

My experience in Saint. Ninian's High School

Good evening everyone, my name is Francesca, as Mr. Docherty said, I am the departing head girl. This evening, I have been invited to reflect on my experience as a pupil at Saint Ninian's High School.

I'm going to begin by telling you a story about a twelve-year-old first year girl, who six years ago, joined Saint Ninian's, unaware of what exactly her future would hold. Being passionate about football she decided to trial for the St Ninian's girls football team. Two years down the line, she had been training with the school team on a weekly basis, representing the school in league matches and even the Scottish cup. And one day, at the end of a training session, her football coach and PE teacher informed the girl that she had been put forward, by the school, for a trial for the West of Scotland squad. Despite her nerves and her doubts, she attended the trial, made the regional squad and even progressed to trials for the Scotland national team. She played for the country's national team in matches against countries from all over the world and was scouted by a coach for Glasgow City. Her entire sporting career began and took off in Saint Ninian's. Disclaimer; that is not to say that any girls (or boys) who choose to join the school team will become Scotland youth nationalist's. However, it is one small example of the multitude of ways in which Saint Ninian's nurture, promote and encourage their pupils. So this evening, I stand before you as the seventeen year old, sixth year girl who, six years later, is about to leave Saint Ninian's, exactly sure of what her future will hold, thanks to the exceptional support of this school. P.S the story is true because that girl, is me!

It is hard to believe that it has been six years since I started my first day here at Saint Ninian's High School. Trying to squeeze into this brief summary everything I have done throughout the years is quite impossible. However, what I can say with no hesitation is that I have had the most involved and amazing times here.

Learning at St Ninian's is centered around the individual and encourages pupils to study independently, learn at their own pace and to think for themselves – a vital preparation for life after school. The central curriculum is supported by a wide variety of academic and cultural activities and the enormous range of activities offered away from the classroom ensures that each pupil can grow and develop wherever their interests and talents may lie. The school's achievements in music, art and drama, dance and its outstanding reputation in sporting endeavors are testament to that.

Phenomenal results and extracurricular activities aside, Saint Ninian's is a school which transforms hard working, committed individuals into people of virtue and character. St Ninian's provides pupils with an environment which builds on the works of family and primary school to support them in learning and celebrating faith. The

caring, sharing and catholic ethos provides a platform for everyone to develop and grow in our faith in the prospect of becoming well-rounded, responsible individuals.

I assure you that pupils who put in hard work and effort in this school, graduate six years later as polished, self-reliant individuals. And that ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, is because of the school's principal of excellence in learning and gaining a first class education. Speaking as a voice of sixth year, I know that we could not have asked for a better start in life. Our year group are leaving the school as confident, refined young people who over six years, have been given a vast array of wonderful opportunities.

When looking back at how I have spent six years of my life, I realise that when sat in your position six years ago, listening to Headteacher, Mr Docherty describe Saint Ninian's as a community, he was absolutely right. Saint Ninian's is a community of people who are all willing to look out for each other and help those in need. From day one in first year to the last day in sixth year, my time at St Ninian's has been challenging, rewarding and the most memorable years of my school life. Overall, I can honestly say that I have enjoyed every minute here and the feeling of belonging is something I gained from the very first day. Saint Ninian's High School demonstrates the importance of leading each individual to achieve their utmost potential, not just academically, however, as a whole person.

The dedication, hard work and commitment of the staff here at Saint Ninian's is a pivotal part of what makes this school so good. The teachers' understanding, passion for their subject and genuine interest in their pupils tie together the strands of what it takes to be the excellent teachers that they are. Year after year, the teachers continue to teach with such inspiration and enthusiasm. I speak on behalf of the entire student body when I say that as pupils, we are so grateful to have teachers who push us to truly challenge ourselves in order to achieve success.

Personally, I feel hugely indebted to my teachers for the support that they have given me in helping me to achieve my goals. It is thanks to them, and indeed to the entire school community, that I now understand what it means to belong. As sad as I am to leave, I'm reassured by the hope that my connection with Saint Ninian's will continue for a long time to come.

To conclude, Saint Ninian's High School has played such a large part in shaping my life and personality and I hope that, in six years time, you find that you feel the same positive effect. It can be so easy to take for granted everything this school has to offer, the teachers who teach here, the opportunities you will receive and the environment you will learn in. So; a word of advice for the primary sevens transitioning into high school; set your own high standards, get involved in the

extracurricular activities, in the faith life of the school. Seize every opportunity that Saint Ninian's has to offer and be grateful to have them. Finally, enjoy learning, enjoy each year, don't rush them. Work hard, and remember you only get out what you put in.