
Personal Experience Of Volunteering As A Teacher

The influence that a brilliant teacher can have on the life chances of children should never be underestimated. I learned this through my own personal experiences throughout secondary school, with one particular teacher investing her time in me and never doubting my capabilities - helping me achieve more than I ever thought I could. Her support undoubtedly had an impact on which path I chose to take next. I believe my passion to have a positive influence on others will create a supportive environment to give pupils of all abilities the opportunity to grow and succeed. As a committed and practising Catholic, I am also interested in completing the Catholic Teaching Certificate alongside my teacher training. I was blessed with an excellent Catholic education and know first-hand how Catholic teachings aim to help students develop to their full potential, preparing them for life whilst informing their minds and character so they can contribute to their communities.

I initially chose to volunteer with St. Helen's Primary school to experience working with a wide variety of age groups. I was able to spend a few weeks working with children in Primary 1, 3, 3 & 7. This experience gave me an insight into the methods used for managing behaviour, dealing with a wide range of abilities within one class, and how to ensure that every child's needs are being met. I also learned the importance of perseverance through working one-to-one with a primary 3 pupil that struggled with his behaviour. This was challenging as it took time to learn his individual needs and to gain his respect. I believe I have a great deal of patience which is key when working with children in any capacity.

I also volunteered in Turnbull High School. During this time, I observed History and Modern Studies lessons from S1-S6. Working with different stages has expanded my understanding of how the curriculum can be implemented to suit the needs and abilities of students. Having furthered my interest in History and Modern Studies by completing a degree in History with Politics and International Relations at The University of Strathclyde, I am keen to work with young people to develop their awareness of social and political issues. I have a particular interest in social stratification and gender discrimination both of which continue to be central to the History and Modern Studies curriculum. I enjoyed the varied nature of learning at University which consolidated and enhanced my understanding of my interest in global social and political issues. Whilst in Turnbull I had the opportunity to take part in the wider school curriculum and assist with a performance that pupils put together to mark the centenary year of the Great War. Whilst this was a school production it enabled me to get involved with pupils and staff on an informal basis and was vitally important in marking the centenary and remembering those who were involved in the Great War from the local community.

Whilst volunteering in St. Helen's was a great opportunity it led me to realise that I have a greater passion for Secondary education. Secondary education is vital in the development of young people, as they are encouraged to think about their future whilst continuing to need guidance to prepare them for adult independence and responsibility. The GIRFEC approach is important as this focuses on ensuring a positive difference to young people's lives and a multi-agency approach ensures young people get the right help at the right time. I spent time shadowing pastoral support teachers, and this has helped me understand the differing levels of support available for pupils. Teachers play a vital role in the wellbeing and educational

attainment of students; contributing to outcomes by safeguarding the wellbeing of students, supporting them to reach full potential and communicating concerns with other agencies.

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