

press release

16 March 2010

St Bees School top of Shares4Schools North region

- Students' gamble on banking sector pays off with £229 profit
- St Bees School is 3rd in Shares4Schools national league

Students at St Bees School have shot into first place in the North regional league of the national investment competition, Shares4Schools, following a brave investment in the banking sector.

The team of six Year 12 students chose to invest in Barclays on 25 January, almost a good month before the bank released its final results for the period ending 13 December 2009. They bought 293 shares at 279p, investing a total of £817.

On the 16 February 2010 Barclays announced a 92% rise in its full-year profits, causing its share price to rise almost 7% to 295p. Today, the bank's share price stands at 357p, which means the School is currently sitting on a profit of £229; almost a 28% increase.

Even though many analysts were advising investors to exercise caution before investing in the banking sector, St Bees decided to take the plunge and buy Barclays.

Isla Frost-Pennington, a St Bees team member, said: "At the start we bought a variety companies, but then we sharpened up our research. We bought Barclays because we felt the bank's predicted profits were not reflected in its share price. We now realise that you cannot leave your share portfolio to fate, if you want to make a profit."

Commenting on Barclays and St Bees' investment decision, Nick Raynor, investment adviser at The Share Centre, said: "Barclays has been our favourite bank since it refused to be bailed out by the government, instead opting to take matters into its own hands. St Bees have made a very shrewd investment here, but they need to remember a profit isn't a profit until it's cashed in."

The competition, run by retail stockbroker, The Share Centre, allows students to invest real money in the stock market, helping to bring business studies and economics to life.

Explaining the benefits of Shares4Schools Philip Capes, headmaster of St Bees, said: "This is a tremendous competition for our senior pupils. The fact that they are dealing with actual money means the students take their portfolio management responsibilities very seriously. Every member of the team now realises that you can't just invest in the stock market and get rich quick!"

Alistair Mackintosh, a St Bees team member, added: "I now read the financial pages with interest, rather than quickly flicking through them. I have started to understand some of the factors which affect the change in a company's share price."

St Bees is competing against 16 other schools in the North region of Shares4Schools and 65 in the main national competition. The School is ranked first in the North and third nationally. St Bees' portfolio currently stands at £1,737.30; a 15.8% increase.

The 2009/2010 competition closes on the 4 June 2010. The final victors of all the regional leagues as well as the national winner will attend the Shares4Schools awards ceremony on 30 June to be held at One Great George Street in Westminster, London.

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Note to editors:

North Region Shares4Schools League – Top Five

Position	School	Value	Gain
1	St Bees School	£1,737.30	15.8%
2	Ilkley Grammar School	£1,635.17	9%
3	St Mary's College	£1,633.32	8.9%
4	Scarborough 6 th Form College	£1,575.63	5%
5	Castle Rushen Manx 1	£1,537.41	2.5%

National Shares4Schools League – Top Five

Position	School	Value	Gain
1	Wester Hailes Education Centre	£1,749.65	16.6%
2	Wellingborough School	£1,749.84	16.4%
3	St Bees School	£1,737.30	15.8%
4	Hurstpierpoint College	£1,697.60	13.2%
5	Reading School	£1,651.66	10.1%

*Rankings and values correct as of 10.20am 16 March 2010. For up-to-date rankings, please visit www.shares4schools.org

About Shares4Schools:

Shares4Schools is a competition organised by The Share Centre, a leading retail stockbroker. Established in 2003 and endorsed by pfeg, this unique competition brings Economics and Business Studies to life as students invest real money in the stock market. The competition is open to schools throughout the UK, with teams of students competing in regional and national leagues.

How does Shares4Schools work?

Each team must raise an investment pot of £1,500 to invest in the stock market, with the aim of achieving the highest fund value over the period from October to June.

In addition to promoting and administering the competition, The Share Centre offers a limited number of sponsorships of £750 which schools can apply for when registering their interest in the competition.

All participating schools retain the proceeds of their investment fund to use at their discretion, and the team with the highest value fund at the end of the competition will be recognised at a special ceremony in London.

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About The Share Centre:

The Share Centre was established in 1990 to provide value-for-money share services for private investors. Its range of services includes buying and selling shares (by Internet, telephone and post) and a comprehensive share administration and safe custody service. Tax-efficient investment 'wrappers' including ISAs, CTFs and SIPPs are also available.

The Share Centre's Advice team provides comment on market sectors, individual shares and funds on www.share.com. Access is available to customers and registered users of the site. Registration is free. To understand how our Advice team arrive at their views please read our [Investment Research Policy](#)

In addition, account customers can receive individual telephone advice on UK-listed shares and on funds traded via the CoFunds trading platform.

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