

NORTH AYRSHIRE

CET REFLECTION

MANDARIN MOMENTS: TEACHING AND LIVING IN SCOTLAND

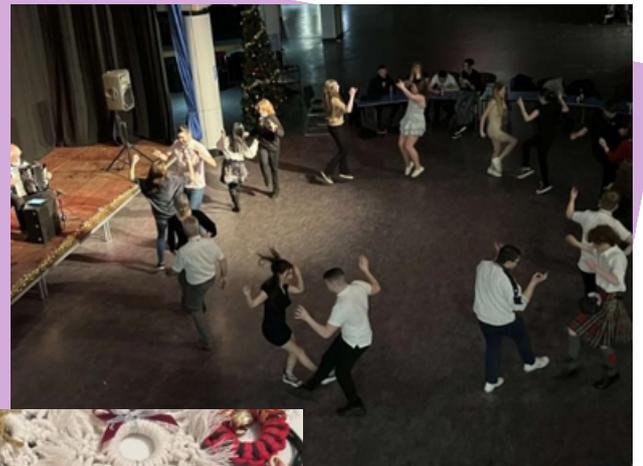
Yingnan He, Chinese Exchange Teacher in North Ayrshire

At the end of August 2023, I arrived in Scotland with excitement, ready to embark on my journey as a Mandarin teacher. With the help of Dean Zhao, Ellie, and Callum, I smoothly checked into the hotel and during the induction week that followed, gained insight into the responsibilities and duties of being a Mandarin teacher through Karen and Susan's guidance.



I was assigned to two schools in North Ayrshire. Despite the challenges of finding accommodation, I settled in the picturesque and tranquil seaside town, Irvine. Here, I witnessed breathtaking sunsets and made friends with the locals.

Throughout my work, I received support from fellow teachers and had the pleasure of meeting delightful students. I had the opportunity to showcase my skills and talents. The most memorable experience for me was Christmas. I had the opportunity to savour authentic Scottish cuisine and I was invited to the Ceilidh, where I joyfully danced to lively music with everyone. It was during the act of giving small gifts that I truly felt the essence of Christmas - the spirit of giving and love. The handmade gifts I presented were warmly received by all, and I felt immensely happy to be able to fully immerse myself in the holiday festivities.



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As Chinese New Year approached, students assisted me in decorating the classroom, where I displayed numerous Chinese-themed paintings at the school entrance. The handmade cards and crafts about dragons that I led in making were well-received at the primary school. Additionally, I participated in the 2024 Spring Festival event hosted by the University of Glasgow, showcasing traditional Hanfu on stage.



During the event of Eric Liddell's 100th anniversary, I also contributed to the creation of a model of the Minyuan Square. This square, a landmark building in my hometown, was constructed with Eric Liddell's involvement, further connecting Tianjin and Scotland through his legacy. I take great pride in spreading Chinese culture and teaching Mandarin here. I have also felt the warmth and kindness of the people. I cherish every moment spent here, every second, and every minute.

