



Aylesbury High School | #AHSWalksTall

Developing uniquely talented young adults, who are independent, strong and confident

Tuesday 15 October 2024

Dear Parent / Carer

SWEDISH EXCHANGE MARCH/APRIL 2025 - 24-ZSWED

We are delighted to be able to offer your child the opportunity to take part in the School's seventh exchange to Sweden.

The school we exchange with is called Ribbaskolan, which is in Gränna, a very pretty small town situated on a lake called Vattern, more or less halfway between Stockholm and Gothenburg.

The benefit to our students is not the same as when we go on an exchange to France, Germany or Spain, in terms of how their language skills can improve. Rather, it is an opportunity to sample life in a different country and learn something about its culture and people. Students who have previously taken part have spoken highly about the richness of their cultural experience.

Trip Details

The Swedish students will visit us first, where you will host a Swedish student in your home. They will arrive in Aylesbury on **Monday 3rd March 2025** and depart on **Sunday 9th March 2025**. They will have spent a few days in London beforehand. As well as being hosted by AHS students, the Swedish visitors will spend some time in school and go out on organised trips to places of interest in the vicinity. We will confirm the final arrangements nearer the time, but we are likely to do a trip to Oxford together and we will have you spend a family day on **Saturday 8th March**. We will do a joint trip with the Swedish students to Harry Potter Studios during the week and the Swedish students will depart England to return home on **Sunday 9th March**.

It will be an excellent opportunity for your child to make new friends and broaden her cultural horizons. **Please note that there will likely be some boys in the Swedish group, so some of our students could be paired with a male student; please let us know at this point if you have a particular preference.**

We will visit the Swedish school in April, leaving on **Friday 4th April 2025** and returning home on **Thursday 10th April 2025**. Please note that the entirety of the trip **overlaps with one leg of the German Exchange, so your child will not be able to attend both trips.**

We will fly into Gothenburg where our Swedish friends will welcome us and we will likely spend the day in the city, visiting the Gothenburg Universeum (a zoo, science centre and public aquarium) and Old Town. In the evening we will take a coach to Gränna, where our students will be met by their host families. They will stay with their partner in their family home in order to get a full and authentic cultural experience of the Swedish lifestyle. The students will spend some time experiencing the very different Swedish education system and will also take part in some activities local to Gränna, such as learning to make polkagris, a traditional Swedish peppermint sweet, and visiting the local museum. Our students will enjoy a whole group trip as well as a family day.

Miss Hussey is leading the trip and will be accompanied by Mrs Jones. They will be supervising AHS students for all the activities and travel when students are not with their host families, along with two teachers from the

Swedish school. On **Wednesday 9th April**, we will leave our friends in Gränna and take the train to Stockholm where we will visit some museums (including the incredible ABBA Museum!) and the Old Town, and spend one night at [STF af Chapman & Skeppsholmen hostel](#), before flying back home on Thursday.

DBS Checks

To comply with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and our safeguarding requirements, the School is required to carry out a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service on each adult who will be living with, and responsible for, a visiting student. The DBS fee is included in the trip price. Further details as to which adults in the household/s require a DBS check can be found here. In January, we will hold an information evening in school to go over the itinerary and answer any questions. On that evening we will also ask parents to bring in the relevant documentation so that it can be checked. To be valid for the period our exchange partners visit us, **the DBS check must take place in January**. If you have any concerns about a DBS check being carried out, please feel free to contact the Headmistress or myself in confidence. If anybody refuses to have the check done, their child will be unable to take part.

Even if a parent is currently on the DBS update service, they still have to go through the process to meet all of the new regulations as they pertain to exchanges.

We understand it is a slight inconvenience, but all adults who require the check must come to school **in person** with the **original** documents listed here to confirm their identity, as well as **photocopies** of those for us to keep.

You need three suitable identification documents for each adult having a DBS check. The most common documents to produce are:

1. Valid passport.
2. UK Driving Licence.
3. Utility bill or bank statement dated no more than three months old that has been posted to your address, not printed from an online account.

Important Points to Note:-

- The School **cannot** accept any documentation printed from the internet e.g. internet bank statements
- The School **cannot** accept photocopies only
- The School must only accept valid, current, and original documentation

Signing up for the trip, cost and payments

We expect the total cost of this trip to be in the region of **£650** which covers the cost of accommodation, travel, activities, insurance and administration for all parts of the exchange (in Sweden and the UK). We will be able to give a precise figure when we know the size of our group and flights have been booked.

If you would like your child to attend this visit, please pay a non-refundable deposit of £150 via ParentMail by **Monday 4 November 2024** at the latest. **This trip will open on ParentMail at 7:00pm on Thursday 17 October**. If you are unable to find the payment item on your homepage in ParentMail you can search for the item in your shop page.

As space on the trip is limited, places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. If we are oversubscribed, students' names will be added to a waiting list. If successful in gaining a place on the trip, we will write to you again with further details and ParentMail payment instalments.

In recent years, there has been an unfortunate trend whereby students sign up for an exchange and then drop out a few weeks later. In some cases this is due to circumstances entirely beyond their control, but, more often than not, it is due to them simply having a change of mind. It is not always possible to find a replacement student, and this means we have to contact the foreign school to get them to tell one of their students that they can't go, a decidedly unfair situation. We would ask you in the first instance to think long and hard about participation on an exchange. They are a fantastic, worthwhile experience but please check both sets of dates to ensure you can fully take part. If your daughter does need to pull out, please let us know ASAP so we can

try to allocate her place to another student. Please remember that all refunds of any amount paid after the initial non-refundable deposit will not be possible unless they can be replaced by another student or for cancellation due to medical reasons, confirmed by a doctor.

Ticking the relevant box when making payment in ParentMail constitutes consent to this activity. If you would like to apply for financial support for this trip (whether or not your child is eligible for Pupil Premium Funding), please complete the confidential on-line form accessed via the Parents' section of the website by **Friday 1 November**. Please reference the trip code: 24-ZSWED.

Please note that the student medical information and your contact details that we hold on record will be used for the trip, so if anything has changed since you last updated us, please email the changes to your daughter's Pastoral Support Assistant: Mrs Faulkner on lfaulkner@ahs.bucks.sch.uk (Year 10) or Mrs Sheed on dsheed@ahs.bucks.sch.uk (Year 9).

As with all trips we want students and staff to have an enjoyable experience. If either you or the school have any concerns about your daughter's ability to participate then it is vital that we discuss at an early stage how the school can appropriately support her and ensure the trip is suitable for her.

Information regarding trips and visits including the code of conduct, insurance arrangements and voluntary contributions can be found on the school website in the 'What's On' section. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact one of us either by email or through your daughter.

Yours faithfully

Miss Rachel Hussey

Mrs Megan Jones

Teacher of English and French

Teacher of Geography



The town of Granna and a very icy lake!



Learning to make the local speciality, polkagris