

My Work Experience at High Fernley Primary School

For my work experience I received a placement at High Fernley Primary School. It is located in Wyke, Bradford and provides education for children aged three to eleven. I attended High Fernley primary school for two weeks; my work placement began on 27 September and ended on 9 October. Each day I arrived at 8.30am and normally finished at 3.10pm; sometimes I would work slightly longer in order to finish tasks.

I did not attend a pre-placement visit as a result of a delay in confirmation of the placement. Nevertheless, I rang High Fernley as soon as I received confirmation and I spoke to the school administrator, Mrs. Julie Malinder. I introduced myself and thanked them for accepting my work placement. I asked important questions regarding dress code, arrival times and lunch arrangements.

Before the placement I was excited because I was looking forward to it and I knew that I would like the school environment. However I was also nervous because I was going to be working in a different environment and I would be working in a different role as a teaching assistant not as a student. I had a basic idea about what this work placement would involve and I had already thought about what skills, abilities and qualities I hoped to gain from this experience.

I was hoping to gain further knowledge about the working environment, what it was like and how different it is to a student life. I also wanted to develop my communication skills by talking to adults and children and participating in class discussions. I also hoped that it would give me a taste of this type of work and help me decide if I wanted to do a similar job in the future.

During my work placement I did various tasks such as helping the children to follow simple tasks and instructions such as washing hands and tidying up. Sometimes I found this quite difficult as it involved shouting over large amounts of noise and getting the children's attention but it helped to develop my confidence and communication skills and as the week went on I found this task much easier. Helping children to put their shoes and coats on was another task I did often. I found this easy but sometimes putting 30 pairs of shoes on children was quite tiring. However I enjoyed teaching the children how to tie their laces and fasten their coats as this was quite rewarding and by the end of the week some of them could do these tasks. I also helped the children to learn and revise the alphabet and numbers. I was involved with tasks such as painting, jigsaws, listening exercises and writing. All these helped the children to learn this. I also assisted the children whilst they built houses and models using boxes, glue and card. In addition I worked with the children on the computer helping them to use the mouse, for example, click, drag and move. Also making them draw pictures using the paint software and monitoring how well they did these tasks on the computer. I then collected the printouts and stored them in a folder so that their progress can be monitored. I enjoyed these tasks as they enabled me to get to know the children more whilst having fun. Also I help the children get ready for P.E. As well as this I did basic jobs around the classroom such as washing tables, cleaning up toys, making sure toilets had paper in, filling and emptying water tank, creating and putting up displays and setting the milk with straws and name tags so that they can drink their milk. Additionally I supervised the children on a school trip around Wyke where we looked at the different types of houses in order to help them with a project they were doing. I was in charge of a group of four children and I had to help them cross the roads and ensure that they were safe at all times. I had the chance to stand in front of a house and explain the different features to the whole class. I enjoyed this as it enabled me to improve my communication skills and I learned how to manage a group of children.

I decided to interview the class teacher, Mrs. Cooper. I found out that she was in charge of preparing, planning and teaching lessons such as Literacy, Maths, Art, Numbers and Shapes as well as all the other areas of curriculum. The most important parts of her job were making sure children were learning in a safe, fun environment. She told me that being a teacher had taught her how to organise time, herself, resources and to communicate effectively. In order to be a Primary School teacher I found out that you need a PGCE in education as well as 5 A-C grades in GCSE's. Mrs. Cooper told me that the best part of her job was that she loved to see the children progress and learn whilst having fun and she found this very rewarding. However she said that this type of job was very time consuming and that anyone interested should be prepared to give up their time.

I feel that I have achieved my entire action plan. My aim was to gain further knowledge about the working environment, what it was like and how different it is to a student life. I found out that it is similar to the school environment that I am

used to as you still get breaks and lunchtime. However, instead of being on the receiving end of instructions and having to complete tasks given to you by teachers such as homework etc... You have to give instructions and make sure children complete them. In this type of working environment I had a lot more authority than I do at school. I also wanted to develop my communication skills by talking to adults and children and participating in class discussions. I improved my communication skills everyday as I was always talking to children and staff and I gave a lot of instructions and I learned how to communicate effectively with large groups of children.

In the future I would like to keep on improving the above skills so that I would feel confident in any work situations.

Overall I had an excellent, fun and memorable work experience. I enjoyed most aspects of this type of work and I learnt so much and I feel that I have become more knowledgeable and improved as a person. The only parts I did not enjoy was when I had nothing to do; I like to always be doing something that is productive and active.

I do not know what career I would like to pursue in the future but I would like to be involved in an active job where I would not be bored. I would also like to do a job that involved music or sport. In addition I would like to be in a job where no day is exactly the same and where I can learn something new everyday.