



## THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL

CGH/JHS

15 June 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Expedition to The Gambia, Friday 20 October – Friday 27 October 2023**

I am delighted to be able to offer your child an exciting opportunity to visit The Gambia in October half-term 2023.

The Gambia is the smallest country on mainland Africa and has an estimated population of 1.7 million people. The Gambia's official language is English and it lies in the same time zone as the UK. The Gambia experiences a warm climate which hosts a wide range of biodiversity making it the perfect location to see a variety of wildlife such as crocodiles, monkeys, chameleons, geckos, snakes and much more. The Gambia also boasts magnificent golden beaches backed by swaying palms; you do not have look far to see why The Gambia is known as "The Smiling Coast" as the locals are known to be among the friendliest people you will ever meet!

The expedition may be a 'once in a lifetime' experience for your child, providing an insight into a completely different and fascinating culture within a developing country. The students will uncover the Gambian village way of life by having the opportunity to work closely with our partner school, Mansa-Colley Bojang School, and by a varied programme of cultural experiences which will offer your child a memorable and rewarding expedition. In the run-up to the expedition, our students attending will be required to participate in fundraising activities to sponsor young girls to go attend our partnership school for the year, therefore enhancing the volunteering aspect of the whole experience.

The provisional itinerary is:

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|-------------|--|
| Friday 20   | Flight London-Banjul (depart Gatwick, arrive Banjul). Familiarisation walking tour of hotel followed by dinner in the hotel.   |
| Saturday 21 | <b>4 Wheel Drive adventure</b> following the coast and uncovering the Gambian way of life including a visit to Tanji (a traditional village) and a reptile farm to see snakes and lizards indigenous to The Gambia.  |
| Sunday 22   | Explore the mangroves of the award winning <b>Makasutu Cultural Forest</b> in canoes; nature walk through the forest to glimpse baboons, mongoose and monkeys. Lunch, dancing with the Jola tribe.   |
| Monday 23   | <b>Visit partner school</b> and pay a courtesy call on the village Chief: learn about the hierarchy and different roles in the village; take part in classes.  |
| Tuesday 24  | <b>Volunteering at Galloya village.</b> After a warm welcome from the residents and a chance to see village life at first hand, students join renowned Gambian artist, Njogu Touray, to paint a meaningful mural on one of the village compound walls with help of the Gambian villages. |

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- Wednesday 25 **'City and more' excursion** in the morning, visit the Monkey Park, Katchichally crocodiles, Bakau Market (you will get the chance to barter for souvenirs) and a drive through the capital Banjul with commentary. The afternoon will be spent relaxing in the hotel complex and a visit to the local craft market to barter for more souvenirs.
- Thursday 26 **Visit partner school.** Students shadow Gambian students in their lessons. Lunch at the Calypso restaurant with a chance to see crocodiles in the nearby pool.
- Friday 27 Farewell celebrations at the partner school. Transfer to airport after lunch (depart Banjul, arrive Gatwick).

We will be travelling with a reputable travel company, 'The Gambia Experience', who are experienced in successfully arranging school trips to The Gambia. We will be staying in the resort of Koto, at the Kombo Beach Hotel. The cost of the trip will be £1,690.00 and will include all travel expenses, accommodation and breakfast, lunch and dinner during the visit. Students will require their own passport and will need to consult with their doctor with regards to immunisation and anti-malarial medication, the cost of which is not included.

Teachers accompanying residential visits carry an enormous responsibility for the students in their care. We therefore reserve the right to refuse a place to any student whose behaviour in school has been or becomes a problem.

You can apply for a place by completing the Google registration form below and paying a **£130.00 deposit** via our online payment system (if your child is unsuccessful in gaining a place, the deposit will be refunded). The registration form and deposit must be completed by **Friday 15 July**. If your child is successful in gaining a place on this residential visit, we will inform you by email and we will issue a payment card detailing a full schedule of payments. The payment plan will require £130.00 per month from August 2022 to July 2023.

Click here: [The Gambia Expedition 2023 Registration Form](#)

We will be running a briefing for parents on **Tuesday 5 July at 6.00pm** in the Lantern Theatre, where we will outline the itinerary and answer any questions you may have. Please indicate on [The Gambia Parent Briefing](#) form your attendance.

Having secured a place, should you wish to cancel your child's place, the school will try to fill the place from any waiting list. If this is not possible, the deposit will be lost and further cancellation charges made by the travel company will be incurred. These will vary according to the notice given.

If you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

C Goodrich (Mr)  
Director of Business Services

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