

30 September 2015

Dear Parents/Carers

We are writing to tell you about an exciting opportunity for your child to take part in the Spanish exchange visit to *Santa Margarida i els Monjos*, a town just one hour outside Barcelona in north-eastern Spain, from Tuesday 5 April to Tuesday 12 April 2016. The purpose of the trip is to give students the opportunity to experience life in Spain, use their language in practical situations and see an area of the country rich in history, art and culture.

We have a strong link with *Institut el Foix*, since I personally taught there for eight months, and, for the second half of the exchange, we look forward to welcoming our Spanish partners in England from Tuesday 8 March to Tuesday 15 March 2016. The expectation is that you will host the Spanish student during their stay in England, and your child will be hosted by the partner's family in April. This is a two-way exchange programme.

The trip is aimed at Year 10 students in order to support them with their GCSE studies. However, there will be spaces for any Year 9 students who are also interested. The trip hopes to run annually, so there should be further opportunities in the future.

Travel will be by coach to Bristol airport and back, then by plane to Barcelona. Once in Spain, we will be making use of the fantastic train services throughout the region to get around. The varied programme during our stay will include two part days at our partner school, experiencing what a Spanish school is like, a visit to Barcelona and of course a trip to the beach! Evenings will be spent with host families. Please note that students will therefore not be under the direct supervision of teachers at all times. We will have contact numbers of the host families in case of emergencies and students will be provided with a staff emergency contact number. Whilst Spanish students are staying with The Castle School families, parents are asked to supervise their guests. Due to new regulations on child protection, The Castle School families who are hosting a Spanish student will need to be DBS checked (formerly CRB).

The estimated cost of the exchange will be £350, based on 20 students taking part. We are only able to offer an estimate at this stage, because flight prices are so volatile, and we must take this into account. Once we have all of the deposits collected, we can book the flights and the final price will be confirmed. The price will include all transport, excursions and insurance.

Please note that the cost of the flight allows for cabin baggage only. There is no weight restriction but the bag should be no bigger than 56x45x25 cm. If your child's bag is larger than this then the bag will be checked into the aircraft hold at a charge of £40.00. **If you know that your child's bag will have to be checked in as hold luggage then please add £40 to the initial deposit.**

Please also note that if you cancel the trip after the travel and arrangements have been confirmed, you will be liable for the cost of the trip minus the cost of excursions in Spain. We are unable to refund any money as the result of the late withdrawal of a student, unless we are able to get a replacement student or the withdrawal is as a consequence of illness preventing the student from travelling. This would normally be covered by the school's travel insurance, although pre-existing medical conditions which are known about at the time of booking are normally excluded.

If you would like your son/daughter to take part then please sign and return the form together with a non-returnable deposit of £180 (cheques made payable to The Castle School) to the Finance Office by Monday 2 November 2015. Please also complete the EV5 medical form enclosed.

Please pay either via the school's online payment system, by cash/cheque (made payable to The Castle School) or by credit/debit card (either in person or over the phone).

This larger than usual deposit is so that we can book the flights early to ensure the cheapest overall cost of the trip. The remainder of the monies is to be paid in instalments by Monday 1 February 2016. If your child does not get a place then your deposit cheque will of course be returned to you.

Many thanks for your interest in the visit. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Mr B Pennington
Teacher of Spanish and Spanish exchange coordinator

Spanish Exchange to Santa Margarida i els Monjos, 5-12 April 2016.

I would like my son/daughter Tutor group: to participate in the Spanish exchange to Santa Margarida i els Monjos.

I enclose a non-returnable deposit of £180. I have paid by cash/cheque (cheques made payable to The Castle School)/I have paid online, or by credit/debit card*. (*Please delete as applicable).

Signed: (Parent/Carer) Date:

Please complete and return to the Finance Office by Monday 2 November 2015.