

Culture En Vie, Envie de Culture

Blog by; Ciara Hosty

Sunday 9th February

We got on the bus that morning at the early hour of 7am. We were all a bit apprehensive but were mostly excited. After everyone was settled on the bus, we set off on our journey to Dublin Airport. On the drive there we stopped off at Applegreen for a quick stop. We then arrived at the airport and went through security at ease. We had time and so went around the airport for some food and shopping. At midday, we all arrived at the gate and before we knew it were settled on the plane ready for take-off. Unfortunately we got off to a bit of a rocky start and experienced a bit of turbulence but soon enough we were flying smoothly. We arrived at the airport safe and sound and then went on a bus to Olot. In Olot we were met by our host families who brought us home.

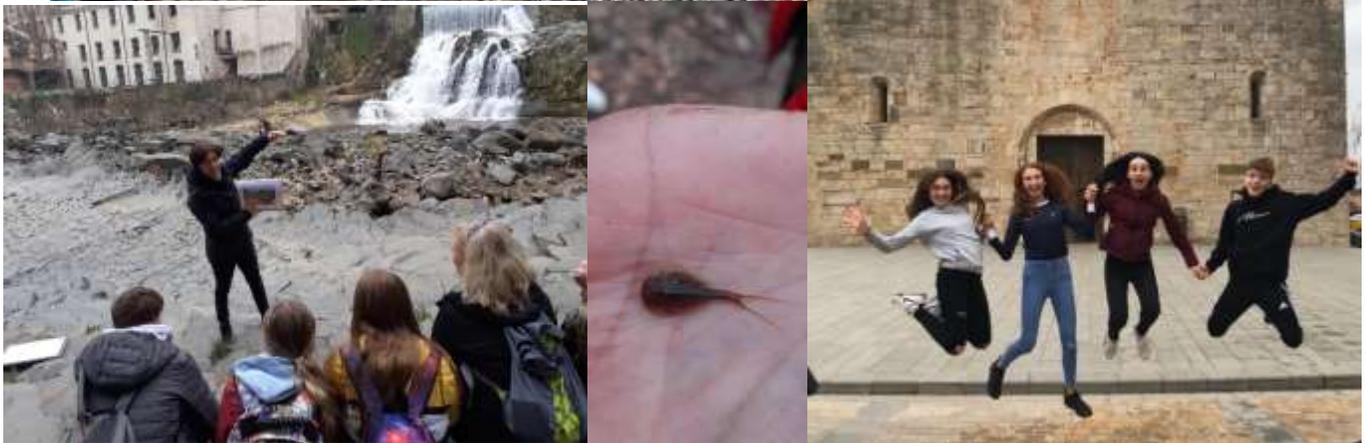
Monday 10th February

We started off our first full day in the school. Here we had a formal introduction to the mobility and we were all given a badge which displayed our name and team. We were tested on our knowledge of the local region in a game of Kahoot. All of us then walked to the nearby town hall, where we met the mayor of Olot. After that, we went to the tourist office and had a talk there. There, we split in to our teams from earlier and began a discovery game of the city, completing different tasks such as taking pictures at a cloister and dancing a traditional Catalanian dance. We all then met up together and began our trek up the nearby volcano, Mont Sacopa. It was a hot day so we were very tired when we reached the top and so were delighted to relax and have a picnic there. Again, we started walking and arrived at the volcano museum where we had a guided tour. Then we returned to the school where we did a *unique* dance and poetry activity. After the long day we returned home to our host families.



Tuesday 11th February

Everyone met at the school in the morning and we boarded the bus, heading for Parc Natural. Here we saw a few lava flows and lots of basalt, which our tour guide showed us. We ate our packed lunch before walking up to Castellfollit, a historic village on a cliff edge. While up there we visited a biscuit factory and tried some of their lovely biscuits. Then we drove to the town of Besalu. There we had a lunch buffet at the Oliveras restaurant. Then we split into our team and discovered Besalu. We visited the famous milkve bridge and skimmed stones underneath the bridge. After that we hopped back on the bus and stopped at a farm, then some waterfalls and finally a lake. Here we saw a special 3 eyed insect that is unique to the area. After another tiring day we returned home.





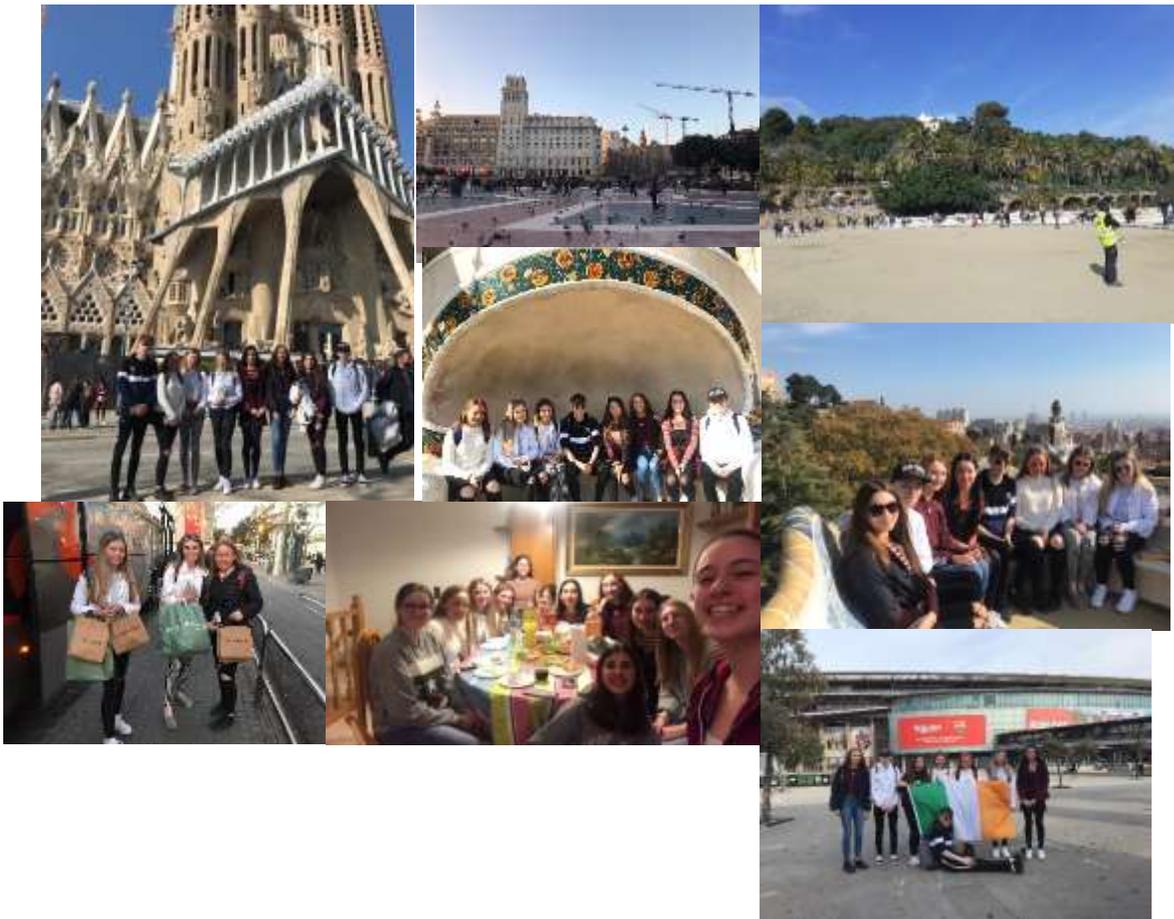
Wednesday 12th February

We arrived at the school and were met by our usual bus which was destined today for La Fageda. This is a forest that is famous all across Europe. However, inside the forest is a farm and a factory where people with special needs work. We were given a guided tour of the farm and factory where they make ice cream, yoghurt and jam. At the end we were each given one of their lovely yoghurts to try. After the tour we began our cycle and cycled to Volcà Croscat, here we were given a guided tour. We then cycled on some more and arrived at some picnic benches where we stopped to eat our packed lunch. After lunch, we cycled to an artists house and he showed us his studio displaying his paintings of volcanoes. We cycled some more before eventually arriving at the bike rental centre in Olot. We then walked back to the school where our host families picked us up.



Thursday 13th February

Arrived at the school and we went on the bus to Barcelona. We arrived at a big square in Barcelona filled with pigeons called Plaça de Catalunya. Then the Irish people boarded a hop on hop off bus. Our first stop was at La Sagrada Familia, a big church. Here we got some food and walked around before going back on the bus. The next stop was Park Guell, a famous and very scenic park. Then our third stop was Camp Nou, Barcelona FC home stadium. We then got on the hop on hop off bus one more time and our final stop was Barcelona city centre. Here we did some shopping and got on the private bus home. That evening all the Irish girls and their Catalonian partners went to Ellen's partner Berta's house for pizza and eventually we went home.



Friday 14th February

We began our final full day at the school where we split into our previous teams and each team made a PowerPoint presentation about their week in Catalonia. We then went to the gym and there was an array of typical Catalanian foods there and we made sandwiches and had a cake called coca. Afterwards we all went outside and danced a simple traditional Catalanian dance called the Sardana. We then had free time and so all of the Irish people went for lunch together at a nearby pizzeria. Then some of the people stayed in town and some went home to get ready for the evening ahead. At 6pm we all arrived in the school and presented our PowerPoints from the morning. The teachers then made a farewell speech and we were all gifted a souvenir of a volcano which was made by the special needs students in the school. Then we played a card game in our teams. The game was a business invented by the oldest members of the school and has won many awards. Finally it was time for the big farewell dinner. We all walked to a nearby restaurant and had food we had ordered previously. This was definitely a highlight of the trip and everyone had great fun. We then walked to a nearby hall and watched a performance by a human castle group. It was very good and at the end some of the students even joined in! After a very long day, we went home late and finished packing.



Saturday 15th February

We woke up at the early hour of around 5am and were in school by 6. This was very sad and we all had to say our final goodbyes before going on the bus to Barcelona.

We came to the airport and went on the flight home. We arrived in Dublin safe and sound although there was a bit of a rocky landing. We stopped off in Kinnegad and had a well needed Supermacs. We drove home on the bus and were all happy to see our homes.