



July 2010

Dear Parents,

**Current year 8 Pupils –MFL Department FRENCH EXCHANGE TRIP 2011**  
**Tuesday 29th March- Thursday 7th April (French visit Harpenden)**  
**Saturday 21st May- Monday 30th May (St George's pupils visit France)**  
**Organiser: Mrs M. Stearn**

We are pleased to be able to offer your son/daughter the opportunity of participating in the French Exchange next year when they are in Year 9. Our Exchange school, the Lycée Notre-Dame de Bury in Margency, is an independent mixed school, set in very attractive parkland, and has some 1,000 pupils aged 11-18. It enjoys an excellent reputation. Margency lies just to the north of Paris, providing your son/daughter with the opportunity to visit the many famous landmarks there.

The exchange will also offer an excellent opportunity for your son/daughter to learn something of the French way of life, and of course to make real progress in their spoken French and general comprehension of the language. The increased emphasis on these aspects of foreign language learning in the GCSE exam is an added incentive to participate in such exchanges. Pupils often return from participating in the exchange with greatly increased confidence, not only in their ability to speak and understand the language, but also in a more general way. The standard of hospitality on the French side is very high, and life long friendships can often develop from taking part in an exchange at the age of fourteen. Every attempt is made to ensure that a suitable partner is found for your son/daughter, but obviously a perfect match cannot be guaranteed.

The French group will visit Harpenden first next year. The dates for their visit are **Tuesday 29th March- Thursday 7th April**. The dates for our return to Margency are **Saturday 21st May- Monday 30th May 2011**. Please note that this trip will return on the first Monday of the May half-term holidays.

The overall cost of the exchange is likely to be between **£300 and £360 per pupil**. The price will be confirmed in September once we have a precise number of French partners. This price will include all travel, insurance, workbooks, as well as group trips in both France and England. Students would only need a small additional amount of pocket money.

### **Application**

Students who wish to take part need to return the reply slip overleaf with **an initial deposit of £60, in the form of a cheque made payable to St George's School**. Please note that "ParentPay" is not available for the deposit. Reply slips and payments have to be brought to the Finance office in the main reception building, and must be returned **by 9 a.m. on the morning of Friday 17th July**.

Places will be offered in September once confirmed numbers of participants have been received from our partner school. The trip is often oversubscribed so we will allocate places by drawing lots and will have a reserve list should pupils need to withdraw from the trip. The children will be notified as soon as possible as to whether or not their application has been successful. However, the languages department is not prepared to consider the application of any student whose poor conduct and attitude in Year 8 suggest that their participation would not be in the interests of an orderly and educational visit. It should be noted that if a student is accepted onto the exchange, but is involved in serious misconduct prior to the departure of the trip, they may forfeit their place on the trip. This could lead to loss of monies paid. Please be aware that, if your

child is successful, you will then be committed to paying the full amount for the trip unless it is possible to find a suitable replacement in time.

Should your son or daughter gain a place on the exchange, a further payment would be required in October, with further instalments after that. These could be paid via "Parentpay" – details would be given in the confirmation letter.

### **Documentation**

May I also take the opportunity to remind you that if your child does take part in the trip they will need a valid passport and an EHIC medical card. Parents whose children do not have a European passport must organise a valid EU Visa for their child in plenty of time for the trip. Staff will not have the time to do this for you. Unfortunately we cannot take any child who does not have the correct travel documentation. Staff may well require this documentation to be handed in some days ahead of trip departure so that we can be confident all is in order and we can travel without incident on the day.

### **DCSF Guidance on Exchanges and Visits**

As you are well aware, Exchanges and Visits play an integral role in our curriculum here at St George's School and each year we rely on the hospitality and goodwill of our parents to be able to run very successful exchanges for our students to France and Germany.

We have some important information to relay to you if are volunteering to offer the same support this year by hosting one of our French or German visitors. As from October 2009, we will be obliged by the government to register all host families with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) which will involve a CRB check for all members of the host family who are over 18 years of age.

You will be receiving more information shortly with regards the administrative procedures that we will need to follow. We sincerely hope that this new guidance will not deter our generous parents from caring for and accommodating our visitors since ultimately our students are the ones that benefit from the reciprocal generosity of families linked to our partner schools. We hope too that St George's will be able to continue its tradition of successful links with France and Germany.

Please get in touch with me if you have queries about this visit.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M. Stearn

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### **French Exchange, 2011**

This slip is to be brought to St. George's School to the **Finance office** in the main reception building, and must be returned **by 9 a.m. on the morning of Friday 17th July**.

I would like my child to participate in the French Exchange 2011. I understand that we are obliged to accommodate his/her partner on their visit in March. I also confirm that, if my child's application is successful, we will then be committed to paying the full amount for the trip unless it is possible to find a suitable replacement in time.

**I enclose a cheque for £60/ I would like to pay via boarder's disbursement (delete as appropriate)**

Name of student \_\_\_\_\_ Tutor Group \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_(parent/ guardian)