Dear Parents/Carers

YEAR 11 WORK EXPERIENCE WEEK: 28th SEPTEMBER – 2nd OCTOBER 2015

As a very important part of our Work Related & Enterprise Learning activities, preparations are now jointly underway with Herts CC Youth Connexions (‘HCC’) for our Year 11 Work Experience Week, which will take place at the end of September 2015.

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:

- Develop their personal, social and employability skills;
- Develop their understanding of the world of work, and gain some relevant skills and knowledge;
- Broaden the range of occupations they may consider for the future;
- Experience some of the challenges and strains of work so that they will be able to handle the move to working life more comfortably.

In recent years the Government has removed the statutory requirement to send all students out on work experience, and with it all funding, but has advised schools this does not mean they do not place great importance on such experiences! As a result, many schools have cut work experience from their provision and rely solely on classroom based careers lessons. However, 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 personal and employability skills, to better prepare them for the increasingly competitive world beyond school – be that in further/higher education or in 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. 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 with regards to health & safety, insurance, and the provision of appropriate work. An inspection entails a visit to the employer by a qualified assessor employed by HCC. 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 £30 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 Room on 13th May and 4th June to explore the placements on offer and to pick their top 6 choices from a variety of categories of work, which they then place in order of preference. 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 their choices with them.

Whilst we will endeavour to match all students with one of their 6 preferences, it is impossible to place every student with a placement of their choice in their local vicinity. With this in mind, we would ask you to encourage your child to find their own placement, with your support. Details on how to do this are given overleaf.

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Private Placements:

Given the high demand on the placements offered by HCC, 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 wish to do so should complete an Employer Health & Safety Declaration Form – a copy of this form is attached and will also be available on the school website. You should arrange for this form to be completed by the prospective employer, and returned for the attention of Mrs Pickford. The completed form will then be sent to HCC and the placement will be visited by an assessor to ensure it is suitable and complies with the insurance, equal opportunities and health & safety criteria.

Please note the following when arranging a private placement:
- Placements must employ five or more people, including the work experience student;
- Requests will only be accepted if they are within reasonable travelling distance from the school as staff are required to visit each student during work experience;
- HCC will only accept applications for placements in Hertfordshire, Beds, Berks, Bucks and London.
- HCC has a reciprocal vetting service with these areas. However, if that area's internal caseload is heavy they may not agree to inspect the placement, and therefore it will not be approved. The School has no control over this situation and cannot, therefore, guarantee that placements will automatically be processed.

As HCC need adequate time to process these requests, the final date for return of Private Placement Referral Forms will be Friday 22nd May 2015.

Cost of Work Experience Placements to Parents:

1. Private placements and placements provided by HCC within Hertfordshire £30
2. Private placements outside Hertfordshire £60
3. Late submission of private placements (i.e. after 22nd May) will incur a penalty charge of £80

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 HCC provided placements is due by 22nd May 2015, and can be paid via the School Cashless payment system or via cheque. For those students in receipt of Student 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 30th June, the whole of Year 10 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.

Please do not hesitate to contact me 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
Careers, Work Related Learning & Enterprise Coordinator

Attachments:
Employer Health & Safety Declaration Form
Work Experience Payment slip
Y11 WORK EXPERIENCE PAYMENT FORM

Please return to Bursar’s Office by Friday 22\textsuperscript{nd} May 2015

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

I enclose payment as indicated below:

- £30 For placements within Hertfordshire (both private, and those organised by HCC)
- £60 For private placements taking place outside Hertfordshire.

*Please tick against method of payment below:

Cheque payment: please make cheques payable to Rickmansworth School and hand in at the Bursars Office

Online payment: I am registered for the School internet payment facility and would like to make online payments

My email address is ........................................................................................................

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

If the payment is in cash and over £20 a receipt MUST be obtained from the Bursars Office. Thank you.