

Students, Parents' and T/Y Coordinators, please read the information below carefully.

DSPCA WORK EXPERIENCE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Welcome to the DSPCA – Ireland's oldest and largest animal rescue and welfare shelter.

First of all, may we say thank you for choosing the DSPCA to undergo your work experience placement. As you will no doubt realise, our extensive programme is very popular with schools and our diary fills up pretty quickly with students booking in advance.

The information below is designed to help you get the most out of your time with us. It contains basic health and safety rules for working here and it gives you an idea of what you should expect at a busy, working animal hospital.

Your Hours of Work: Work commences each morning, Monday to Friday, at 9.00am sharp and finishes at 4.30pm. Please arrive at **8.50am** each morning in order to be ready to commence work at 9.00am. Students must be at their assigned work stations by 9.00am.

You will not be expected to come in on a Bank Holiday or Public Holiday.

Duties: Assisting with general yard duties, which will include the daily care, cleaning, and exercise of the animals in the shelter.

All students are requested to make sure they are dropped off and collected each day on time. There are no busses directly to the shelter. The nearest bus stop is three quarters of a mile away and there are no footpaths. This can be dangerous, especially during the winter months.

Break Time: A half hour mid morning break is allocated to you from 11.00am to 11.30pm sharp (though times may vary to suit your supervisor).

Lunch Time: One hour, from 1.00pm to 2.00pm sharp is allocated to you for your lunch break (though times may vary to suit your supervisor).

All students are asked to bring a packed lunch with them; all that hard work will make you hungry, also there are no shops nearby and students must remain on the premises for the entire duration of the work day. This is a health and safety requirement.

There is a kitchenette on site and students may make tea, coffee, toast etc., and there is a microwave if students wish to heat food.

Students are requested to take their lunch in the coffee shop or in a place designated to them by staff. It is essential students leave their eating area tidy for the next user.

Clothing: Please suitable clothes such as old, warm, rainproof clothing and wellies. The work is hard but fun, and everyday is different. Please note clothes may get very dirty.

Jewellery: Please leave it at home. It can be uncomfortable and even dangerous when you are handling animals.

School Insurance Certificate: Please bring this with you on your first morning and hand it to the Education Officer. **This must be an up to date insurance certificate.**

Assessment Sheet: Students who have a written assessment **must** provide the relevant sheet/documentation from their school, **along with a stamped, addressed envelope**. Students who do not have an assessment form will have one of the DSPCA standard ones filled in and sent to the school.

Special Requirements: ***NB!*** It is ***absolutely essential*** that all students have an up to date anti tetanus vaccination before commencement of work experience. Proof is **not** required! Those who don't ***will not*** be allowed commence work and will be sent home (unless a previous arrangement has been made with parents or guardians). If you are unsure regarding the date of your anti tetanus vaccination please check it with your family doctor or health centre. Generally, a vaccination is valid for 10 years but we recommend you check this with a medical practitioner/school.

Your Work Day: On your first morning it is **essential** you arrive **on time**, otherwise you will miss the health and safety/orientation meeting and will not understand the operations of the shelter or the tasks you are required to carry out.

At this meeting you will be allocated your particular area of work. You will be answerable to the supervisor in charge of that area.

All students **must stay** within their allocated areas and under **no circumstances** may they swap around or visit other areas without prior permission from the Education Department. **This is a health and safety regulation of the DSPCA.**

***If a student is found to be in breach of the shelter's health and safety regulations it will result in their immediate dismissal from the programme and they will be asked to leave. This will terminate their Work Experience at the DSPCA and a letter will be sent to the school and parents/guardians.**

Sign In Sheet: It is a health and safety requirement that every morning, each student must sign their name in the 'sign in' sheet at reception. You will be shown this on your first morning. Any student who doesn't sign this sheet will be deemed to be absent and will be marked as such on their school assessment.

NB! If, for whatever reason, you are absent, you must email the Education Department on education@dspca.ie. This is vital so we can avoid organisational problems. It is also a requirement of your school that you undergo the required amount of days with us and any absences or late appearances will be filled in on the attendance/work assessment sheet for your school.

Mobile 'Phones: These are **not** permitted during working hours as they can upset the animals and you are required to give the animals in your care 100% of your time and attention. You may, if you wish, use your mobile 'phone during break times only. Office 'phones are not for the use of work experience students unless authorised by a staff member.

Walkmans: I pods or MP3 players etc., are not permitted during work times. They are a safety issue when working around animals.

Hoodies: If you are cold, please wear a hat. Hoodies are not permitted; they upset some of the the animals and are a safety issue around certain animals.

Hi Viz: Students will be issued with a Hi Viz jacket and are required to wear same during their working hours. **Any student not wearing a Hi Viz jacket will be deemed to be in breach of health and safety regulations.**

The Office Buildings: These are non smoking buildings. **Students are not permitted to smoke whilst at the shelter.**

***Anyone found in breach of the non smoking rule will immediately have their work experience placement terminated.**

The Public: The shelter is open to the public from 11.00am, please refer any member of the public who asks you for information to a member of staff or to reception where they will receive expert help. You are not required nor are you experienced enough to give out information regarding the shelter/staff/animals, etc.,

Basic Rules of Hygiene: Animals can carry contagious diseases, so, when working with animals, it's important you follow basic rules of hygiene.

- You must wear gloves provided. These are in each feed room or ask a member of staff.
- Wash your hands with disinfectant soap provided before each break and before you go home.
- Do not eat while working in the yard.
- The feed for all animals is prepared in the corresponding feed room. It is important to keep it clean and tidy and restocked for hygienic reasons.
- At all times, follow the instructions of your area supervisor. If in doubt, or if you have any questions, ask a member of staff.

First Aid: There are many first aid kits: Notify a member of staff of any accidents and injuries. If you are bitten/scratched, it is essential you disinfect the area immediately and notify a staff member.

Please be aware of the following:

Isolation, treatment kennels, quarantine and post operative units all house vulnerable animals and visitors are not allowed in these areas.

***Work experience students may only go into these areas if specifically instructed to do so by a staff member. If a work experience student is found to be in any area without express, prior permission from a member of staff, it will result in their instant dismissal from the programme. ***

Our Animals: We are a working animal hospital; we rescue sick, injured, abandoned and cruelly treated animals. Please be aware dogs and cats can react aggressively when they're stressed and/or in pain. Always approach animals calmly. If you are not confident about a particular situation, please ask a staff member for help and advice. If in doubt, always ask for guidance. We are here to help.

Kennels: Always ask a member of the kennel staff before you enter a kennel and take a dog for a walk. Do not take any animal for a walk unless you have first cleared it with a member of staff.

Also, **do not** walk dogs during your break or lunch times. Please pick up any poo deposited by a dog while out walking. There are specially designated poo bags and bins for this purpose and staff will provide you with them.

If you are asked to do something and you are unsure of what to do, please ask for clarification from a staff member. Nobody expects you to remember or to know everything.

And remember...if you have any queries, problems, dilemmas concerning your work experience placement or your duties, please ask a staff member in charge of your area. We want your time here to be enjoyable, positive and rewarding both for you and for the animals in your care and we will endeavour to do all we can to ensure this happens.

Once again, thank you for choosing to undergo your placement with us. The staff appreciates your hard work and enthusiasm.

Gillian Bird

PH: 01-4994705

E: education@dspca.ie

Education Officer, DSPCA – 177 YEARS HELPING ALL ANIMALS.