

If you think about going to Scotland to teach at a primary school, here is some hopefully useful information to plan your trip!

### **How to get to Scotland**

We booked our flights already six months before the trip so that we only paid 200€ both ways. Unfortunately, we had to fly from Stuttgart via Frankfurt to Edinburgh and it took us 4 hours. Additional to the flights, we decided to rent a car in Scotland which we had also booked in advance. One of the schools was quite far into the countryside and we planned to visit some places outside the city, so a car seemed convenient. We picked up the car at the airport in Edinburgh and took the bypass around Edinburgh city to Portobello resp. Musselburgh.

### **Accommodation**

We all stayed in a homestay accommodation which means we stayed with a family or single person in their house or flat. I had a single room with TV and breakfast as well as dinner was included. It was a shared bathroom and I was able to use the washing machine and back garden to sit outside in the sun. The place was fantastic because Fiona, my landlady, knew all about Musselburgh and the area around, nice places to visit, the next bus stations and bus routes and, not to forget, the best pubs and restaurants around!

### **Schools**

I was at Whitecraig Primary School in Whitecraig, a little village south of Musselburgh. Whitecraig is easy to reach from Musselburgh by bus no 40 which, unfortunately, runs only every 30 minutes. But it only takes about 10 minutes and a bus journey costs 1.50£. School in Scotland starts around 9am and ends around 3 / 3:30pm, so there is still time to enjoy Scotland after school.

After a warm welcome from the head teacher and the staff, I was able to visit all age levels, from the nursery, P1/2 up to P6/7 during my stay. At Whitecraig Primary there are only composite classes with around 20-23 pupils each. It was very interesting to experience different teaching styles, the Scottish school system and discover differences and similarities to the German school system.

### **Confluence Scotland Language School**

Furthermore, we met Alison Hiley, head of "Confluence Scotland", which is based in an office in Musselburgh. Alison gave us an introduction to the Scottish school system, the Scottish culture as well as the famous sights in and around Edinburgh city. We met regularly during our stay and discussed similarities and differences between the German and the Scottish school system, the teacher training at university and the daily life at schools in both countries. Jane Richie, a dear friend and former colleague of Alison, joined us in these meetings and told us about her personal experiences as former head teacher of a primary school and teacher trainer. In our last meeting we discussed positive and negative aspects of the whole trainee teacher exchange program to make it more efficient for next year's participants.

## **How to spend your free time in Scotland**

During the week after we finished school, we decided to visit various pubs in and around Musselburgh and Portobello. We sat at the beach, listened to some live music and had fish and chips at the beautiful shore of Gallon beach.

On our first free weekend we went to Edinburgh to explore the beautiful and charismatic city. Carlton Hill, Arthur's Seat, the Scottish National Gallery, Princes Street, the Edinburgh Castle, Grassmarket and Rose Street with its various pubs with live music are just a few sights and places we visited.

The following weekend we went to Glasgow. One rather inexpensive way to get there (or even other cities) is by bus, e.g. the Citylink busses from Edinburgh station for only £11 one way (ca. 14Euro). Glasgow is perfect for an afternoon of shopping with all kinds of shops, as well as various cafés and restaurants.

To round up our trip to Glasgow we went on a day trip up north: Loch Lomond, a beautiful lake with a very picturesque scenery. So we spent a whole day wandering around the park and arranged gardens enjoying the great view on the lake.

## **Conclusion**

To sum it all up, I had a wonderful time in Edinburgh and I can only recommend it to everyone who is considering this trip! It is a great opportunity to expand your knowledge about the English language and build up your linguistic skills and vocabulary. You will experience the Scottish culture, their way of life, food and drinks and the school system. You will be able to observe different teaching styles, methods and strategies as well as learn about classroom management whilst being at the school.

Nonetheless, in the end you get a certificate which you can add to your future job application and impress your future head teachers, colleagues and students.

