



**SPEAKERS**  
for schools

## **VWEX Safeguarding Policy**

### **Summer 2020**

We understand that the safety and wellbeing of young people is the main priority for their teachers and responsible adults. As we work with so many schools across the UK, many of whom differ in what they consider to be best practice, we want to be clear around the processes and checks that are put in place by Speakers for Schools to make sure students are safe during placements.

As liability for safeguarding remains with the school throughout the placement, and as we do not have access to or know what each school's own safeguarding checks and processes are, we ask that you read the safeguarding measures we've put in place and make sure that these meet your own requirements.

The following procedures have been put in place to help schools meet their safeguarding requirements:

- **Minimum cohort sizes:** We only facilitate placements for five or more students. These students may be from different schools, rather than just your own. This minimum placement cohort means students will never be in one to one calls or online meetings with employers.
- **Code of conduct:** Before the placement, we ask all participating employers involved in direct delivery of the placements to read and sign a code of conduct, which outlines how they should interact with students and responsible handling of data.
- We also ask all students to sign a code of conduct relating to professional behaviour and keeping themselves safe during placements. We make it clear to students that they should report anything unusual or uncomfortable to their teachers and Speakers for Schools as soon as they can.
- **Temporary email accounts:** We generate temporary G-Suite accounts for all students so that employers cannot view their personal contact details.

- **Oversight:** We run the placements through our own Google Classroom account, meaning we have full visibility of all interactions taking place between employers and students.
- We record all video meetings and calls. We store these securely and will only ever view them if an issue arises. These videos will not be shared privately or publicly.
- Students should not share personal contact details with adults or other students, instead using the Google Classroom accounts which we provide.
- For the VWEX Light, we ensure that students are aware of safeguarding procedures when accessing the livestream events.

## FAQs

**Speakers for Schools has previously required a school reference to support any pupil work experience application on your website. Is this still the case in this virtual world of work?**

Yes, we would require a staff member at the school to approve all student applications, confirm that they will be available to attend the placements and provide any information required by the employer.

**What health & safety checks are done by your charity with employers before you advertise their opportunities?**

Before the placement, we ask all participating employers involved in direct delivery of the placements to students to read and sign a code of conduct, which outlines how they should interact with students and responsible handling of data. Most of the employers are leading employers including Bank of England, BP, Tesco, Morgan Sindall, V & A Museum and as a charity we do not have the capability to carry out health and safety checks on these employers who are based in every corner of the UK. You will therefore need to conduct your own health and safety checks following your usual procedures for school trips and/or work experience placements.

**Is there certain criteria employers need to demonstrate to you regarding internet and data safety for their virtual opportunities to be advertised through your site?**

We run the placements through our own Google Classroom account, meaning we have full visibility of all interactions taking place between employers and students. We give all participating employers and students temporary email addresses with which to access the Classroom so that no personal contact details are shared and we delete the temporary email addresses after the placement. Only users with email addresses from our own domain can access the classroom. We also ask employers to sign our Code of Conduct before the placement. These procedures mean we are confident we have done everything we can to ensure students are safe during placements.

**Is there an opportunity anywhere for parents of students under the age of 18 to support the application or will schools always need to support an application?**

Schools should secure parental permission as we have verified that registered school contacts are staff members. Speakers for Schools does not have the ability to confirm the parents' details if it is passed on to us by the student.

### **Are the courses run through the companies own website or does it run through yours?**

The placements are delivered through the Google Classroom platform, which is provided by Speakers for Schools.

### **Are there any costs involved for parents or schools?**

VWEX opportunities are completely free for schools, colleges and academies thanks to the generosity of our funders and supporters of the charity.

### **If there is any unsafe or inappropriate behaviour by a student, would they be removed from the session and if so, who holds those privileges?**

We ask all students to sign a code of conduct before the placement which includes:

- Asking students to ensure they are in a quiet space with a neutral background during all calls
- Ensuring they are dressed appropriately if cameras are on
- That they need to tell a member of their school staff and a member of the Sfs team if anything makes them uncomfortable during a group call. We have a minimum cohort size of 5, so students are never one to one on calls with employers and employers have the right to mute a student and terminate a placement if a student does not abide by the code of conduct.

If a student placement was terminated as a result of unsafe or inappropriate behaviour, Speakers for Schools would ensure the school staff member who is the key contact for the duration of the placement was notified immediately.

### **Do all employers have an up to date DBS check and will these be passed on to schools?**

Employers who are providing work experience placements are not normally asked to provide DBS checks for each employee who will be working with students. This is to ensure that the provision of work experience does not become onerous and so prevent employers from getting involved.

For more information please see the VWEX Educators guide [here](#).

If you require further assistance, you can reach a member of the team by emailing [experience@speakersforschools.org](mailto:experience@speakersforschools.org)