

Expectations, Evaluations and Assessments on European Work Experience by St. Michael's Pupils

What do you expect from your work experience?

More confidence in speaking Spanish, larger vocabulary and greater accuracy. A wider range and more developed speaking skills and communication. That the children will be quite needy and simple mannered.

What do you already know about the business / company / institution you are going to work for?

It is a day nursery from 8am to 1.30 pm.

What aspects or areas of your workplace would you like to explore in greater detail?

The Spanish school system and the differences with the British system eg public and private schools, what they learn, how they study and for how long.

Evaluation & Assessment

I believe my expectations were fulfilled in that I am more confident in speaking Spanish. I am also more confident with my oral presentations and I have learned alternative ways of saying the same thing. I was wrong in my expectations of the children: they were more perceptive than I had imagined, very lively and demanding. Patience is key and also a love for children. I feel I did have these skills but this experience helped me develop them further. I really enjoyed the experience and I learned how to lead a group and impose authority as well as improving my linguistic skills.

What do you expect from your work experience?

I expect this work experience to not only practice my French but to also allow me to observe and practice the culture and daily life of Belgians. I would also like to be able to interact with other people regularly.

What do you already know about the business / company / institution you are going to work for?

It is a kindergarten school called St Nicolas. The children are between 3 and 5 years of age. It is a religious school for both boys and girls.

What aspects or areas of your workplace would you like to explore in greater detail?

I would like to explore in greater detail the structure of the work place, what the children actually study at what age and how the teachers go about doing this.

Evaluation & Assessment

My work experience definitely met my expectations. I wanted to be able to interact with the children and I succeeded in doing so. The fact that they were young meant that they didn't really understand that my level of language wasn't as good as their's, which meant that the speed at which they talked really improved my listening skills. Overall I really enjoyed my work experience because it allowed me to learn a lot whilst having fun in a relaxed and casual atmosphere. In my opinion good social skills, the ability to interact patiently with children and patience are qualities that I am definitely needed for this job which I believe I have.

On March 19th 2011, a group of Italian A level students from seven schools in North London embarked on a one week linguistic trip to Florence, Italy and as we got off the plane we were all very nervous. We arrived at the airport in the afternoon and travelled to the Italian school of [ITCG Piero Calamandrei](#) where we were greeted by our exchanges and their families. We each spent a relaxing weekend getting to know our families and enjoying the traditional Italian food we were offered.

On Monday morning, the real work began as we were placed in different work placements around the town, where we would have no choice but to use our Italian skills as best we could and although we were all terrified we knew it would be exciting! The placements varied from being in a primary school to a traditional Italian bar and we all met interesting people that we worked with for the duration of the week.

This trip enhanced our communication skills and reinforced our confidence in speaking the language to the natives whilst building on the vocabulary we have all been learning since year 7. The evenings were spent with the rest of the students and exchanges visiting the beautiful sights of Florence and one day, travelling a short hour train journey to Pisa to visit the Leaning Tower and walking around to local town. Overall, it was a very beneficial experience that I would recommend to anyone interested in experiencing new cultures and being involved in the community whilst working and improving linguistically.

We took a two hour flight into an airport on the outskirts of Stockholm. The climate in Stockholm was completely different to London, as it was -7°C and snowing. We got the coach to the central bus station where we met our families and we spent the evening and the rest of the weekend getting to know them as we tried traditional Swedish food and went sightseeing in Stockholm - it was amazing to see the rivers that froze for 5 months a year, especially with people sledding along them. We were taught the routes to our individual work placements, which ranged from primary schools to hospitals.

My work placement was in Cafe Mimer. I was quite disappointed at first because I would have preferred work experience more related to medicine. However, once I was there I was utterly amazed at the busy workload and how many skills I picked up in my placement. By 12 noon each day, I had made 15 fruit salads and 24 rolls, as well as wiping down a few tables and sorting out cutlery, despite the fact that before the trip I was not very skilled in the kitchen. Another problem was the language: I don't speak a word of Swedish, but I found that most people there could speak English, and I soon picked up words and phrases (e.g. cheese, pineapple, pepper, thank you and hello.) In the evenings, my exchange took me out with other students- we went shopping, to restaurants and even to CyberTown (like Laser Quasar). The experience gave me the opportunity to think on my feet, use my own initiative and improve my people skills, and I am very grateful to the teachers who organised the trip.

What do you expect from your work experience?

I expect the experience to be very beneficial to me for several reasons: from helping me with my social skills, to helping me expand my French vocabulary and have more confidence with my French speaking.

What do you already know about the business / company / institution you are going to work for?

I know that it is a primary school I will be helping the children with their English and other subjects.

What aspects or areas of your workplace would you like to explore in greater detail?

I would definitely like to get an idea of the differences between primary schooling in France and England. I hope to gain some understanding of how English is taught abroad.

Evaluation & Assessment

The work experience without a doubt fulfilled my expectations. I expanded my French vocabulary, gained a great deal more confidence in my French speaking and used my social skills effectively despite the new environment. I improved in skills that will be useful in any job including reliability, confidence, team work and punctuality. In conclusion the work experience abroad was easily one of the best experiences of my life.

What do you expect from your work experience?

I expect to expand my vocabulary particularly in terms of colloquial expressions. Hopefully I will also learn about German lifestyle and culture. I expect to become more confident with speaking German.

What do you already know about the business / company / institution you are going to work for?

I know I will be working in a kindergarten near the centre of Hearn. It is essentially a Catholic institution looking after children from the ages of around 3 to 6 years old. Each class has up to 20 children.

What aspects or areas of your workplace would you like to explore in greater detail?

I am interested in the early stages of learning at my placement so it will be interesting to see how the nursery staff integrate learning and playing. It will also be fun to play games with the children and compare what they do in English nurseries.

Evaluation & Assessment

I felt my work experience was worthwhile, both mentally and physically demanding. I learnt to deal with young children in a foreign language which proved challenging at times but expanded my vocabulary and increased my confidence in speaking German, especially spontaneously. Working with children requires patience, understanding and lot of caring which is not always easy. However I think I developed some of these qualities on my work experience which will help me in the future should I decide to go into education or childcare.