Reference Sonia Magana

Sonia has been a hugely valued member of our school community for the time she taught here from September 2011 to March 2017. She made herself a great presence in the school, inspiring students with her exciting delivery of content, use of great humour and dedication to the students in her care.

Sonia worked as part of a highly successful MFL department. In Key Stage 3, she brought Spanish to life for our students. Sharing with them experiences of her life and making the experience fun. Learning a foreign language can be a daunting enterprise for so many of our students, but Sonia was able to give them a love of language and appreciation of culture which enabled them to engage and succeed. Sonia was always diligent in her work. Marking and correcting work and giving students the opportunity to resolve any misconceptions they had was part of her day to day practise.

In Key Stage 4, Sonia worked with GCSE language classes delivering content for the AQA board and preparing students for their GCSE exams. The MFL results at GCSE are consistently high as students make great progress. These results are based on the prior achievement of students. As such, Sonia was able to guide students to make significant progress and achieve excellent results.

Sonia also taught Spanish to KS5 students. This involved a deeper level of skill again. Students are challenged and stretched to succeed in the subject at A-level. Sonia again had the ability to work successfully with these students, enabling them to make great levels of progress and succeed at A-level. It is worthy of note, that one of those students has now gone on to read languages at Oxford University.

One of Sonia’s great achievements whilst at the school was to solely organise a Spanish exchange. This was a huge undertaking as Sonia made all of the connections necessary to get the trip up and running. It was not something that had been done before that she was building on, it was completely of her own making. X students made the trip from BGN to Spain in 2015 and in return X students made the trip from Spain to Banbury to be welcomed into our BGN community. Sonia completed all of the risk assessments and appropriate paperwork which is necessary to carry out such a mission. There is no measure for the value of such an experience for both the Spanish and English students. Those who take part in an exchange cherish the experience for ever.

Alongside all of this, Sonia worked as part of the Science department to deliver the A-level Psychology course. Working with these students, Sonia was successful in enabling her students to achieve great results at this level. Sonia delivered the course to both Year 12 and Year 13. Her own qualification of ‘Masters’ in Psychology meant that she was able to teach students with the greatest of knowledge and expertise in this field. This degree of knowledge, however, is of little use if it cannot be conveyed to the students. In this dimension, Sonia demonstrated huge capacity as she was able to engage and encapsulate her students to achieve in this subject. Students had not studied this subject at any point before, their first introduction to it was at A-level. Sonia’s dedication to her students knew no bounds as she went out of her way to offer extra time and support to her students far beyond the time dedicated on the timetable.

Again in this subject area, Sonia went the extra mile to fully engage her students by organising and running a trip to London to Zimbardo's Psychology conference. This was hugely appreciated by the students and gave them an extra layer to consolidate their learning in the classroom.

In addition to these subject areas, Sonia also taught Religious Education for a year. Again she approached the task with passion and enthusiasm and was able to get the very best from her students. She was also a tutor to Year 9 students when her timetable allowed, which an enabled her to work with students in a different way; liaising with parents and responding to the needs of individual students across the spectrum of their life at home and school.

As part of the school community as a whole, Sonia was fully engaged. She became a popular part of the programme for our Senior Citizens Christmas Celebration. Every year, Sonia rehearsed with a group of students to perform a song for the guests at the Christmas party. She took part in all of the extra-curricular activities in school, generously giving of her time and always lending a helping hand to anyone in need.

Sonia is a vibrant, energetic and highly intelligent person. She has the ability to enthuse those around her, both students and adults alike. Her ability to persevere and convey concepts is appreciated by all of those whom she has taught in whatever subject it might be. She is completely dedicated to everything she does and will always go beyond normal expectations to ensure the very best for the students in her care. I have no doubt that she will be the greatest of assets to wherever she chooses to share her abilities and will be appreciated by all.