

## CCHS - Mexico Trip 2025

In January 2024 the Chair of the Governing Body gave approval by Chair's Action to a proposed school scientific expedition to Mexico in July 2025. At the time of this approval it was agreed that further details would be provided to the next meeting of the Full Governing Body.

### **Context and Rationale:**

- CCHS participated very successfully in a similar expedition in 2018 and had planned to return with another group in 2020 had the pandemic not scuppered this.
- The proposed expedition will be run by a trusted and experienced provider, Operation Wallacea. CCHS had a very positive experience when working with this company in 2017/18 and in the lead up to the cancelled expedition in 2020. Operation Wallacea have been running school and university expeditions to a range of locations around the globe since 1995. More details can be found at <https://www.opwall.com/>
- Charlotte Palmer from Operation Wallacea recently visited CCHS to launch the proposed expedition to students and parents. The staff who attended that event were again impressed with the quality and professionalism of Charlotte's presentation and the obvious thought and experience which has gone into both the planned expedition and into issues such as safety management and contingency planning.
- Charlotte also explained at length the scientific research which the expedition team will be carrying out and demonstrated the real value of this research to the work of professional scientists.
- Participation in this proposed expedition will allow CCHS to offer an adventurous overseas trip in a way that is safe, meaningful and without the risks attached to a number of other models of overseas school trips.

### **Staff:**

- Mr Luke Moller
- Mrs Sabina Buckley
- Mrs Emily Manning
- Mr Mark Rowell who led the 2018 expedition may participate in 2025; this is dependent on final numbers and logistics.

### **Students:**

- At present we are able to offer 32 student places. These have been offered to students currently in Year 11 and Year 12. Current Year 12 students who participate will have finished their A levels before the expedition. Current Year 11 students will be given time off school at the end of the summer term to participate.
- At the time of writing we await firm expressions of interest; the number of these will determine whether or not we need to operate a selection process.

### **Costs and fundraising:**

- The cost of the expedition will be in the region of £3400, including transport to and from the UK airport.
- It is recognised that this is a large amount of money. However, Operation Wallacea provides extensive support to students to help them with fundraising and CCHS will operate a system of staged payments. It will also be noted that the increase on costs above those for the 2020 expedition is very reasonable given the widespread inflation in insurance and air transport costs since the pandemic. The experience of other local schools indicates that there is a real desire for such trips and that students are able to raise the funds required.

Dr M. Palmer  
Mr L. Moller  
March 2024