Supporting Young People in the Workplace

Guidance on Safeguarding, Wellbeing and Responding to Concerns



For any adult working with children, it is important to feel confident in the relationship, whilst at the same time being aware of the potential that a problem may arise.

The following guidelines have been written to support employers to deliver safe and successful work placements for both children and employees alike.

Behaviour and Relationships

It is important that children are reassured and helped to feel comfortable and confident in their new surroundings. However, relationships should remain professional and avoid becoming too familiar. Be aware that 'horseplay' may cause a child embarrassment or fear.

Physical contact

The occasions when touch is required to guide the arm or hand of a child during a task or whilst training to carry out a technical or manual operation should be kept to a minimum and should be used in a manner that is appropriate to the situation. Again, it is good to have more than one employee around.

Disclosure

A child may confide to a work colleague information that could raise concern for their physical or emotional safety. If this arises, the employee should speak to their line manager who should share the concern with the school contact or central work placement organiser, or in the case of a college, the student support Designated Child Protection Officer. This response should also be adopted if a child makes an allegation against someone in their work placement.

Supervision

Children should be always supervised whilst on a work placement. Good supervision is an effective way of enabling the placements to be successful and reduce the risk of problems arising. Employers should remind staff that relationships with children are appropriate to their age and gender and do not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitude, behaviour, and language all require care and thought in the presence of children.

Environment

It is advisable that employees are not placed in a situation whereby they are isolated or working alone with a child. If a task necessitates one on one, employers can implement simple precautions such as ensuring the task is delivered in a public area or in a room with the door open enabling occupants to be visible and audible from the outside.

Travel

On occasions when travel is necessary, ensure that a third party is aware of the intended destination and check-in times are agreed and registered. It is a good idea to make available a mobile phone in the event of a breakdown or emergency.

Disqualification

Employers are reminded that they are required by law to protect children from harm and that employees are required under the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 to declare if they are disqualified from working with children.

NB: Safeguarding procedures protect both staff and children.

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