

Offering work experience at Borough Care

Borough Care work with their local colleges and Jobcentre Plus to support people interested in work in social care, to do work experience and gain an honest insight into the challenging but rewarding world of working in a care home.

Borough Care provides care services for older people in Stockport. They have 11 residential care homes, as well as active recovery and day care services.

They're passionate about supporting people who are interested in working in social care, to have a meaningful experience and really understand what it's like to work there before applying for a job with them.

Life in a care home is so varied, with no two days the same - so the work experience they offer is diverse to give a rounded view of what it's like to work there. Importantly, tasks are shaped around the person's interests, skills and capabilities to ensure they're engaged and motivated.

They also encourage them to interact with people who access care and support as much as possible – such as finding out about their life history, hobbies and interests. This helps placements understand how much the colourful characters and their exciting stories make a career in care so rewarding.

To achieve this, placements might do things like serving tea and cake or helping the activity

and lifestyle facilitator with activities such as chair basketball or karaoke. They might also, for example, support people at meal times.

Shadowing is a key activity within all placements because they feel it enables people to explore how the organisation works and develop their knowledge.

They've learnt that while some people are self-starters and able to keep themselves busy, others need prescribed activities to keep them engaged in the placement.

Younger individuals find this particularly useful, as they sometimes lack the communication skills to ask for further tasks. Being specific also helps the activities feel meaningful and demonstrates how individuals really make a difference, which can motivate them.



Recruiting people for work experience

Borough Care celebrate diversity within the workforce and welcome work placements and volunteer positions for individuals of all ages and backgrounds.

They find people for work experience through their relationship with the local college and Jobcentre Plus, who refer suitable candidates to them.



Induction for people on work experience

They invite all work placements to attend the 'Welcome to Borough Care' session – this introduces them to the organisation and explains more about what they'll be doing and what the organisation expect from them.

They also enrol placements on their 'My Learning Cloud' portal, so they can participate in relevant modules of learning.

They've found that a learning log from people's college or Jobcentre Plus is helpful, to ensure people get what they want out of the experience.



The benefits

Offering work experience has developed the skills of Borough Care's existing staff who support placements through mentoring and coaching.

Staff have also enjoyed the fresh ideas and enthusiasm that has come from placements.



Monitoring progress

They monitor people regularly throughout their work placement. Where possible, they encourage registered home managers to enter into continuous dialogue and always encourage an exit interview or discussion at the end of the placement.

Skills for Care recommends

Offering meaningful work experience guide

This step by step guide helps adult social care employers deliver and get the most out of work experience.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/meaningfulworkexp

Pre-employment support

We have guidance and tools to help adult social care employers get involved in pre-employment support programmes.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/preemployment

Finding and keeping the right workers

Our online toolkit has practical tips and resources to help you attract, take on and keep the right people for your organisation.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/finderskeepers