

INFORMATION FOR LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS**SCHOOL INFORMATION:**

Name of School:
Address:
Phone Number:
Fax:
Email:
School Timetable:

SCHOOL STAFF:

Head teacher (Director):
Deputy Headteacher (Jefa de studios):
Head of Bilingual program (Coordinadora):
Secretary (Secretaría):
Caretakers:

Class teachers:

3 year olds:	Year 3:
4 year olds:	Year 4:
5 year olds:	Year 5:
Year 1:	Year 6:
Year 2:	

BILINGUAL PROGRAMME IN LUIS CERNUDA PRIMARY SCHOOL

The main objective of the program is to improve the linguistic competence of our students in a foreign language, in this case English.

Within the 25 hours of teaching per week, at least one third must be taught in English. The subjects we teach in English are: Science, Art, P.E. and, of course, English.

The Head teacher is the person in charge of the programme; however, the coordinator of the programme is the person who coordinates the activities of the language assistants and their tasks.

It is very important to create a bilingual environment. The students are allowed to talk to the teachers only in English. Language assistants are required to speak to the students exclusively in English, and should similarly require that the students respond in English.

External examinations: Trinity College will test the students when they finish years 2 and 4. The test is oral (speaking and listening skills are tested) and it takes about 4-10 minutes per student, depending on their age group.

In year 6, the students undertake the PET/KET Cambridge exams, which cover the four core skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

As you already know, your work consists of helping students achieve communicative competence in English. All of your work will be supervised by the teacher you are assigned to work with. The teacher will work with you to provide ideas and plans for your daily interaction with the students.

You will be required to develop 16 hours per week of planned educational activities.

You are required to be at the school four days per week; the exact schedule will depend on the needs of the school, the class, and the teachers.

KEY OBLIGATIONS OF A LANGUAGE ASSISTANT

- To speak in their mother tongue to the students.
- To help teachers plan their lessons, providing linguistic support in the classroom.
- To follow teachers' instructions, cooperating with him/her at all times.
- To strictly comply with the designated timetable.
- To reinforce the students' oral skills in their foreign language, and to promote other cultures.
- To motivate the students' and to foster interest in the language and culture of their English-speaking countries.
- To encourage the participation in training initiatives and in the learning and teaching of languages.
- To carry out specific conversational tasks.
- To attend the language laboratory, computer room and multi-media centre with the students.
- To provide teaching material, especially authentic material from their countries of origin.
- To take part in a variety of activities.
- To attend meetings along with the rest of the bilingual staff in order to organize class activities and plan ahead.
- To teach other members of staff their native language.
- To carry out any other related activities.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF A LANGUAGE ASSISTANT

- Complete their stay at the school:
 - ❑ October 1st - June 30th for language assistants funded by the Madrid Regional Ministry of Education.

- ❑ September 15th - June 15th for language Assistants appointed through the Fulbright Commission.
- Consult the official website on a regular basis:
<http://comunidadbilingue.educa2.madrid.org/>
- Fulfil the assigned timetables and follow regulations regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Perform the tasks and carry out the activities assigned.
- Become familiar with the school's specific regulations.
- Present the required final report and assessment of the year.
- Justify absences to the Principal in writing.
- Contact the school management to ensure appropriate action is taken in case of absence or illness.
- NEW Language Assistants must attend the Orientation Session.

YOUR ROLE

- Help the teachers in activity-planning and assist them during the lessons.
- Follow the teacher's instructions and cooperate with them.
- Reinforce the students' communicative skills. It is important to establish a consistent relationship with the students, particularly with respect to language. You must speak to them in English and, require them to respond in English. We would also appreciate very much if you engage with the students, in English, on the playgrounds, corridors, and other school property in order to reinforce the "normality" of English in their minds.
- Engage the students with stories and realia from your home country, in order to spark their interest.
- Discuss ideas for improvement with your teacher, and please feel free to engage in the students' English education in an active way.
- Participate in the activities which take place at the school: teachers' English department meetings, elaborate on didactic materials, etc.

HOW TO MODEL THE LANGUAGE APPROPRIATELY & HOW TO TREAT STUDENT RESPONSES IN THE TARGET LANGUAGE

- only use English with students and English teachers,
- praise and encourage students for what they can do,
- be aware of the range of abilities,
- speak using an appropriate speed and register,
- be genuine and show interest in what students say,
- allow students' speech to flow without interruption,
- get as much language from students as possible,
- build confidence,
- remedy incorrect pronunciation by reiterating the student's words using the correct form.

WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES CAN ASSISTANTS DO?

- Greetings, class routines...
- Preview, motivator, schema builder, hook...
- Present new language,
- Do learning activities,
- Review material,
- Go over homework,
- Give students' feedback,
- Do lists of children books in English,
- Create engaging resources,
- Write information about themselves for the school paper, on a blog, in a poster, for a display...
- Bring photos of their home town, family members or old school to use in group conversations or to make a presentation for the whole class,
- Participate in the planning of art and crafts activities for children,
- Tell stories and act them out,
- Teach socio cultural aspects: food, traditional games, typical songs...
- Celebrate the typical festivities: Halloween, Bonfire Night, Thanksgiving, Saint Patrick's Day...
- Sing and dance songs with the students to help them learn the lyrics in English,
- Help students create science projects in groups or individually...

EXPECTATIONS AND DUTIES:**1.-Act Professionally**

A - Be on time. You must be with the teacher at nine o'clock in the playground to go upstairs with the children (you can help the teacher with the lines / talk to the students while they get into the classrooms...). And you must go downstairs with the teacher and students at the end of the last lessons (two o'clock). You must attend the school from 1st October to 30th June.

B. - If you are sick, call the school. If you don't go to school you will need an official note from a doctor / hospital/ clinic. (This is called a *justificante*) . Some doctors (dentist for example) work after school, too. You must justify both absences and lateness to the Head teacher. Whenever possible, you must inform the Head teacher in-advance regarding any change to the agreed-upon work schedule, e.g., in the case of a medical situation or any other acceptable circumstance.

Absence from work, without a reason, is forbidden.

C. - Attend bilingual meetings when asked for.

D. - Attend training sessions by the Comunidad de Madrid.

E. - Keep the students in order.

F. - Act as a teacher and positive cultural representative, use any change to talk with the students and encourage them to speak to you in English at all times.

G. - Address issues/concerns/ problems/ doubts... to Lucía, the Bilingual coordinator.

2.-Contribute and be proactive:

A. - Create materials and resources for classes. We ask you to do it voluntarily, at times, we, as teachers are so busy, we may be overwhelmed, and if you have an idea or a suggestion, introduce it to the teacher, they will be thrilled, and you can proceed planning and executing your idea.

B. - Design activities that contribute to the cultural gains of the students, your national holidays, and celebrities from your countries, food, music, sports..... ANYTHING!!!!

C. - If a teacher comes in a little bit late, you can do some activities with the children: play some games like "Simon Says", "Hangman", "I spy with my little eyes...". You can also start with the morning routines (star of the day).

D. - All the teachers who you will be working with, will try to get some time to work with you, and tell you the way they work, the contents to work with, the students characteristics... We might tell you this information at two o'clock, once the students have already left, to make sure there are no interruptions.

E. - If one day your group has a different activity (trip, Spanish Language activity...) ask the bilingual coordinator what you can do.

F. - When you have a different activity, and you cannot go to your lesson, let the teacher know about that, as well as the bilingual coordinator.

G. - We will ask you to help us with the yard duties, so you can talk to the children in English, play with them, show them some games from your country...

H. - You should prepare a presentation about your country, culture, typical food, festivals...and show it to the students during the first week.

I. - One of your duties will be prepare some festivals like Halloween and Christmas. (We have to start with Halloween as soon as possible).

J. - Another duty will be to lead the morning assembly (star of the day), so you help the students call out the register, read a book/text, speak about the weather...

K. - Engage in, and help develop, the tasks designated by your Head teacher or coordinator.

L. - You are expected to participate in, and attend, school celebrations and events, to motivate the students and support your colleagues.

3. - Linguistic contributions:

A. - Talk and talk a lot!!! The job title is Language Assistant which entails talking. Don't wait for the teacher to ask you to talk. Talk to the students in the corridors, in the playground, in the classroom, between classes...

Use lots of positive words such as: awesome, great, amazing...

Use high fives, smiles, stickers...

Ask them questions about matters outside the curriculum, for example: *What did you do last weekend? Where did you go? What did you eat?*

Give them compliments: *nice shirt, cute dress, did you get a haircut? Looking great*

These positive comments and daily interaction are shown to be one of the most important ways children acquire language.

- B. - It's very important that they don't know if you understand or speak Spanish.
- C. - Find out, by asking from the start how the participating teacher would like you to address their language errors. As language learners we are always learning. We all make mistakes, yet by correcting them in the least optimal way, may create tension, so find out how the teacher wants to be corrected. It will help their language growth!
- D. - Speak slowly, the bilingual program is a process in language learning, at the primary levels students are really developing both languages, thus you can really help by speaking slowly, using cognates (words that sound similar in English and Spanish, i.e. evaluation and *evaluación*, say for example " we are going to test you, or evaluate you on"). This form of speaking will help students to understand and will expand their vocabulary.
- E. - Be an actor, a dancer and a singer, anything to help the students comprehend the words you are saying. Be persistent and show them they can understand English!
- F. - At the end of the school year you will have to write a report (15 days before leaving) for the Comunidad de Madrid.

4. – Random advice

- A. - If you work with a reduced number of students learn their names by heart, and try to register the students' knowledge on a sheet or a chart.
- B. - Tell the teacher your expectations and your experience, that way they know where you are coming from.
- C. - Feel comfortable and try to be another teacher, talk with the other teachers during the breaks and participate in the different school events.

WHERE DO ASSISTANTS HAVE TO BE IN THE CLASSROOM?

- Never at the back, because the students need to see you!
- Assistant in front of the class, teacher at the back: when practicing pronunciation, vocabulary, working on the star of the day...
- Assistant working with a group of students outside the classroom: when practicing conversations with students.
- Assistant and teacher side to side at the front of the classroom: when modelling behaviour, when learning personal questions and answers...
- Assistant and teacher monitoring the groups: when students are working in pairs or groups, to make sure they are on task.
- Assistant in a different classroom working on a different task with a small group.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. - Payday:

You will be paid via check the last working day of the month. Carmen will do it for you.

2. - Holidays:

See the school calendar.

We realize that as Language Assistants you may want to take advantage of travelling within Spain and Europe, and we encourage this! Yet, we would ask that you make your plans to travel in accordance with free days. There are some three day weekends (*puentes* in Spanish) that you can take advantage of and some long breaks.

Taking days off to travel is not allowed by the Comunidad de Madrid.

Your last school day will be June 30th.

3. - Health Care:

It's recommended that you research a bit about your health care options. There are different insurance plans for Language Assistants depending on your country of origin.

Due to the confusion of the different plans it is recommended that you ask a veteran Language assistant how your policy works.

Note that, as teachers, we don't have the same health care as you do, thus although we will try to help if you need anything, we are not familiar with your policy. In terms of general health care in Spain, here is some general information.

The emergency number in Spain is 112.

Know where the nearest Health center is in relation to your house.

Carry your insurance card with you all the times.

4. - Lunch

You can have lunch at school, it costs around 5 € a day and it will be served in the upstairs dining room at around 15.00-15.15.