

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: Education Committee	Subject: WORK EXPERIENCE FOR SCHOOL PUPILS: HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE
From: Director of Education	
Date: January 2001	
Ref: MM/MS	

Summary

This report proposes the establishment of a health and safety post to vet pupil work experience placements.

Recommendations

The education committee is recommended;

- (i) to approve the establishment of the work experience health and safety post as detailed in section 3.
- (ii) to refer this request to the personnel committee for approval.



Members wishing further information about the paper should contact:

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NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL : DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WORK EXPERIENCE FOR SCHOOL PUPILS : HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

Report by the Director of Education

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Each year over 4500 pupils from North Lanarkshire schools take part in a work experience programme. Placements are generally one week long and are arranged by the school. These are significant in preparing young people for adult and working life. The experience is considered to be an essential element in their education because
- (a) it helps to develop personal and social skills
 - (b) it gives first hand opportunity to learn about working life and the workplace environment
 - (c) it helps to develop the attributes and skills needed in later working life, for example problem solving, teamwork and communication skills
- 1.2 Work experience opportunities are generally offered during the last year of compulsory education but also to those staying on beyond the leaving age.

2 LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

- 2.1 Work placements do not offer the supervised and disciplined environment of the school and there may be possible risks to pupils. Therefore it is essential that every possible step is taken to safeguard their health, safety and welfare.
- 2.2 This requirement is also recognised in legislation, particularly health and safety legislation and the authority's "in loco parentis" common law responsibilities for pupils. The key players in the successful management of work experience are the education authority, schools and the placement provider. However, parents and individual pupils also have an important role.
- 2.3 Duties of the placement provider
- Employers have the responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all their employees and others in the workplace, including those on work experience. The particular duties for work experience placements include risk management particularly risk assessment, risk controls and the provision of risk information to parents.
- 2.4 Duties of the education authority
- Under health and safety legislation the authority has duties both to employees and others affected by its work, for example pupils. Therefore, it is essential to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that pupils on work experience are not exposed to health and safety risks. This involves:

(a) ensuring that proposed placements are suitable, for example that adequate health , safety and welfare arrangements are in place and that there are no significant risks to the pupils.

(b) supporting schools in their organisation of placements.

2.5 It is therefore considered that the education department should establish procedures for vetting and approving proposed placements. Work experience placements will be allowed only in approved establishments.

3. WORK EXPERIENCE HEALTH AND SAFETY POST

3.1 The establishment of the following post is proposed to carry the responsibility for work experience placement vetting.

<u>Post</u>	<u>Grade/Salary</u>
Health & Safety Officer	APV
	Salary/on costs £23,790
	Travel £2,000

3.2 The funding for the post is available in the existing education budget.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The education committee is recommended;

(i) to approve the establishment of the work experience health and safety post as detailed in section 3.

(ii) to refer this request to the personnel committee for approval.

MM
January 2001