

## S3 Mandarin – Business Languages Champions



Mr Huang's S3 Mandarin students have begun a project with the Balmoral Hotel which will enable them to learn valuable employability skills and also use their Mandarin for a practical purpose.

Organised by SCILT (Scotland's National Centre for Language, Strathclyde University), the Business Language Champions programme enables language classes to link with local businesses for just these purposes.

On Wednesday 9 December twelve students accompanied by Mr Huang and Mrs Tosh visited the Balmoral for the first stage of our project. We were warmly welcomed on a particularly cold day by Mr Andrew Jeffrey, Quality and Development Manager. Students took part in a Cultural Awareness session where they learned about the different nationalities of the people who visit the hotel and how the hotel will cater for cultural differences. For

example Chinese guests would never be given a room with the number 4 because in Mandarin the word for 4 sounds similar to the word for death.

We were then given a tour of the hotel, both front and back of house. The highlight was being able to visit the 'JK Rowling Suite' where she finished her book *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. We visited the Michelin Star kitchen and restaurant, the Palm Court and many other places. We learned about the history of the building too, and how originally it was built to service the railway station. Students also took part in a CV Writing and Interview Workshop where they learned good and bad practice from the perspective of Balmoral staff.



Pupils received a personalised certificate and a goody bag at the end of their visit. It really was a 5 star experience and we are very grateful to the Balmoral for this opportunity.

Next term Mr Huang's students will create leaflets for the hotel to use with their staff. They will provide cultural information and language which may be useful to the hospitality trade when dealing with Mandarin speaking guests. We are looking forward to creating these leaflets for the Balmoral.

