



Expanding horizons (clockwise from top left): All Hallows hosts a cultural visit for Chinese pupils; a Farleigh School classroom is transformed into a French cafe; Chafyn Grove youngsters give snails a try; Chinese New Year is celebrated at Malvern St James Girls' School; Packwood Haugh school pupils visit the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

# FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**G**ROWING up in a world with shrinking borders, today's young people are having to adopt an increasingly international outlook.

A combination of cross-continental trade, more accessible travel and the internet-enabled ease of communicating with contemporaries in other countries has created fertile ground for

those able to think in a global manner.

This trend has not gone unnoticed in Britain's schools, where a wealth of activities in and out of the classroom are helping to expand the horizons of the next generation – including those from Army families.

Pupils at Wells Cathedral School don't have to venture far for an

international experience as the diverse student body includes children from countries such as France, Switzerland, Spain, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Thailand, China, Malaysia, Japan, Korea and the USA.

The school offers the opportunity to learn four principal modern languages, as well as Latin, and those from overseas are offered examinations in their native language – with Chinese, Czech, Russian, Korean all taken at Wells in recent times.

Away from lessons, pupils get enviable opportunities to travel. Highlights include a homestay exchange with Wells' partner school in Geneva, annual trips to Barcelona and Berlin for those learning Spanish and German and overseas arts and sports tours.

Impressively, the school also runs the Sierra Leone Project, a ten-day trip to Freetown during which youngsters lead musical workshops and lessons at The Ballanta Music Academy and the JT Reffell French Memorial Primary and Secondary School and even perform for the British High Commissioner and the

British Council.

Julie Desmarchelier, Director of Modern Languages, explained that the ample overseas offerings are designed not just to expand pupils' minds in the present, but hopefully to open doors for them in the future.

She added: "Every year, the languages faculty draws students' attention to the fact that a career in the Army with the knowledge of a foreign language is a great opportunity and that GCHQ is always recruiting linguists."

## VALUABLE VOYAGES

Providing pupils with first-hand experiences of other countries and cultures is also a key component of the education provided at the Duke of York's Royal Military School (DOYRMS) in Dover.

Drawing on the school's Forces pedigree, youngsters have travelled to Bangladesh to tour military schools in the country as well as hosting Bangladeshis for a return visit.

An overseas challenge expedition is held every two years, with an upcoming visit to India following hot on the heels of »



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– Julie Desmarchelier, Wells Cathedral School –

missions to Nicaragua and Costa Rica. These exciting trips combine trekking and cultural activities with volunteering work benefiting local charities.

And budding performers have got in on the international act thanks to recent co-productions of *West Side Story* and *Phantom of the Opera* with a school in the United States which saw students from both countries cross the Atlantic to perform together.

Such is the success of DOYRMS' international education that it has secured the British Council's International School's award, a globally-recognised mark of its embedded approach to looking beyond the UK's borders.

Stephen Haslehurst, Vice-Principal (Curriculum and Progress), explained: "If students are to thrive, and to be able to seize opportunities presented to them in an increasingly borderless world of work, we recognise that it is vital that they have an outward approach to learning and the broader experiences that we offer as part of our curriculum."

### EARLY ADOPTERS

Proof that you are never too young to explore the wider world is in abundance at Andover's Farleigh School, where French is taught from reception classes upwards and Latin enters the curriculum from year six.

A week-long immersion in *la vie Française* follows during the same year, with students able to practise their linguistic skills and experience Gallic life up close.

Farleigh's commitment to exposing youngsters to other ways of life also extends to a series of cultural days arranged for pre-prep pupils exploring Hinduism, Judaism and celebrating Holi Day.

Those in year three enjoy an Ancient Greek day, while year four learns all about India by wearing traditional dress, making tayo

food and having a go at some of the country's dances.

A further treat for year three sees Head of French Henri Kennard's classroom transformed into a French cafe, with pupils serving as staff and customers.

Mr Kennard said: "At Farleigh, teaching pupils from a young age about different cultures gives us rich opportunities to make every child achieve through celebrating diversity and valuing different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

"Children are encouraged to make a positive contribution by respecting others and working collaboratively. They also develop team skills, which will contribute to their future economic wellbeing."

### LANGUAGE LOVERS

Linguistics sits at the heart of education at Salisbury's Chafyn Grove, where pre-prep pupils learn French – aided by two native speaker members of staff – and Spanish is available from year five onwards. Further options include Mandarin, Russian, sign language and Ancient Greek.

Headmaster Simon Head explained: "The learning of language is a powerful vehicle of appreciation and understanding for other cultures. It also helps inform an enhanced understanding of English."

Exchange and residential trips to France, choir tours and an annual Alpine ski trip provide exciting international experiences, while Chafyn Grove's children gain cultural insights during visits from the Gurkha community.

And Mr Head points to the positive contribution made to by the boarding pupils who head to Wiltshire from overseas to study.

He added: "It is a cardinal aim for all our children not to see difference as 'other' – whether that is on grounds of nationality



*"It is a cardinal aim for all our children not to see difference as 'other' – whether that is on grounds of nationality or anything else."*

– Simon Head, Chafyn Grove –

or anything else.

"However, there are specific advantages to sharing school with children from overseas in appreciating that the world is a larger place than Wiltshire.

"Our overseas children add a great deal to our school environment on top of engendering that sense of wider community. By definition they are explorers and we hope our school will always be filled with curious children keen on discovery."

### GLOBAL CITIZENS

Forces-friendly Adcote School may be nestled in the Shropshire countryside, but its horizons lie far beyond its immediate surroundings. Catering for day and boarding pupils aged between seven and 18, the school's ethos of producing well-rounded, well-informed global citizens is aided by the fact that one-fifth of pupils are from overseas.

Students learn French and Spanish, explore the impact of the classical world on the modern era in a Latin club and get to experience overseas trips including visits to the World War

One battlefields of France and Belgium, Christmas markets in Lille and Bruges and adventures in Rome, Sorrento and New York.

The school also hosts an international day with food, games and activities from around the world and has its own Rotary Club which puts on an international food fair and dress day.

Headmistress Diane Browne said: "At Adcote, we nurture girls' individual talents and pride ourselves on ensuring that all girls have the opportunity to excel.

"We build aspiration, confidence and a caring attitude to others. Our small classes, in safe and secure surroundings, enable our girls to realise their full potential and be the best they can be."

### CREATIVE CLASSROOMS

Evidence of the value placed on an international outlook at Somerset's All Hallows School can be found in abundance in its thriving modern languages department, where role play, music and storytelling are used to bring French, Spanish, Italian and Latin to life.

An annual languages week »

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– Stephen Haslehurst, Duke of York's Royal Military School –

includes quizzes, workshops and treasure hunts in Spanish and French, Indian dancing and cooking and guest talks from a host of international speakers, while pupils can even have a go at creating their own languages.

Deputy Head Richard Barnes told us: "In an ever-increasing international and globalised world, we believe that it is vitally important to value language learning and inspire our children to learn new languages and study different cultures.

"Today's children will be the workforce of tomorrow and, with technological developments, they will undoubtedly need to work and collaborate with colleagues in other countries, making an international perspective even more important."

Pupils arriving from overseas – including those from Army families who have lived overseas – form an important part of the All Hallows community and bring insights from countries including France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Sweden, Russia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, the United States and China.

Mr Barnes added: "We believe that the children's language learning and cultural awareness can only benefit from opportunities to travel overseas with their friends.

"Whether on one of our two

annual French trips, a Dutch sports tour or the annual ski trip to France or Italy, children learn a certain amount of independence and have great fun whilst learning language skills with their peers."

**WIDER WORLD**

An early introduction to foreign languages is on offer to youngsters at Packwood Haugh School, where pre-prep pupils build their linguistic talents through weekly French, Spanish and Italian sessions. Latin is introduced in year five, with Greek and Mandarin following.

Lessons learned in the classroom are complemented by organised visits. An annual ski trip is open to all, while year eight students have recently benefited from travels to Iceland, France and the Netherlands where itineraries cover everything from history, geography and art to religious studies, languages and more.

Headmaster Clive Smith-Langridge explained: "While, of course, we can all pick up huge amounts of information from books, television and the internet, actually visiting a country provides children with a unique and invaluable opportunity to see and experience so much for themselves – at Packwood we believe that is when the real learning happens."

Day-to-day life at Packwood

Haugh also features an international flavour, with the dining hall cooking up themed meals and the school's 24 pupils from Asia and continental Europe sharing their cultures with their British friends.

Mr Smith-Langridge added: "In [today's] globalised world, I believe none of us can flourish in isolation. Therefore, it is vital for children to develop an understanding and appreciation of the wider world.

"As a prep school, our aim is to equip children with the knowledge, skills and characteristics that will enable them to go on to lead fulfilling and successful lives."

**BUILDING CONFIDENCE**

A diverse selection of cultures are on display at Malvern St James Girls' School in Worcestershire, where pupils from 26 countries enhance daily life.

The value of linguistics sits at the heart of the school's approach to education, with the core languages of French, German and Spanish supplemented by extra-curricular options including Russian, Arabic, Mandarin, Japanese and Italian.

Students are able to exercise their newly-acquired skills in practical ways, including celebrating Epiphany in French lessons, cooking Spanish dishes and writing to German penpals, while recent overseas trips have taken in France, Spain, Greece and the Netherlands.

Headmistress Olivera Raraty said: "Languages can be perceived as challenging subjects but pupils who choose to study them learn to engage with challenge and are prepared to take risks.

"In particular, speaking a language which is non-native is an exercise in building confidence and encouraging perseverance.

"In that sense, it is a really good example of the growth mindset which all good educationalists are encouraging: that is, the notion that in order to learn and develop, we must be prepared to have a go and make mistakes. It is all part of the learning journey." ■



Sampling sushi at Packwood Haugh School

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–Clive Smith-Langridge, Packwood Haugh School –

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