

Jennifer in Bangor – February 2010

Hi all!

I thought it was about time I sent out an update in case people are wondering what I'm up to these days!

I was hoping to send something out before Christmas but there wasn't really a lot to say as my timetable was quite empty, which I found VERY frustrating! However, now things are much busier which is great! So I'll attempt to describe to you what a typical week is like for me.

I have just started some work at a nursery just up the road in a place called Llandygai. I basically help supervise and play with the kids! The nursery is bilingual which helps me practice my Welsh. I'm not too good at it but have managed to play games (such as matching words with animals, and colours) in Welsh and have even on occasions had to tell the other staff what something was in Welsh!! I'm really enjoying it and get on well with both the staff and the children. I have been going in on Mondays and Wednesdays but from this week I will also be going in on a Friday as I am starting some one-to-one work with a boy there who is sometimes a bit disruptive and does not seem to be developing as fast as some of the other children. I'm not entirely sure what sort of things I'm meant to be doing with him but I'm sure I'll find out soon! On a Monday evening I have been (jointly) leading the Christian Union cell group (yes, I am still involved in helping out the Christian Union, despite no longer being a student – I just can't tear myself away!) which has been fun although attendance has been fairly low which is a shame.

On Tuesdays I volunteer at a drop in centre for adults with mental health problems. It's pretty fun and usually involves drinking tea and chatting with the people that come in. It can be a bit challenging though as so many of them just seem a bit lost and don't have much hope about anything. Straight from there I go up to the sports centre for 3 hours of trampolining coaching (two sessions that are 1.5 hours each) for the 'Bangoroos' club! The second one is for children with autism, which I love! We have a whole range of abilities there. A couple of the boys can communicate with us pretty well and respond to what we're saying, some of them respond fairly well to what we say but don't really talk and a couple have extremely limited communication. There are some who are only spoken to in Welsh at home, just to add the challenge!! Tuesday evenings we have our church cell group which I'm really enjoying as we're quite a small, close group and it's great to discuss the Sunday sermon in more detail and pray with each other.

I have Welsh at 8 on a Wednesday morning and then go straight to the nursery (as explained above!). Wednesday evenings used to be fairly free but as of yesterday this is no longer the case! I run an after-school trampolining session from 4-6, and am now also required to help with the Wednesday Bangoroos session (from 6-8) as an 18 year old, visually impaired boy with limited communication has started attending. He can't really bounce on his own so I am constantly on the trampoline with him holding his hands, it certainly gives me a good arm workout! I did enjoy the session so it will be nice to try and get to know him a bit better.

Thursdays are generally fairly free until 4 (so I have been trying to get out walking/cycling a bit more) when I run another after-school trampolining session for Year 8/9 children until 6. Although all the children are lovely on their own they are crazy when they're together and some sessions have been pretty manic. There have been a couple of times when I've been the only coach/adult there and there have been about 20 children. It's pretty hard to try and coach/ make sure they are safe on the trampoline while the rest of them are running about the sports hall (and other parts of the sports centre) creating mischief! The Christian Union meets on a Thursday evening at 8 so I go along to that most weeks too.

Fridays also consist of Welsh lesson and nursery, and the final after school trampolining session of the week from 3-5. There is an extra Bangoroos session, starting next week, from 5-7 but hopefully I won't have to be at that every week!

So yes, things are definitely busier now but I'm loving it!

The Christian Union had their mission outreach week last week which seemed to go really well. They had a load of different events on including giving out free breakfasts, lunchbars (food put on in 2 of the student bars and a speaker talking about different issues relating to Christianity), quizzes, film nights and more! One of the highlights for me was the lunch bar titled 'what kind of God allows suffering'. There was a really good turnout, loads of people asked questions at the end and even after it had all finished there were several groups of Christians and non Christians discussing what had been spoken about.

I thought I'd finish with a few prayer points!

- Please pray for the Christian Union at Bangor, especially for follow up from the mission week – that those people who came to the talks won't forget about what they heard but that God would really start working in their lives.
- Please pray as I need to start figuring out what I'm going to do next year! At the moment I really don't know and could really do with God's guidance!
- For my relationship with David as he is in Sudan – that we can both grow stronger (together and in our faith) as he is away, and that David continues to enjoy his time out there.
- That I continue to enjoy all that I am doing in Bangor at the moment.

Thanks very much,

I look forward to seeing you (hopefully) over Easter time.

I'll add my email address at the end and would love to hear from you.

God bless

Jennifer

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