

7th October 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

10th Anniversary French Exchange Visits - 2017
St Benedict's students to France Thursday 18th May to Wednesday
24th May 2017
French students to St Benedict's Saturday 17th June to Friday 23rd
June 2017

The modern languages department is pleased to offer your son/daughter an opportunity to take part in the French Exchange with our partner school in Châtillon-sur-Seine in Bourgogne in 2017.

Years 8 and 9 students of French are invited to participate in both legs of the exchange. Students who take part will be paired with a French student with similar interests. St Benedict's students will be hosted by the French families on the first leg of the exchange in May 2017 and we will welcome the French students in June 2017.

This has always been an exciting and rewarding trip for students. We have close links with the Collège Fontaine des Ducs; students benefit from a unique opportunity to make new friends and improve their language skills. While in England our French visitors will experience school life at St Benedict's and visit places of local interest including the Town Hall, the Zoo and Colchester Castle. While in France we will spend some time in school attending lessons with the French partners and will also go on excursions together. The evenings will be spent with families in addition to organised activities such as swimming, bowling and a BBQ to encourage the French and English students to socialise together.

Travel to France will be by train from Colchester to London, Eurostar from London to Paris and high-speed train to Châtillon sur Seine. We will leave Colchester railway station on the morning of Thursday 18th May 2017 and return during the evening of Wednesday 24th May 2017. Further details will follow.

The French group will arrive during the afternoon of Saturday 17th June 2017 and leave from Colchester Railway Station at 9.00 am on Friday 23rd June 2017.

The cost of the visit is **£300**. The total cost includes £250 towards travel to and from Châtillon sur Seine, and all excursions while we are there. It also includes a contribution of £50 toward other necessary expenses for the visit to take place. Although part of this cost is a voluntary contribution, I do need to point out that it is probable that the visit will not take place unless all parents, who are able, are willing to contribute by the deadline given below. Should the college cancel the visit, a full refund will be made, although all monies are non-refundable should you cancel the place yourself.

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**ST BENEDICT'S
CATHOLIC
COLLEGE**

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When the French students are in England, families will be required to provide accommodation and meals including a packed lunch for midday. Special arrangements will be made for our visitors to travel on college transport with St Benedict's students where necessary. English students will be able to accompany their partners on some excursions.

If you would like your child to be considered for the exchange please pay an initial deposit of **£100 by Monday 7th November 2016**. **By making this payment you are consenting to your child taking part in this trip.** We kindly ask you to use the Parent Pay website, where you can pay online using your credit or debit card.

The maximum number of places available is 20. Should the trip be oversubscribed, places on the trip will be allocated by ballot.

The college would not want the cost to prevent any student from attending. If you feel that you are in such a position, please contact the Principal, in confidence, to discuss whether some suitable arrangements can be made.

Students who demonstrate commitment to their language studies would benefit most from this kind of experience. If the trip is oversubscribed, a random ballot will be held to determine which students are offered places.

The college reserves the right to refuse any student a place if their conduct in the future, leading up to the trip, is unacceptable.

Once both schools have a list of participating students, you will be asked to provide additional information to enable careful pairing. The students will then be encouraged to contact their partner by email or letter.

If you have any further queries about the exchange at this stage please do not hesitate to contact me. Once the trip has been confirmed there will be another letter explaining when the next payments should be made. There will also be an information evening for parents in the summer term, as we approach the date of departure. Please note that students will require their own valid passport and a European health card for this visit. Information is available at: <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/Pages/about-the-ehic.aspx> and <https://www.gov.uk/get-a-child-passport>.

Please fill in the reply slip to confirm that you would like your son/daughter to take part in this visit and return to the college office or by email: trips@stbenedicts.essex.sch.uk, by **Monday 7th November 2016**. You are also required to provide a copy of your child's passport and details of European Health Card.

Yours faithfully

Mrs E Saines
Subject Leader for Modern Languages

Please return to the college office by **Monday 7th November 2016** (or email: trips@stbenedicts.essex.sch.uk)

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Name of Student: **Form:**

I give authorisation for my child, named above, to participate in the French Exchange 2017.

I have paid the deposit on Parent Pay **Yes / No***

* Please contact the Principal if you are concerned about meeting the cost of the trip who will look to see how we can help.

It is very important to ensure that the trip organiser has full information on emergency and medical details. Please can you supply an emergency contact telephone number (preferably a mobile number) to be used by college staff in case of an emergency:

Emergency numbers: (Name)

..... (Name)

Passport No: **European Health Card:**
(please also provide a copy of your passport and European Health Card for our records when returning this form).

Medical details and/or dietary requirements:

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I also agree to authorise members of staff during the course of the visit to approve such medical treatment for my child as deemed necessary in an emergency on the advice of a qualified medical practitioner.

Signed: **Date:**
Parent/Carer