

Nuffield Placement News September 2013



Head Girl Shannon O'Brien gives us an insight into her Nuffield Placement over the summer holidays. Shannon obtained five Grade A Highers in S5 in Maths, English, Biology, Physics and German. Shannon plans to apply to university to study Psychology or Biology but is still undecided.

'During the 6 week summer holidays this year I assisted in carrying out a Psychology experiment at Glasgow University as part of the Nuffield Placement Scheme. It was brilliant! Despite feeling like the underdog with little knowledge about the field of Psychology, I came out on top, meeting fantastic people and gaining a wealth of experiences. My experiment involved quizzing Level 2 psychology students about their anxiety towards a statistics exam that they must sit. We did this through questionnaires and focus groups. Although it wasn't the most exciting of projects, I had a fantastic time and a great laugh with the PhD students who I shared an office with. I was also able to participate in really fun experiments (some that even paid you!) and I was given the freedom to explore the University and meet all of the lovely lecturers. So although I didn't have much free time during my summer holidays I now have 6 weeks experience of psychology at a prestigious university as well as having several lecturers who are more than willing to write me references for university applications. Therefore I highly recommend that anyone interested in studying sciences participate in this fantastic opportunity!'

Craig Manzie (6C1) gives us an insight into his Nuffield Placement. Craig obtained 5 Highers in S5 in Chemistry (A), Computing (B), English (A), Maths (B) and Physics (B). Craig plans to study Chemical Engineering or Applied Chemistry at Glasgow University.

'During the summer I carried out a Nuffield research placement at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow. I worked in a research laboratory in the department of pure and applied chemistry alongside other students from the university which provided me with invaluable first-hand experience of both a research and university environment. Alongside the practical chemistry experience, I also worked on the analysis of substances outside of the lab using computer software to analyse data from my experiments and gained experience of writing a short scientific report. The experience has built my confidence about working in such environments and given me a better idea of how chemistry is applied in the real world. I have no doubt that the placement will benefit me in the long term and has reinforced my interest in the field of chemistry.'

Robyn Casey gives us an insight into her Nuffield Placement. Robyn obtained 5 Highers in S5 in Biology (A), Physics (B), English (B), Maths (A) and Music (A). Robyn has left VOLA and is studying Dance at Anniesland College. She then hopes to go on to University to study Maths and then become a Maths and Dance teacher.

'My Nuffield placement took place at the University of Glasgow and was in the field of physics. The Nuffield placement was a really amazing experience that taught me so much, not just in physics but also how to work independently and make decisions for myself which is not something you really get the opportunity to do at school. During the five weeks I spent on my placement I worked in the lab most of the time learning how to use different equipment and programmes that had many uses in the field of physics. I picked up many different skills that I will surely be able to use throughout my life. I would definitely recommend a Nuffield placement to anyone with even a slight interest in science as it teaches you so much and you get the privilege to meet so many interesting and talented people along the way.'

Rhys Wells (6C1) gives us an insight into his Nuffield Placement. Rhys also obtained five Highers in S5 in Maths (A), Physics (A), Chemistry (A), Graphic Communication (A) and English (B). Rhys plans to go to university to study Chemical Physics at Glasgow University.

'The Nuffield Placement offered an excellent opportunity to gain first hand experience within a laboratory setting, working with volatile substances demanded maturity and patience, also the project gave me the opportunity to use a variety of equipment which exemplified the diversity of the field. Each student I worked with had real enthusiasm for their project and were friendly and helpful when I needed help. Working with them gave me insight into the importance of Chemistry. Being passionate about chemistry they gave inspiration and showed me that a job can be enjoyable and fulfilling. Lastly the Nuffield Project gave me insight into the responsibilities of university life and it prompted me to continue down this career path as it demonstrated the joys of chemistry.'

The pupils represented the school and attended a 'Celebration Event' this month at the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh to present their research. If any current S5 pupils are interested in being considered for a Nuffield Placement for the summer of 2014 please speak to **Miss Mooney** (Principal Teacher of Raising Attainment) or **Mrs Palin** (Curriculum Leader Science). Pupils must be studying at a minimum of 5 Highers (including Maths and **at least** one science subject).