



16 December 2022

Dear Parents,

Year 10 & 12 Spanish Exchange Trip – June and October 2023

The Spanish Department have been planning a Spanish Language Exchange with IES Las Canteras, our partner school in Collado Villalba near Madrid. We will be offering this exchange to students in Years 10 & 12 who are studying Spanish at GCSE and A level respectively. This is a great opportunity to develop the students' linguistic skills and their confidence in the language.

It had been hoped that our students would visit Spain in March 2023 and then the Spanish exchange partners would in turn visit us in June. Unfortunately, despite many attempts, we could not obtain flights that worked with both schools' agendas and a decision has now been made for our visit to Spain to be postponed until October, when the students will be in Years 11 and 13. The Spanish students will still visit the UK in June 2023.

For the exchange, we aim to match students with similar interests so that their stay as part of the family enables them not only to practise their language skills but also helps them to fully experience the Spanish way of life. A profile form will follow soon and will need to be completed by every student on the exchange.

In Spain, during the day, when the Spanish students are at school, excursions to places of interest will be arranged, and would normally include the following: Guided tour of Madrid, Flamenco Workshop, Bull farm, Visit to El Escorial, Bernabéu Stadium tour, Museo Taurino Las Ventas. Our students will be accompanied on these trips by members of staff from the Piggott School. Students will also experience Spanish school life by spending some time in our partner school. The rest of the time, in the evening and at weekends, the students will be with their exchange partner and family who often organise extra activities for them. The same arrangement will apply when the Spanish students come here. As a host family you will be responsible for offering board and lodging and for ensuring safe travel arrangements for your guest to and from the Piggott School.

The Spanish students will visit England, staying in their exchange partners' homes, in late June (provisionally 21st to 27th). The proposed dates for our trip to Madrid are Tuesday 3rd – Monday 9th October 2023, but this is subject to change until flights are booked.

The last time we ran this exchange in 2019, the cost was just over £400 per student. With rising costs, we are anticipating that it may be significantly more this time, possibly £550-650, depending on the number of students involved and available flights. Rest assured that we always endeavour to keep costs to a minimum and seek the best value we can. The cost of the trip will include all transport (coach and air), excursions, staff costs, fully comprehensive insurance and administration.

The approximate cost will be confirmed once we have a better idea of numbers. Should there be insufficient interest, the trip may not take place. If your son/daughter is in receipt of free school meals, pupil premium, or a sixth form bursary, the school may be able to support with the funding of the trip depending on your circumstances. Please email the Trips Office (trips@piggottschool.org) with any requests for financial support briefly outlining the reason for the request and this will be triaged to the appropriate department.

As a host family you will be responsible for offering board and lodging to your son/daughter's Spanish exchange partner when they are in the UK. The exchange student should be treated as a member of the family and as such should not be expected to pay for evening/weekend activities that you may wish to do as a family, such as cinema visits or meals out. Your son/daughter will experience a reciprocated level of hospitality when they visit their partners in Spain.

Current legislation means that host families in the UK are required to obtain Enhanced DBS certificates. This applies to **all adults living in the house** (aged 18 and over). We will arrange these checks through the School at no additional cost. Further details will follow once the trip participants are confirmed.

If your son/daughter would like to take part, please complete the consent form here: [ONLINE CONSENT FORM](#), ideally by **Monday 19th December** so we can give our Spanish colleagues an indication of numbers, but if you need longer to decide, then please have the responses back to us by the end of the Christmas holidays. The form asks for passport details, so please have this handy if possible – but if the passport is not currently available, please do not delay completing the rest of the form and just send the passport information separately when you have it.

Once we have exact participant numbers, we will book flights to get a better estimate of the total cost and deposits will then be requested. A payment schedule will be put in place for those who wish to spread the cost of balance, but we expect that the majority of the trip's costs will need to be paid off in full by the start of the summer term. Please note: costs are shared between both sides, therefore the overall cost of the exchange is usually not able to be completely finalised until the itinerary for the Spanish students' visit here has been confirmed.

Since the pandemic and Brexit there have been changes to international travel rules. Please do read the additional notes at the end of this letter to see how these may affect your child as their eligibility to travel remains your responsibility.

We believe that this is a fantastic opportunity for students to improve their language skills and experience Spanish culture first hand.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours sincerely,



Mr M Connor (Head of MFL and Spanish)
connorm@piggottschool.org

Additional notes:

Your child's eligibility to travel remains your responsibility. There have been many changes to international travel since both the pandemic and Brexit, and we must therefore bring your attention to some of the relevant issues for your consideration. This means that you must be aware of the following:

- Your child must have a valid passport with sufficient validity remaining on it and you are responsible for checking entry requirements and restrictions, particularly those for non-UK passports. Should a visa/ETIAS be required, you will be responsible for obtaining one. To check travel requirements, please visit: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice
- If eligible, your child should have a GHIC (Global Health Insurance Card). The GHIC arrangements replace the old EHICs. If your child is eligible for a GHIC, but does not hold one, then our insurance will not cover the costs of any medical treatment that would have been provided for free had a card been used. Please note that if your child has a valid EHIC, it can continue to be used until it expires. For further information visit: www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/
- If any testing (such as a PCR) or certification is required at the time of travel, you will be responsible for any additional costs involved and for ensuring your child has the correct documentation in the format required for travel. This applies even if no such requirements were in place at the time of booking.
- If any country that we are travelling to, or transiting through, requires passengers to be fully vaccinated then our insurance will not cover the cost of cancellation for any unvaccinated passengers if there has been sufficient time to obtain the required vaccinations. Unless your child holds a medical exemption, choosing not to vaccinate would be considered as 'disinclination to travel'.
- If a period of self-isolation or quarantine be required either by the destination country, or the UK upon return, we would not be covered for any associated costs such as quarantine in a government approved facility or loss of earnings.
- We will closely monitor and follow all travel advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Local rules can sometimes change at very short notice. We are fully insured for cancellation and curtailment arising from changes in travel rules if our trips are booked in accordance with travel rules in place at the time of booking. Parents must be aware that while we will endeavour to give you the most accurate information available to us, any subsequent changes are out of our control and do have the potential to disrupt the trip and affect its cost, therefore your flexibility and understanding of this is appreciated.

Whilst away, all students are expected to behave to a very high standard, as laid out in the School Behaviour contract. If, prior to the trip departing, it becomes apparent that an individual student's behaviour is unacceptable at School, thus causing us concern, you will be contacted. We reserve the right to withdraw a student from the trip if we believe their behaviour would have a detrimental effect on the rest of the party, or that their own safety and welfare may be at risk. We would endeavour to find a replacement student and then all monies may be refunded, subject to an administration charge. If, however, we were unable to find a replacement, the initial payment and any incurred cancellation charges, would not be refunded.

Should your child voluntarily withdraw prior to the trip, or you are unable to continue payments, you would lose the initial payment, and any payments already made would be used to cover cancellation charges, the balance being refunded, unless their place can be filled by another student.