



May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Spanish Exchange 2026/27

I am absolutely delighted to confirm that we will be running our Spanish Exchange again in 2026-27 to the beautiful historic city of Vitoria-Gasteiz with Colegio Vera-Cruz. It will be open to all students of Year 11 studying GCSE Spanish. The exchange will provide a great opportunity to encounter both language and culture at first hand, to make new friends and develop self-confidence.

Last year's trip cost was £595 and we will endeavour to keep the costs as close to this as possible; the price this year will depend on final student numbers and flight costs. Our provisional dates for the exchange are:

- **Incoming (Vitoria-Gasteiz partners in Backwell): Tuesday 22nd September – Tuesday 29 September 2026**
- **Outgoing (Backwell party in Vitoria-Gasteiz): Saturday 23 – Saturday 30 January 2027**

When in Spain, students will attend school with their exchange partner and participate in a number of excursions to nearby places of interest. Possibilities include a trip to Bilbao, activities learning about Basque culture and a trip to the beautiful coastal surf town of San Sebastián.

Please carefully consider the aspects of hosting, and the outbound visit, with your child before applying. For the outgoing trip, students should be prepared to spend time independently with host families in the evening and at the weekend and be open to trying new food/experiences, thus making the most of the experience.

To register interest and have the chance to be offered a place, please complete the MS Form, below. **This form will go live at midday on Friday 15 May and will close at midday on Tuesday 19 May.**

[Spanish Exchange 2026/27 - Register of Interest – Fill in form](#)

Please note that there is a limit to the number of students who can take part, so early application is essential in order to gain a place. Once we have a final list of attendees, we will confirm flight costs with the travel agents and will communicate the final trip cost and payment plan.

If your child is in receipt of free school meals and/or is Pupil Premium, financial assistance is available, please contact the Finance Team on finance@backwellschool.net to discuss further.

We will be reserving flights as soon as possible once we have confirmed attendees. Please note: the first two instalments of **£220 each** will be used to pay for the flight tickets and are therefore **non-refundable deposits**. If these instalments are not made by the payment plan's due dates, then we will be unable to reserve a flight for your child.

Student matches are partly made based on gender, but this does also depend on who applies in Spain. Once your child has been offered a place, we will issue them with a student profile form, which should be completed and returned to us as soon as possible, to enable us to match them to a Spanish student and give them an opportunity to make initial contact with each other.

Your child will need a passport for travel in January 2027, valid for up to six months from the date of their return. Students will require a Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) for health insurance purposes, which is available via the NHS website. Please ensure that you follow any national travel guidelines in the lead-up to the trip, including any visa requirements that may apply.

To follow Government policy, we are expected to obtain up-to-date DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) certificates for all parents involved in hosting foreign exchanges. Once we have the list of students who are partaking in the Spanish Exchange, we will send full details about how to complete the forms and provide school with the correct identification.

Once arrangements are finalised for the incoming visit, we will arrange a parents' information evening meeting in September to discuss details of the incoming leg of the exchange. In the meantime, should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

N Maguire
Head of Spanish/ Second in Languages