

# COLEGIO HISPANO BRITÁNICO

## General information to prospective staff

Lanzarote is one of the most exotic holiday destinations in the world. Approximately 35 miles long and 15 miles wide, it is an extension of the Sahara stony desert with an average rainfall of less than 4 inches. It has a very benign climate with daytime temperatures rarely falling below 18° in the winter and not rising much above 28° in the summer. The sea temperature varies only between 19° and 22°. The trade winds bring permanent air-conditioning in the summer and you rarely perspire.

As a holiday island, it is unique in that a simple local artist, Cesar Manrique, has determined the continuity of the Moorish architectural style in every form of construction. Without any political or financial power, the now deceased Manrique designed a dozen outstanding holiday attractions around the island, and created an ethos in its people that continues after his death. As a result of his work, UNESCO has declared Lanzarote a "World Biosphere Reserve".

In the design of the school, we have tried to emulate this local Moorish architecture, but it is purpose built to suit its own specific requirements. The classrooms are much smaller than normal schools as we have a maximum of 16 students per class but the laboratories are well designed and extensively equipped.

Of the 100 British Schools in Spain, it is one of few with a Spanish name, but it has a greater proportion of British students than most others. We follow the National Curriculum and have British Inspectors, but in addition, we also teach Spanish language and aspects of their History and Geography to all students. We do our utmost to engender an interest in the sciences but all students are taught four languages (English, Spanish, German and Chinese). We have 260 children aged from 3 to 18, with 30 at present in the Sixth Form. We offer the International GCSE and O Levels of Cambridge International and Edexcel boards.

At A Level we offer 17 different subjects and students normally go on to good Universities in Great Britain. More than a dozen students apply to University each year, several are offered Oxbridge interviews and one is specializing in Neuroscience at Caius College at the moment.

The Queen has commended this school for our constant exam success. In 2015, five of our students had the highest overall IGCSE grades in the world and since 2010, seven students have obtained the CIE Top of the World Award in a specific subject.

We have been featured in many publications including the Times Educational Supplement (four pages) and the 800<sup>th</sup> Centenary Album of Cambridge University (two pages) for our educational prowess. We have also been featured in the British national press for educating the youngest Doctor of Medicine ever to graduate in the UK (she was applying to universities at the age of 15 and took a year out to obtain work experience before starting her course). More recently we were featured in The Guardian's lead results story in August 2015.

In 2017 two of our students obtained the highest possible pre-university result in Spain. One student with five A\* grades at A Level was, at 16, the youngest student to be admitted to the Chemical Engineering course at Imperial College. Our powerful teaching team in KS 1 and KS2 have permitted 17% of our student body to be one year advanced in their studies.

These results are even more outstanding because, although some of our students come from academically capable families, we are a relatively tiny school with no entrance examinations and the majority would not normally have contemplated post 16 education had they been living in the United Kingdom.

# COLEGIO HISPANO BRITÁNICO

Information on

## Staff Wages and Benefits

For appointments from the U.K.

We rarely have difficulty in recruiting staff. In any one year we can receive up to 100 unsolicited applications for teaching posts and we have been able to employ the most excellent of teachers. Occasionally, to attract the best of specialist secondary teachers we place advertising with the Times Educational Supplement.

Our teachers rarely leave us. We employ some 60 members of staff of whom 50 are full time. Some staff have been with us since the school was founded 41 years ago. This very rare opportunity to enjoy life in such a unique educational community is due to the retirement of the present member of staff.

A large part of our success in obtaining teachers has obviously been due to the magnificence of the lifestyle on this island. Even so, our small class sizes, the unlimited budget for educational materials and the generous manner in which we treat our staff (within the apparently frugal Spanish national pay scale framework), must all have had some bearing on the security that our teachers have enjoyed throughout the years.

Our teachers are paid strictly according to the Spanish national pay scales for private schools. One third of all the teachers in Spain work in the private sector and their wage agreement is an immensely complex document, such that different members of our teaching staff rarely take home the same salary. Over and above your salary the school makes the complete payment for your social security and state pensions contributions.

To a British teacher, applying a straight rate of exchange to the remuneration in Spain, the wage might appear ridiculously small. Spain is a country where the average worker lives adequately receiving between €700 and €1,200 per month (80% of the working population receives less than €1,000 per month) and a doctor earns €2,200 per month. The present basic average pay for ancillary staff in this school is €850/month; infant teachers receive €1,030/month; Junior teachers receive €1,343/month; many senior staff who work longer hours approximate to between €1600 and €1820/month and whatever the size of the school, a Headmaster working maximum hours receives €2,368/month.

Great Britain is one of the most heavily taxed countries in the world and the wage you receive is very different from the amount you end up with as disposable income. A teacher in Britain who might receive £33,000 per annum may lose a third of that in taxation and National Insurance contributions. Then you have to pay your rates, your heating bills, your car tax and fuel bills etc. and you probably have a disposable income of £12 –15,000.

Depending on your personal circumstances and in the lower paid posts, **in this school your disposable income can often approach your gross earnings.**

The cost of living in Spain is much less than in the UK. Suffice it to say that in general terms the Spanish teachers seem to enjoy a better standard of living and average purchasing power than their English counterparts.

For those of you who have spent many years teaching in the UK, you will find that your existing capital worth, and the pension rights you may have accrued, will all go a long way if brought to Spain. Throughout Europe, pension rights of all countries are respected and pensions can be drawn from all the countries where one has worked. This school carries out possibly the most valuable pension policy of schools within Spain. Many of those employed

here for their last 17 years before retirement, should receive a pension **equal** to their average income over those years.

You are allowed absence with full pay for any sickness (for three months with further unlimited cover from the state), marriage (15 days), wife gives birth (3 days), moving house (1 day), close family wedding (1 day), close family death (3 days).

In addition to our standard benefits this school is a delightful place of work. The class size has a maximum of 16 children, they usually behave in an exemplary fashion, a good number of the students have English as a first language (unusual in a foreign country), you are given an unlimited budget for teaching materials or laboratory apparatus, your classrooms are tailor made to your own requirements and you are normally the only teacher that uses your classroom. Classes for students under 12 years of age start at 9.30 a.m. and finish at 3.30 p.m. with only 4.66 hours of contact time every day. There are usually only 175 days of tuition per year (as against some 190 in Great Britain) and you have three months holiday each summer.

Senior teachers have increased hours (and hence salary) as they may have to work until 4.15pm or start at 8.45am, because Years 10, 11 and the Sixth Form have an extended day. There are no half terms (except for a week off for Carnival in February); the summer term finishes in the third week of June and the Autumn term doesn't start until the second week of September.

Staff are encouraged to develop their personal abilities and interests and are given great freedom to be inventive and resourceful in the classroom in any way that might benefit the tuition of the students. Paperwork is cut to a minimum; we are not involved in SAT tests and the end of term tests are short with reports being done on a computer in a few hours. We have a very wide syllabus and very few days to impart this information to the children.

The quality of life in the Canary islands far outstrips that of mainland Spain and Lanzarote is the motor of the Canary Islands' economy. Seven million people pass through its airport in any one year. It is difficult to pay more than £40 for a full tank of petrol; there are no heating bills, few clothing bills, minimal road tax or local authority housing tax. The excellent locally produced foods can be more reasonably priced than in the UK. It is one of the healthiest places in the world to live and staff enjoy a totally relaxed lifestyle, both at work and in their private lives.

We have been determined to make it not just a pleasure, but also a privilege to work in this school and we already provide several services that go beyond the simple support of friends in the same profession. Our membership of the school company or "Sociedad Civil" gives us several advantages. Personal taxation is kept to a minimum and we do not need further social security cover if we do other work outside school hours.

Staff are at liberty to use the services of the school tax advisors free of charge, our health, pensions and legal advisors are also at the free disposition of all staff. Small short-term loans are available to help personnel out of any immediate problem.

The greatest single problem in Lanzarote is the exorbitant cost of rental accommodation. Most staff quickly purchase their own property as mortgage repayments are similar to rental payments and property is always an excellent investment. Our connections with certain banks have made mortgages relatively easy to obtain.

It is no good thinking you can live like a permanent holiday maker, eating out every night, commuting at every holiday to the UK and paying two mortgages, but if one lives with the similar austerity that you would in Britain, then you can have a truly enjoyable, interesting and healthy life in Lanzarote.