

# BP STUDENT TUTORING SCHEME

## The Gordon Schools, Huntly - March 2013

**Participation:** Mrs G Scott (BP Student Tutoring Scheme Co-ordinator), Mrs M Anderson, Depute Rector/Link Teacher, Mr McLauchlan (Acting Depute Rector and PT Business Education), Mrs Cameron (Art), Mrs Harper (P.E), Roslyn Feeney (RGU), Mark MacDonald (UA), Philippa Hurst (UA), Gordon Rosie (UA).

The Gordon Schools (TGS) in Huntly, Aberdeenshire have participated continuously in the BP Student Tutoring Scheme for a number of years. Mrs Mary Anderson, Depute Rector is the current 'Link Teacher' and is a keen advocate of the scheme, encouraging teachers throughout the school to consider taking on board a tutor.

Four student tutors were observed during the visit and where available a discussion with supervising staff and pupils who have gained from tutor support. An additional tutor Laura Barrie, a University of Aberdeen student, supports the Maths Department on a Wednesday and has also been very much a valued resource within the school.

Roslyn Feeney is a final year Management with Marketing student from the Robert Gordon University. She assists every Friday morning in the Business Studies department with predominantly S4 pupils but has also worked with S1, S3 and S5/6. She initially met with an S1 class and will revisit them later in the placement to work on logos and branding where she will have an opportunity to share her marketing knowledge. Meantime she has spent the bulk of her time assisting Mrs Brown with the S4 Business Administration class, focusing mainly on spreadsheets and databases. She gives one to one advice within the IT suite and shared that she and the pupils 'learn from each other' regarding some of the complex spreadsheet tasks. Roslyn is hoping to pursue PGDE Secondary at some point and has found the experience invaluable.



Pupil comments include:

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“She has helped very much with spreadsheets and when I have been stuck she has been helpful”

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“She has helped me concentrate on doing my work”

“Really helped me with my revision before my prelims. She is also very nice”

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Mr McLauchlan, a recently promoted Faculty Head of the Business Education, ICT and Enterprise Faculty was very keen to 'inject new life' into the classrooms so particularly receptive to having Roslyn, drawing on her academic background and confidence to work with pupils. He looks at having her as an opportunity to gain feedback on current practices; encouraging existing staff to self-reflect on their own practice and improve as necessary. Overall Roslyn has had a positive impact on the pupils showing them what studying business studies can lead to in a university setting as well as giving help and support on an individual and group basis.

Mark MacDonald is a final year student at the University of Aberdeen studying English and assists at TGS every Friday morning. He has supported a variety of teachers and classes from S1 to S6. On the day of the visit Mark initially supported in his first class a child who required support with reading; in his second accompanied pupils to the primary school to interview/video the Head Teacher on the school anti-bullying policy; thereafter with an S2 class working on a 'favourite super hero vs villain' pamphlet, finishing prior to lunch helping an S1 class to write a 'scary story'! Mark is enjoying his time at TGS and has found all pupils and staff from the school extremely welcoming and supportive.

The S1 class who participated in the visit commented that Mr MacDonald had previously helped them on an 'animals in captivity' project, supporting them in developing a presentation/essay, giving tips on how to improve spelling, both individually and in groups.

#### Comments from the class included:

“ Mr MacDonald helped to get us started on the tasks by giving us helpful ideas” “

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I think he is cool and he helps us a lot"; "he is nice and really good at helping us think of things to write"; "he helped when I was stuck", and finally "he always makes sure you know and understand what we are doing and he is really good at tips". “

Philippa Hurst is a final year History of Art student at the University of Aberdeen and has been at TGS for four weeks. Within that time she has experienced S2, S3 and S4 classes. She worked with S2 pupils on paper mache birds and a further S2 class on bird pencil drawings. S4 concentrated on project work and with S3 was able to contribute her own history of art knowledge including surrealism. For the latter Philippa was also able to view 'past papers', giving her further insight to the role of Art Teacher. She is keen to potentially pursue teaching one day but feels it challenging to be not much older than the pupils so would be keen to gain work experience for a number of years prior to PGDE Secondary Art. Mrs Cameron the Art Teacher whom Philippa has assisted is very keen to have the extra pair of hands as on a Friday afternoon during an enrichment class of 20 pupils, spread between 2 art classrooms. She advised that 'Philippa was a great asset and is comfortable going round the room checking everyone is ok'. Philippa admits that she is a little stressed at this point in her final year and sometimes wonders whether she can fit in her tutoring, but every time she arrives at school she is very glad she has made the effort and it works as an ideal distraction from her dissertation!



Gordon Rosie, a final year Sports Science student from the University of Aberdeen helps every Friday afternoon in the PE Department, normally with an S3 class and on occasion an S2 class. He works with a variety of PE staff, usually Mrs Harper, and predominantly is pool side during swimming sessions and hands-on during badminton thereafter. He has also assisted with fitness testing, which Mrs Harper complimented him on saying 'he was very efficient and good at recording necessary data'. She also commented that generally Gordon is 'polite, well mannered and conscientious', the latter exemplified by him coming in over the lunch period at school and also during 'Comic Relief'. The extra pair of hands is invaluable, assisting in improving pupil performance. Pupils commented that 'Gordon gave me a good tip on how to serve in badminton' and 'helped us add up our score in cardio'. Gordon is still considering whether PGDE Secondary is an option and intends to take some time off after graduation to consider all options.



Overall The Gordon Schools are very happy with the input from these tutors and also with Laura Barrie as mentioned above and looks forward to hosting tutors in 2014.