

Child Employment

Information For Employers And Parents/Carers

August 2025

How To Obtain A Work Permit

- Application forms may be obtained from the address on the back of this leaflet or from the child's school.
- This form must include hours and days and the nature of employment.
- The employer must declare that an appropriate risk assessment has been carried out.
- The child's parents/carers and the child's headteacher/education provider must sign the form
- When completed the form should be returned to the address on the back of this leaflet.
- A copy of the permit will be sent to the employer who must keep it at the workplace.

Can A Child Be Employed Without A Work Permit?

No. Employing a child of compulsory school-age without a work permit is illegal. Any employer found to be doing so may be liable to prosecution by the Local Authority. The employer may also be liable to prosecution by the enforcing authority under health and safety law.

Can A Work Permit Be Withdrawn?

Yes. The Local Authority may at any time revoke a child's employment permit if it has reasonable grounds to believe:-

- (a) that the child is being unlawfully employed; or
- (b) that his health, welfare or ability to take advantage of his education is suffering or likely to suffer as a result of the employment.

Would you like to know more?

Please contact:

Child Employment (Education Office)
Hereward Hall
County Road
March
PE15 8NE
Tel: 01354 750166
Fax: 01354 750293
Email:
child.employment@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

You can also obtain information from the Cambridgeshire County Council website.

If you would like a copy of the text in large print, Braille, audio tape or in another language, please call the Child Employment Office.

Introduction

Child employment is governed by national laws and regulations and by Cambridgeshire County Council's own byelaws which ensure that children who want to work can do so legally and safely.

Children of compulsory school-age¹ may only work if they:

- are over 13 years of age;
- have a work permit issued by the Local Authority.

At 13 years children may only do light work in the following occupations:

- agricultural or horticultural work;
- delivery of newspapers, journals and other printed material;
- shop work, including shelf stacking;
- hairdressing;
- office work;
- car washing by hand in a private residential setting;
- in a café or restaurant but not in the kitchen;
- in riding stables;
- domestic work in hotels and other establishments offering accommodation.

¹ Children reaching 16 years of age between 1 September and 31 August remain of compulsory school age until the last Friday in June.

Children are not allowed to work:

- in any factory or industrial undertaking;
- in a cinema, theatre, discotheque, dance hall or night-club, except where the performance is given entirely by children;
- selling or delivering alcohol, except in sealed containers;
- delivering milk or delivering fuel oils;
- in a commercial kitchen;
- collecting or sorting refuse;
- in any work which is more than three metres above ground or floor level;
- in any work involving harmful exposure to physical, biological or chemical agents;
- collecting money or selling or canvassing door to door except under the supervision of an adult;
- in any work involving exposure to adult material or in situations which are for this reason unsuitable for children;
- in telephone sales;
- in any slaughterhouse or butcher's shop;
- as an attendant or assistant in a fairground or amusement arcade or any other similar premises;
- in the personal care of residents of a residential care home or nursing home;
- in street trading.

Work Experience

The regulations governing work experience differ from child employment.

Hours Children Are Allowed To Work

- a maximum of 12 hours in any week during term time
- only between 7am and 7pm
- only 2 hours in a school day
- only 1 hour before school
- only 2 hours on a Sunday
- they must have 2 consecutive weeks free from work during the year
- they must have a rest break of 1 hour for every 4 hours worked

At 13 and 14 years

Saturdays

- 5 hours between 7am and 7pm.

School Holidays

- Maximum of 5 hours a day
- Maximum of 25 hours a week.

At 15 and 16 years

Saturdays

- 8 hours between 7am and 7pm.

School Holidays

- Maximum of 8 hours a day
- Maximum of 35 hours a week.