



# UK Additional Regionals

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STUDENTS at King's Ely with a love for learning languages and experiencing different cultures are reaping the benefits of an Erasmus+ funded project.

Last autumn the Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) department secured a Language Erasmus+ Project Grant from the British Council and European Commission.

Entitled United in Diversity, it involves Year 9 and 10 students from King's Ely, plus students from IES Andrés Vandelvira in Albacete, Spain, and College Chaloupe Saint-Leu in La Reunion, France.

Head of MFL Esmeralda Salgado has been instrumental in organising exchange trips to partner schools in Spain and La Reunion.

"I cannot put into words how

amazing both of our Erasmus exchange visits have been," said Ms Salgado, "and what a fantastic impact the United in Diversity project is having on our students and the whole King's Ely community.

"The project is not only enabling our students to improve their linguistic skills because all activities are being conducted in French and Spanish, but they are also developing their ICT skills and genuinely fostering a love for cultural differences and tolerance."

Students are also working collaboratively with their overseas partners to create a video diary in the target language. The video will target a particular festival that represents the culture of the visiting country.

"They also got to experience festi-

vals first-hand and undertook a number of day trips to emblematic historical or geographical places," said Ms Salgado. "As a school, we are so honoured to have been given the opportunity to deliver this project, which echoes the MFL Department's mission to take languages outside the classroom."

The culmination of the project will be the French and Spanish schools visiting King's Ely in June to take part in a series of workshops to design a multilingual, promotional video celebrating the heritage of all the countries involved in the project.

In February it was reported that, "foreign language learning is at its lowest level in UK secondary schools since the turn of the millennium."

A report published by the BBC



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said that the number of students taking GCSE language courses in England has reduced by up to 50 per cent since 2013. A separate survey suggested a third have dropped at least one language from their GCSE options, with German and French falling the most.

"We are bucking this trend at King's Ely, that's for sure," said head of German, Neil Urwin. "The MFL department here is a vibrant and exciting place to be, where students are given every chance to succeed in their study of French, German and Spanish.

"We very successfully take language learning outside the classroom, so that our students have a much richer experience and understanding of why they are learning a

language. We have exchange schools in each of the three countries, with an extra link in the Reunion Islands, where French is the official language.

"King's Ely has achieved International School status through our well-structured e-twinning links and the current Erasmus+ project in French and Spanish. All languages offer support sessions at lunchtime or after school, and there is a vast array of other activities for students to be involved in, including International Week and the ever popular Language Leader Award in conjunction with Routes into Languages."

To keep up to date with the project, visit: [www.facebook.com/unit-edindiversityErasmus](http://www.facebook.com/unit-edindiversityErasmus) or: [twitter.com/united\\_an](https://twitter.com/united_an)