a £35 contribution towards the cost of the assessment of their child’s placement (if within Hertfordshire).

Students are able to use our on-line booking system “Link2+” to help find placements within the local area. All students will be allocated time in the Resources Rooms during L3 sessions in May and June to explore the placements on offer and to pick their top 6 choices from a variety of categories of work. We will also advise them to show you the Link2+ system at home, before confirming their final choices.Whilst it is important for the students to make their own decisions, we would encourage you to discuss these with them.
Whilst we will endeavour to match the majority of our students with one of their preferences, this is not always possible. With this in mind, you may wish to consider finding a private placement for your son/daughter. Details on how to do this are given below.

**Private Placements:**

Given the high demand on the placements offered by Herts YC, it is possible for students to arrange their own private work experience placements, and I would strongly encourage you to consider this option. Students who are able to organise a private placement should arrange for the attached Employer Health & Safety Declaration to be completed by the prospective employer, and returned to Mrs Pickford by **Friday 25 May 2018**. The completed form will then be sent to Herts YC who will organise a H & S inspection.

Please note the following when arranging a private placement:
- Placements must employ five or more people;
- Requests will only be accepted if they are within *reasonable travelling distance from the School* as staff are required to visit each pupil during work experience;
- Herts YC has a reciprocal vetting service with neighbouring counties. However, if that area’s internal caseload is heavy they may not agree to inspect the placement, and therefore it will not be approved.

**Cost of Work Experience Placements to Parents:**

1. Private placements and placements provided by HCC *within* Hertfordshire **£35**
2. Private placements *outside* Hertfordshire **£60**
3. Late submission of private placements (i.e. after 25th May) will incur a penalty charge of **£60** (in Herts); **£80** (outside Herts)

Payment for private placements must be submitted with the Private Placement Form and is *not* refundable if the placement is visited and found to be unsuitable. All payments, for both private and Herts YC provided placements are due by 25 May 2018, and should be paid via the School Cashless payment system. For those students in receipt of Pupil Premium no payment is required.

If, for any reason, a private placement is not approved, the student will be informed and an alternative offer will be made from the list of jobs available on Link2+.

On 28 June, all Y10 will participate in a work experience preparation day. They will be given details of the placement we have matched them with and participate in interview technique, telephone skills, health & safety, and application form/cv building workshops. They will also be given guidance in contacting their employers to organise a re-placement interview before the summer holidays.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Pickford in the Careers Department if you have any queries regarding Work Experience Week. In the meantime, thank you for support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Pickford
Head of Careers, Work Related Learning & Enterprise
Y10 WORK EXPERIENCE PAYMENT FORM
Please return by Friday 25 May 2018

STUDENT NAME: ................................................... FORM: ..................................

I enclose payment as indicated below:

- £35 For placements within Hertfordshire (both private, and those organised by HCC)
- £60 For private placements taking place outside Hertfordshire.

The School is in receipt of Pupil Premium for my son/daughter, and I agree that payment for work experience will be made from this fund.