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Headmistress: Mrs Rebecca Dougall BA MA

5 October 2018

Dear Parents

French Exchange

I am writing to invite your daughter to participate in the French Exchange this academic year.

The value of such an exchange cannot be overstated, particularly at this point in the students' French career. This is a fantastic opportunity to improve their command of the language and to experience family life in Provence, an invaluable asset for both I/GCSE and Sixth Form study. The partnership has been running very successfully for 14 years between Abingdon School and the [Lycée de La Nativité](#), an independent, co-educational school in Aix-en-Provence and this will be our second visit.

Aix-en-Provence is a vibrant, attractive city in the South of France about 20 miles away from the Mediterranean coast. This year, as well as enjoying wonderful hospitality from La Nativité, we will get to visit Aix as well as the surrounding area, including the spectacular Pont du Gard.

The first leg of the exchange, during which the French party comes to stay with us will be during term time. The provisional dates are Friday 8 March–Saturday 16 March 2019. This will not disrupt your daughter's timetable, as the French party will be going on visits during the day or staying at school with us to attend lessons. Your involvement during this part of the exchange will be to look after a French student in the evenings and at the weekend.

In line with the government's Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) statutory guidance, the School is obliged to obtain a criminal records check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for all supervising adults (in most cases the parents or guardians) who are resident in the accommodation where the exchange student is to stay as part of a school organised trip. The School will bear the cost of this DBS check and we will do all we can to facilitate the administration of the DBS checks.

In order to obtain a DBS check, all supervising adults will need to make an appointment to come into school before the Christmas break to provide the necessary identification documents required for the check and to get the DBS check application underway. A member of the Human Resources team will make contact with those families who sign up for the exchange trip in order to arrange a convenient appointment date and time. These timescales will allow enough time for the DBS check to be completed before the arrival of the French party. DBS checks must be in place in order for families to host.

The second leg of the exchange, during which our party goes to France is Friday 29 March–Saturday 6 April 2019. These are also provisional dates but will only vary by a day or two depending on travel arrangements. Your daughter will be more or less in total French immersion during the week and a great deal of learning will take place.

The exchange is open to all students studying I/GCSE French in Year 10 this academic year. As there are only 18 places available, in the likely event of the trip being oversubscribed names will be drawn at random.

The provisional cost of the trip is £420 based on last year's experience but the price may vary slightly depending on transport, the final itinerary and the numbers of students signing up. The final cost will include all transport, transfers, visits and insurance cover.

If your daughter would like to participate in the French exchange please complete the [electronic response form](#) by Thursday 11 October confirming that you understand that some of your and your daughters' personal information will be shared with the host family and partner school. You will also be asked for your consent to share special category data in the form of medical conditions when it is assessed that the host family and host school will require this information for safety and comfort of your daughter. For further information on what special category data will be shared, please contact the senior nurse.

Confirmation of places will be sent by email once participants have been chosen and you will then have to electronically upload a copy of her passport and her European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) ensuring both documents have the appropriate validity. If this is not the case, please apply for a new one as soon as possible.

We would ask you to consider this opportunity very carefully with your daughter. In signing her up you are committing to hosting and her going abroad. You will understand that we match students very carefully with their partners and therefore withdrawal at a later date has a damaging effect on the relationships between the schools in the exchange programme. We would therefore expect you to be fully committed to the entire process.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Lisa Probert
Head of MFL, Teacher in charge of French
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