



ST. DAVID'S HOLY FAITH SECONDARY SCHOOL
Greystones, Co. Wicklow

**ST. DAVID'S HOLY FAITH SECONDARY SCHOOL,
GREYSTONES, CO. WICKLOW**

Whole School Modern Foreign Language and Exchange Policy

This Whole School Modern Foreign Language and Exchange Policy was ratified by the
Board of Management on

Tuesday, 21st February 2023

St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School is a Catholic school and part of the Le Chéile Catholic Schools Trust. We are committed to the holistic education of students. In our modern world, understanding of and experiences of other cultures are a vital component of holistic education. Our world has become an increasingly global society in which our students are encouraged to challenge their own boundaries, pre-conceptions, in a way that is accessible to all students and contributes to their cognitive, personal and social growth by enhancing their communicative and thinking skills. Multilingual competencies and cultural awareness and expression competences are two the eight key competencies of lifelong learning considered essential to personal fulfilment, healthy and sustainable lifestyles, employability, active citizenship and social inclusion (Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning, Council of the European Union, 2018).

This is the locus for St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School's Modern Foreign Language Exchange Policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following legal instruments:

- The Education Act, 1998
- The Education Welfare Act, 2000
- The Equality Act, 2004
- The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004
- Children First Act, 2015
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools, 2017
- General Data Protection Regulation, 2018
- The Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct

In addition, at national level, there are curricular developments which underpin our rationale for Modern Languages exchanges:

- Modern Foreign Languages Subject Specification for Junior Cycle
- Languages Connect, Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following policies of St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Statement
- Health and Safety Statement
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-bullying policy
- Wellbeing policy

Rationale

In learning foreign languages, students are actively engaged in activities and tasks which integrate the five language skills of listening, reading, spoken production, spoken interaction and writing. As a result, they communicate with increasing independence, confidence and creativity. As learning is a social activity as well as a personal one and as communication is central to language, learning languages offers students ample opportunities to work with others to develop their language skills and achieve appropriate goals.

A fundamental feature of languages is that they give students access to new worlds and different ways of thinking. The resulting development of socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural awareness also enhances students' cognitive development. By reflecting on other cultures and making comparisons they develop a deeper understanding of their own while appreciating diversity.

While our school specialises in French and Spanish, as curricular Modern Foreign Languages at Junior and Senior Cycle and where students take State examinations in these subjects, we have modules which are conducted, chiefly in Transition Year, in Chinese Mandarin and German (in 2023 – 2024) but varies according to the teacher's professional linguistic proficiency. Individuals for Senior Cycle, choose if they wish, to be examined in Chinese, Polish, German, Russian, Italian, and other languages as required and are registered through the State Examination Commission for Leaving Certificate examinations.

Modern Foreign Language Exchange Structures in St David's Holy Faith Secondary School

We have two models of Language Exchanges in operation in our school:

- (i) A short duration Modern Language Exchange consisting of four weeks
- (ii) A full immersion programme which can be for a term, a year or two years at Senior Cycle.

1. SHORT DURATION MODERN LANGUAGE EXCHANGE

Exchange programme duration

The Modern Foreign Language exchanges in the school will be of a duration of two weeks. St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones' students will host their partner students for two weeks and St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones' students will visit their partner schools for two weeks. Exchanges may take place over holiday periods. Exchange periods will be decided by the schools in advance of the promotion of the exchange and students travel in the decided timeframe.

Selection Process

There is a selection process in place. This is for the benefit of all concerned.

The selection process includes:

- An application form that pertains to students' motivation, social skills and willingness to engage with the programme
- Feedback from staff members who have experience of the student
- An assessment of the student's behaviour record

The school's selection decision is final.

Prerequisites for the Exchange Programme

- Students must display a willingness to engage with the culture of the exchange country.

- Students and their families must be able to provide a visiting student with an individual room. If a family refuse to do this, they will not be able to apply for the exchange
- Students and their parents/guardians must provide a Health Declaration form. Failure to disclose medical information on this form will result in withdrawal of a place on the programme (See Appendix 1).
- Students and their parents/guardians must sign the Exchange Programme Consent Form. Failure to sign this document will result in withdrawal of a place on the programme (See Appendix 2).
- Students and their parents/guardians must agree to the Student Exchange Behaviour Policy. Failure to sign this document will result in withdrawal of a place on the programme (See Appendix 3).

Deposit

Students will pay a deposit to secure their place on the programme. This deposit will be paid through VShare and will be retained by the school until the full conclusion of the exchange programme. This deposit will not be returned in any situation where the exchange is not fully completed or where an alternative family or accommodation has to be found for a visiting student.

Travel Arrangements

The school will be responsible for the organisation of flights. Parents/guardians will pay for these flights through a secure, direct link to the travel agent by a set date. Failure to pay by this set date may result in students being unable to travel. In normal circumstances, a teacher will not travel with the group but may do so if that is a requirement of the airline.

Communication Arrangements

All regular communication methods in use by the school should be used. In addition a specific email will be established by coordinating teachers to facilitate communication between parents, exchange coordinators and students. This email address will be monitored outside regular school hours and should be the first channel of communication used by all parties.

Exchange Coordinators

The role of exchange coordinator will be rotated between MFL teachers on an annual basis.

Wellbeing

The Co-ordinator will be responsible for following up on the wellbeing of the students while in Spain/France through videoconference when deemed necessary.

2. Students engaged in Immersion Programmes to St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones

Our school accepts students for one or two years duration for Transition Year and/or Fifth Year, to come and study in our school. This is set up with local agencies who have professional links with

schools in Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and have been approved by the school's Board of Management. Students, accepted by our school, stay with a host family local to the school and are provided with school uniform and books, by their agency. Students participate in all activities run by and in the school and are bound by the policies outlined above which govern the day-to-day running of the school. These students participate in school life through academic work, committees, sports, arts, and a myriad of extra-curricular activities. The immersion programme presents an unparalleled opportunity to students to improve their fluency. Applications are made directly to the school via the agency and is the generic form of admission for any new student coming to the school. This application and the accreditation necessary are agreed between the school, the agencies, and the host and indigenous families. In the day-to-day activities of the school, all issues are mediated between the school and the agency who in turn connect with the host and the family, as necessary.

Signed: _____

(Chair of the Board of Management)

Date: _____

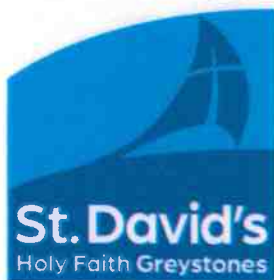
Signed: _____

(Secretary to the Board of Management)

Date: _____

APPENDIX 1

School Exchange Health Declaration Form



School Exchange Health Declaration Form

Student Details:

Student's Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Contact Information:

Parent/Guardian	Alternate Contact (1)	Alternate Contact (2)
Name:	Name:	Name:
Home Phone:	Home Phone:	Home Phone:
Work Phone:	Work Phone:	Work Phone:
Mobile Phone:	Mobile Phone:	Mobile Phone:
Fax Number:	Fax Number:	Fax Number:
Email:	Email:	Email:

Family Doctor		
Name:	Work Phone:	Other Contact Means:

Medical Information:

If you answer 'yes' to any of the questions below, please explain why in detail in the space provided.

1. Does your child currently have a medical condition that requires medication? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please indicate what medicine and at what frequency.

2. Is your son/daughter allergic to any specific medication? Yes ☐ No ☐

3. Does your son/daughter have any food allergies? Yes ☐ No ☐

4. Does your son/daughter have any other allergies? Yes ☐ No ☐

5. Has your son/daughter had any significant illnesses in the last 6 months? Yes ☐ No ☐

6. Has your son/daughter undergone any significant surgeries in the last 5 years?

Yes ☐ No ☐

7. Has your son/daughter undertaken an immunisation schedule? If so, what vaccinations and when?

8. Does your son/daughter have any special dietary requirements? Yes ☐ No ☐
If yes, please indicate the requirements below.

Consent:

1. In the event that your daughter complains of a headache, do you agree that Panadol/Paracetamol can be administered? Yes ☐ No ☐

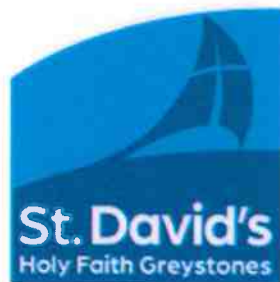
Signature:

Please sign below to indicate that the above information is complete and correct.

Date

Parent/Guardians Signature

APPENDIX 2: School Exchange Consent Form



St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School Greystones

School Exchange Consent Form

To be completed by parents/guardians only

Student's Name:

I/We, the parents/guardians, give consent for our child to participate in the Spanish/French School Exchange (Year) on the basis that I/We understand and comply with the following:

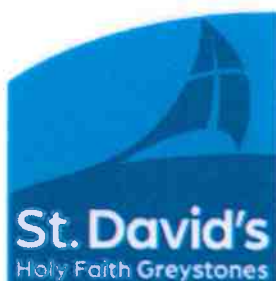
1. Full St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School and (French/Spanish School Name) Rules apply at all times.
2. I/We give permission for the St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School teachers in charge to sanction my/our son/daughter if she/he breaks the school rules.
3. I/We will notify the teachers in charge of any ailment, allergy, and condition or diet requirement, which require their attention.
4. I/We authorise the host family and the St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School staff to act on my/our behalf in an emergency and to sign on my/our behalf any consent forms required by the medical authorities if they know that it would not be advisable to wait for my/our signature.
5. I/We, as parents/guardians, have the full confidence that my son/daughter understands these conditions and will comply with the rules as set out here on the consent form and the student discipline form.
6. I/We understand that this is a direct student exchange between my family and the Spanish/French family at no economic cost and that no charges will apply as a result of the exchange to any party involved.
7. I/We understand that I/We, as host parents, will be responsible for the wellbeing of the Spanish/French student and will act "in loco parentis" during their stay in Ireland.
8. I/We understand that St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School and (French/Spanish School Name) will only act as facilitators of the exchange and that they will not accept any legal responsibility that may result from the exchange.

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

APPENDIX 3

School Exchange Code of Behaviour Form



School Exchange Code of Behaviour Form

To be completed by the student in the presence of their parent/guardian

Student's Name:

We understand that the following regulations will apply whilst on the French/Spanish Exchange (Year):



School rules: (Name of Spanish/French School) Code of Behaviour will apply at all times during the exchange in Spain/France.



General: Students will not be permitted to consume, purchase or carry any alcohol, un-prescribed drugs and/or cigarettes whilst on this school exchange. Any such breach of this expectation will result in serious consequences.



General: Students must understand that their host family and (Name of Spanish/French School) teachers and staff are in a position of responsibility that will include the application of any disciplinary action that is deemed necessary.



Respect: Students will show a level of respect towards the (Name of Spanish/French School) teachers and staff that would be expected within the St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School environment.

Student Signature

____/____/_____
Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

____/____/_____
Date