



Château de la Baudonnière

French language immersion for UK schoolchildren

Call **01273 202 999** or visit **www.the-chateau.com**



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The Chateau is situated in the region of La Manche in Normandy. It is 90 minutes from Cherbourg and Caen, 15 minutes from Avranches, Villedieu-les-Poêles, the local beaches and the fishing port of Granville and 30 minutes from Coutances and Le Mont St Michel.

The Chateau nestles in its own grounds which incorporate an orchard and cider press, boule pitch, farmyard, a lake for fishing and canoeing, a river, an assault course and climbing wall, archery range, woodland and meadows, volleyball court and stables.

It can accommodate a large group of pupils plus accompanying staff in comfortable modern rooms with excellent (mostly en suite) bathroom facilities.

La Philosophie

The Chateau is all about French language immersion. Everything that is done at the Chateau involves using practical spoken French to convey meaning, and the children are encouraged to speak French to get what they want. A friendly, French environment supports this philosophy.

As one of our party leaders said; 'The classroom situation is always artificial to some degree. Here my pupils know its for real. If they know that when they want something, they have to ask for it in French, they will do it!

The pupils leave after our full week programme having had a great time in a fun but educational environment. Their ability to speak French will have improved substantially but more importantly pupils will have the confidence to use French and they will understand the practical benefits of learning and using the language. We hope this translates to having pupils who are both more able and more motivated back in the classroom on your return.



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L'Histoire

1990 - It was a rainy day in Cherbourg. A headteacher was checking out pupils on an exchange visit. As he wandered through the town he was surprised to come across two pupils, looking bored, bedraggled and more than a little dispirited.

They explained that their hosts were out at work, so they had been given sandwiches, shown a bus stop and sent into town, with instructions to return at supper time.

The headteacher, Michael Lewis, was less than impressed. He resolved, then and there that some better way should be found to introduce his young charges to the joys of France and speaking French.

He found it. Chateau de la Baudonniere, and lovingly set about the task of converting it into a spacious centre of excellence for learning. Surrounded by forest with its own lake and a river that runs through it, the Result is just perfect. Groups of pupils from this school still use it regularly but other schools can go there too!



Les Visites Locales

The normandy beaches and Bayeaux tapestry are not far away, but Le Mont St Michel, the beaches, our local farms and zoo and the market at Villedieu and St Hilaire are all less than twenty minutes from our Chateau. Groups normally spend 1 or 1½ days out on visits...

Les Activités - journalières et les Soirées

Activities include; VTT, Escalade, Parcours de Santé, Exercice d'Initiative, et Kayak. Each activity concentrates on a specific area of French language (e.g Escalade = body parts and movement commands) and includes a formal language debriefing. Evenings include camp outs, quizzes and Bar-B-Q as well as our famous French talent show & French evening.

Le Français

Over the last nine years, our experienced native French teachers have developed over 500 different games, drama and creative sessions to motivate pupils of all different ages and abilities. We also help the pupils with their French during their journal writing in the evenings and at meals where we eat in French style!

La Philosophie, mise en pratique

A balanced programme, by the end of your stay, will have approximately divided your group's time equally between French lessons, activities, excursions and evening events. It will take account of the age and French ability of the pupils, your own aims and preferences, and the experience of our management team in delivering programmes that work.



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Our Staff Team

Our staff are special. They have been carefully chosen for their skills and experience as well as their ability to create a friendly community spirit, which is an essential part of the Chateau experience. Uniquely, all our staff are French speakers and the majority are native French speakers. This means that French is spoken everywhere and the pupils quickly get the feeling for French language in everyday situations and in turn expect to use it themselves.

Our French team include the centre directors, Darren and Lotta who will look after you and your groups needs. They will be in contact with you six weeks before departure to plan your programme, rooming, excursions and French language requirements. Sophie and Beredicte are our French leaders and organise our team of ten French native animateurs. Gerald has lived at the Chateau for over 30 years. He keeps everything in working order as well as maintaining the lawns and gardens. Andree is our local French chef and has been cooking traditional French food at the Chateau for over nine years. Nick runs the UK office and organises all the pre visit planning and admin as well as travel arrangements.



Our Programme Includes

- A full week educational tour from Sunday - Saturday
- Good quality accommodation
- Three substantial and good quality French meals per day
- A full programme of excursions, activities, formal French tuition and evening events
- All instruction and equipment and teaching material

PLEASE NOTE THAT PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE MEALS ON ROUTE OR ENTRANCE TICKETS FOR EXCURSION TRIPS.

(our recommended excursion venues provide free entrance)



Travel Information (organised by Castaway Travel)

Travel is arranged in modern comfortable coaches all of which are fitted with seatbelts. We utilise ferries from the fleet of Brittany Ferries who sail to either Cherbourg or Caen.

We are only 11/2 hours from the Ports of Cherbourg (& Caen) so the overall travel time is not too long. The pupils/teenagers will need some packed food or money to buy snacks on the journey. Its a good idea to have a separate day bag as the main luggage stays in the hold for the duration of the journey.



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Safety and Security

It is our responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment. Our natural position in the Blaise Valley is ideally located for this as it is naturally remote and surrounded by farms. There are many additional safety features as well. There is extensive exterior lighting, all ground floor windows are barred and all doors in the accommodation block have combination locks for entry.

There is full 'dry run' fire drill at the start of every week and there is always one member of our staff team on active duty 24 hours a day. One of our staff team accompanies each group on off-site visits to help generally and to provide expert local knowledge. All of our staff have both the experience and qualifications for any activity they perform. Most of our staff team are qualified first aiders.

We do our uttermost to cater for different dietary requirements, allergies and medical conditions. We do need notification of these things in advance.

Overall, our staff and the accompanying teaching staff work together as a team to look after the pupils. The teachers look after the supervision and general care (loco parentis) and we provide a safe environment.



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