

Diary of a tutor constable

Published on 28 November 2022 Written by Police Constable Aaron Griffiths, Northamptonshire Police

Tutor constable PC Aaron Griffiths shares insights from shift

Going equipped 5 mins read

Introducing student PC Nick and myself, PC Aaron Griffiths. I'm a tutor constable on response policing in Northamptonshire. Prior to that, I was a special constable and a control room dispatcher, and I've also tutored specials.

As soon as I started as a PC, I told my sergeant that I wanted to be a tutor once confirmed in rank. PC Nick came to me with no frontline policing experience but was keen to learn. This is a diary of some of the highlights from our shifts together.

Thursday 23 June 2022

We head out to a report of a drink contamination (spiking) incident. We had gone through the operational order and trigger plan for these incidents, noting the required forensic samples. PC Nick takes to this well, and obtains a really detailed statement and description of the suspect.

Although I assist PC Nick, I'm assessing his victim service, his statement taking, and his processing and packaging of forensic samples. I want PC Nick to understand not only the process of dealing with certain incidents, but also why we do it that way, so he has a greater understanding of how our actions fit into a wider investigative picture.

Friday 24 June 2022

Control: 'Are you available for a grade 1 RTC persons trapped?'

Is this our first road traffic collision (RTC)? No. Is every RTC different? Of course.

Arriving at the scene and establishing where to start can be the hardest part. I step back as PC Nick takes control of the scene. He ascertains that the report of persons trapped isn't exactly as it had been reported, allowing for a quick handover when the ambulance and fire services arrive.

Arranging recovery of the vehicles, exchanging details, and completing Police National Computer (PNC) checks and roadside breath tests are all underpinned by legislation, policy and procedure. It's for me to ensure that PC Nick knows all of that and applies them correctly.

Saturday 25 June 2022

'Put us to the job, we'll assist with an area search.'

Heading off in search of a high-risk domestic abuse offender, control highlights an officer safety flag of 'likes to fight police'. That can get the adrenaline pumping, and it does for PC Nick. I observe PC Nick's conflict management and how he applies the national decision model, ensuring he is lawful and safe. Only a week prior, we had a developmental discussion around conflict management and how adrenaline can give us the fight, flight or freeze response. It can be difficult to truly test this until you are in that conflict for the first time.

Imagine my pride when – after CCTV spots the suspect and we arrive at the location – PC Nick dives from the car, runs to the suspect, takes control and shouts, 'You are under arrest!' When we get back into the car, I tell him, 'That is exactly what I wanted to see.' I can't help but smile even as I write this. PC Nick told me he hit a turning point, using his adrenaline to his advantage and preventing a potentially volatile situation from escalating.

Sunday 26 June 2022

As PC Nick comes to the end of his tutoring period, he completes his student review, highlighting his progress around the competency and values framework. I review and comment on his development:

From week one to where to we are now, I have seen you develop from brand new PC Nick to student PC Nick and become more confident in your role as a police officer. I have watched you work with victims, witnesses, and suspects – you are respectful, honest, and professional, all attributes that make a great police constable.

My role is to facilitate learning and development, and to be a support mechanism for my student, identifying when I need to take a step back or intervene. Support can range from praise to assisting

a student after a traumatic or emotionally triggering incident. I am passionate about the job I do and about imparting my own experience on those who join the police.

- This article was peer reviewed by Police Constable Alex Gregory, North Yorkshire Police.

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