



NEWSTEAD WOOD SCHOOL

"creating opportunities for success"

THE SUNDAY TIMES

SCHOOLS GUIDE
2025

STATE SECONDARY
SCHOOL OF THE YEAR
LONDON

15 October 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

Year 9 French Exchange to Bondues – Sunday 17 to Sunday 24 May 2026

We are delighted to offer our Year 9 students of French the opportunity to take part in a home-to-home exchange with our long-standing partner, Institution de la Croix Blanche in Bondues, near Lille. This exchange runs in partnership with St Olave's Grammar School and has a strong track record of enriching students' linguistic skills and cultural understanding.

The success of the program rests on reciprocity: students are expected to be engaged guests in France and welcoming hosts when the French group visits us in June. All adult members of hosting families in France are subject to appropriate safeguarding checks, and all students are enrolled at our partner school.

Dates, Travel and Accommodation

- Outbound exchange (UK group in France): **Sunday 17 to Sunday 24 May 2026**. Students will stay with their matched partner and family.
- Return leg (French group in the UK): **Wednesday 17 June to Wednesday 24 June 2026**. The French group will spend two school days with us and undertake day trips to London on other weekdays; the weekend will be with host families.
- Travel: We intend to travel by Eurostar direct to Lille. Local travel in France for excursions will be by a vetted coach operator.
- Supervision: Students will be accompanied on excursions by members of Newstead Wood School staff. Staff will have daily contact points with students throughout the week in France.

Pairing and Program

Students will be paired with a French student of a similar age, gender and as far as possible, shared interests. We plan a balanced program combining school immersion (approximately a day and a half attending lessons with partners) and cultural visits. Past activities have included sand-yachting and a visit to Nausicaá (National Sea Centre), a guided visit to a coal-mining museum, and a bakery workshop (shaping croissants/baguettes). Final details may be adjusted to secure the best educational value and safety.

Headteacher: Mr Alan Blount, MA, BSc, QTS

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Eligibility and Numbers

This exchange is open to students in Year 9 who are **choosing to study French for GCSE**. The visit will run with a **minimum of 20 participants**. To secure group fares, we encourage early registration. Places may be limited by transport and hosting capacity.

Cost and Payments

The total cost will include return travel and all program excursions. The total cost for this year is £600 per student. This will be paid in three equal instalments of £200.

Payment schedule (4 instalments):

- Instalment 1 (deposit): £200 — due by 5.00pm on **Monday 10 November 2025** via WisePay
- Instalment 2: £200 — due Friday 9 January 2026
- Instalment 3 (final): £200 — due Tuesday 10 February 2026

Consent, Information and Documents

Please be aware that **payment constitutes permission for this trip**. Should you have any financial concerns with regards to payment please contact finance@newsteadwood.co.uk in confidence. **No refund will be possible once the first payment is made.**

We also request:

- A copy of your child's passport and EHIC/GHIC card (or proof of application) as soon as possible after paying the deposit;
- Notification if your child holds a non-UK passport when you submit the deposit, to support ticketing requirements.

Travel document requirements: Passports must be less than 10 years old on the date of travel and valid for at least 3 months after the date of return to the UK. Students will need in-date EHIC/GHIC or travel insurance.

Next Steps

1. Pay the deposit on WisePay **by 5.00pm on Monday 10 November 2025** to reserve a place.
2. Watch for the confirmation email with links to the consent and information forms.
3. Email passport and EHIC/GHIC copies to pbongout@newsteadwood.co.uk.
4. Sign the Code of Conduct <https://forms.office.com/e/ibCDGHZqUd>
5. Provide passport details here: <https://forms.office.com/e/WbvKZG7Upd>
6. Provide EHIC/GHIC details or travel insurance if your daughter doesn't have an EHIC/GHIC card <https://forms.office.com/e/TvpCUX8dsw>
7. Complete student pairing questionnaire <https://forms.office.com/e/cxtsVWbQKD>

We will hold an information evening in January 2026 to share the final itinerary, packing guidance, and contact arrangements.

We are excited to offer this rich linguistic and cultural experience and look forward to your child taking part. If you have any questions, please contact me at pbongout@newsteadwood.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Bongout'.

Mrs P Bongout
Assistant Headteacher