

Balmoral Hotel and Broughton High School



SCILT's Business Language Champions programme helps schools and businesses to build exciting and sustainable partnerships that equip young people with the international communication and employability skills they need for their future careers.

Background

Broughton High School is a large, six year comprehensive school in Edinburgh serving the community of Stockbridge and its surrounding areas.

The four primary schools associated with Broughton High School teach French to all pupils from P1. Two of the schools also teach Spanish with the other two offering Chinese. Pupils can continue these languages in secondary school, with the addition of Italian and British Sign Language.

The school is proactive about developing its partnership links and is seen as a centre of excellence in the wider community, with business partners and neighbours using the building during and beyond the school day.

For more information about the school, visit the [Broughton High School website](#).

Aims

The project with The Balmoral Hotel in Edinburgh gives the young people who have chosen to study Chinese in S3 a real and engaging context for their learning and provides them with an insight into the world of work. It highlights how valuable languages can be in the hospitality industry and demonstrates how learning of a language can enhance their career prospects, as well as developing their skills for learning, life and work. The project introduces the hospitality industry to pupils and highlights its importance to the Scottish economy.

Partners

CISS and the Modern Languages Department at Broughton High School worked in partnership with the staff at The Balmoral Hotel in Edinburgh city centre.

The Balmoral Hotel

The Balmoral Hotel is a five star hotel located on Princes Street in Edinburgh, a few minutes walking distance from Waverley Station. It is one of the top five hotels in Scotland.

The hotel attracts tourists from various countries and they do not always speak English well. Linking with the hotel showed pupils that languages are necessary in the hospitality industry.

Project

The partners worked together to devise a project that would provide a relevant context for young people to develop their language and employability skills.

To launch the project, the learners were given a tour of the hotel, back and front of house, and took part in a series of workshops to develop their understanding of the hospitality industry as well as their intercultural awareness and interview skills. The pupils responded very positively and were enthusiastic about their time at the hotel.



After the initial visit, the partners devised a project to enable the young people to build on their knowledge of Chinese language and culture, as well as on what they had learned about the hospitality industry during their visit. Learners were tasked with developing an internal information leaflet which would support the hotel, sharing their knowledge of relevant Chinese language and culture with the hotel staff. Whilst the hotel would always use professional translation agencies to provide guides and leaflets for specific groups of guests, the material that Broughton High School has prepared will be an invaluable resource for colleagues within the hotel in developing their understanding of Chinese language and culture.

Cristian Gonzalez's leaflet and Josh Barlow's leaflet were both selected as winning information leaflets.

Impact

The young people certainly felt they developed a better understanding of the importance of language and intercultural skills in the hospitality industry. Learners were impressed by the number of languages the hotel staff speak, and the difference this can make to the service the hotel provides, particularly to guests from different cultures:

"I learned a lot about cultural awareness and about how The Balmoral Hotel goes about things. I have learned to think more about my response to someone of a difference culture."
(S3 learner)

Staff found this an invaluable experience for the pupils, particularly the impact of visiting a workplace. This was pupils' first taste of the world of work, and it was very positive.

The human resources team at The Balmoral Hotel was impressed by the quality of work produced by the pupils, and plans to make the leaflets available for hotel staff to use.

Next steps

The staff at Broughton recognised that the project had an impact on the wider school community, from the pupils to their parents and on the teachers too. They would like to continue to promote languages to learners in this way, and the Modern Languages Department is keen to continue to develop their business link with the hotel.