

Report on the 21st Annual Trip to Bournemouth

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〈Keywords〉 homestay language school programme Bournemouth Southbourne
sightseeing

Introduction

This report will reflect on the latest trip to Bournemouth. To begin with, Toko Amagasa will introduce the significance of the short-term language training program at our school. I will then introduce the criteria and selection process that decide which students can join the programme. This report will then look at student feedback received from a Google Form. This includes information such as how much money students brought with them to Bournemouth, as well as their opinions regarding the language school, activities, and excursions. I then present an updated version of the trip-planning timeline and information on the trip blog, before focusing on some of the key issues that should be resolved before the next trip. This report will conclude with some final thoughts reflecting on how the overall programme went during this year's trip to Bournemouth and Southbourne School of English (SSE).

Significance of the Short-Term Language Training Program in the U.K. at our School

本校における英国短期語学研修の意義

本校生徒の自主・自治・自律を実現するには、生徒が多様な人々と関わり、その中で自身の意見や立場を構築できるような場を提供することが不可欠である。もちろん普段の学校生活を送っているだけでも生徒たちは多くの経験をしているが、異国の地で「生活をする」経験を通して、より深い異文化理解・交流が可能になると考える。

● 海外を「知る」プログラム

国際交流部が主催しているプログラムは、生徒が継続的かつ段階的に異文化と出合う構成をとる点に特長がある。中学校 1 年次には学内ミニ留学（校内）、2 年次には福島県にあるブリティッシュヒルズでの研修（国内）、3 年次にはイギリス・オーストラリアへの 10 日間

のホームステイプログラム（国外）に参加することが可能である*。何もわからない状態で突然に海外に行くのではなく、それぞれの成長段階に合わせて少しずつ身体や耳を慣らしてゆくわけで、これは言語学習的にも、異文化理解的にも非常に効果的だと考えている。

生徒たちは2年間の国内での学習を経て、やっと3年目に海外に飛び立つことができるのだが、わずか10日間のプログラムであるために（飛行機での往復を考えると実質1週間）、海外を「知る」機会にはなるが、海外で「生活をする」という感覚にはなりきらないまま帰国することになる。

● 海外で「生活をする」プログラム

中学校3年間を経て（高校から入学する生徒の場合には苦しい受験生活を経て）、高校生が海外で「生活をする」プログラムとして位置付けられているのが、英国短期語学研修である。

本研修では生徒が3週間イギリス・ボーンマスにある現地の家庭でホームステイをしながら語学学校に通う。先述した中3のプログラムもホームステイなのだが、本研修は3週間のプログラムであるという点をあらためて強調したい。日本と同様、家庭によって様々な生活スタイルがあるのだが、ほぼ1ヶ月生活をともにするため、どの家庭においても生徒を「お客様」ではなく「一家族」として扱ってくれる。

たとえば研修2週目初日のこと。語学学校の授業が始まる前に、何人かの参加生徒から「思ったよりもホストファミリーが何もしてくれない」という主旨の訴えがあった。朝食は自分で調理して学校に行きなさい、休日好きなように過ごして良い、と言われたそうだ。本人たちは家庭に不満を持っている様子ではなかったし、各家庭が温かく迎えてくれている事実に変わりはないのだが、研修前に想像していた生活と少々違ったのだろう。

その訴えがあった時、むしろ、この研修の意義はそこにあると感じた。日本での普段の生活を考えると、先に書いたような会話は、ごく普通に各家庭でなされているはずである。高校生にもなれば、わざわざ休日にどこかに連れて行くことの方が少ないだろう。ホストファミリーが普段通りの生活の一部として本校生徒を受け入れてくれている、そして生徒が貴重な経験をしているという意味で、大きな安心感をおぼえた。

研修2週目が終わる頃には、どの生徒も現地での生活に慣れた様子であった。語学学校でも外国人の友人ができ、一緒に食事に出かける様子をしばしば目にするようになった。最初は英語力に不安をもっていた生徒も、ホストファミリーと夕食時に色々な会話ができるようになったと報告してくれた。

こうして、英国短期語学研修では、現地での生活に慣れたところに最終週を迎える。生徒たちはあたかもそこにずっと暮らしていたかのような、海外で「生活をした」ような、そんな感覚で帰国するのである。

（雨笠）

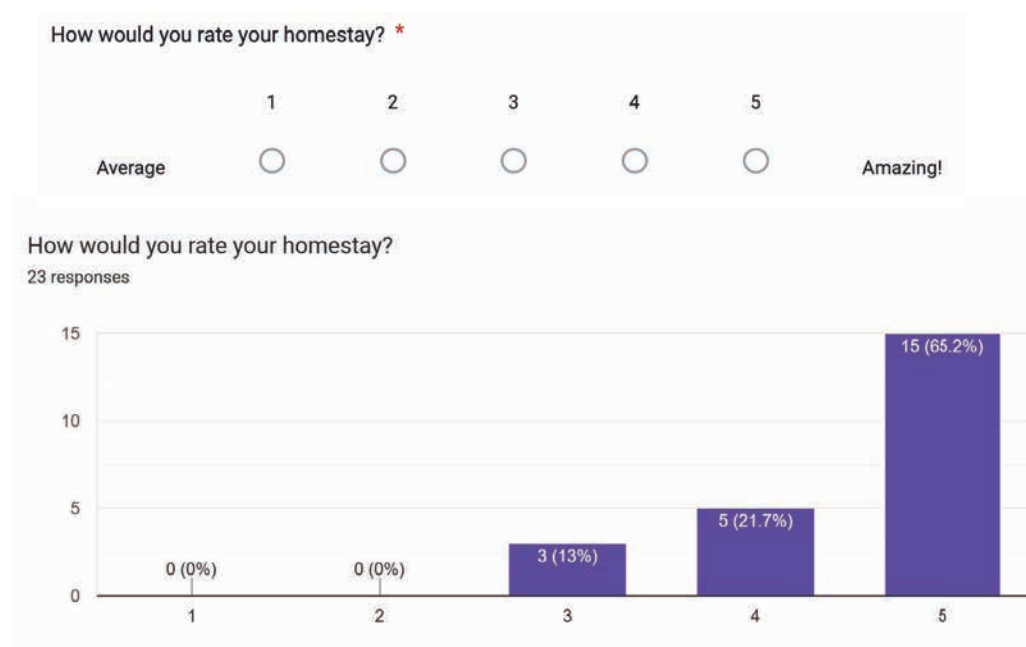
* 全て希望者対象のプログラム

Selection Process

The 2024 Paris Olympic Games took place during our visit to the UK. This meant that flights to Europe were in high demand, so we were only able to offer this year's program to 25 students, compared to the 35 students we took in 2023. A total of 32 students applied to join the Bournemouth trip.

Each candidate completed a written application form that we handed out during the introductory seminar. However, in the interest of fairness and ensuring that everyone had an equal chance to be selected, the international committee conducted individual interviews in both Japanese and English. Each interview was 7-minutes long, and each student was asked questions from a predetermined list. They were assessed based on their replies. The interviews were conducted in early May. It was difficult to narrow down candidates, but we had faith in the selection process and each student who joined the program was there on their own merit.

Homestay Feedback



During last year's program, nearly all of our students were put into pairs and placed with a host family together. However, this year only six students were paired in the same host

family. The remaining nineteen students were either with another international student, or by themselves. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with twenty of the twenty-three students scoring their host family either a '4' or '5' out of 5 points. Below are some of the key responses:

My host mother was Chinese, so her cooking was delicious! Also, my host father was so funny and kind. It was one of the best experiences in my life.

Before this trip, I hadn't spoken with people from another country . I could improve my speaking and listening skills. This was a very valuable experience.

My host family were very kind to me and fed me delicious food. Their big and beautiful house was amazing!

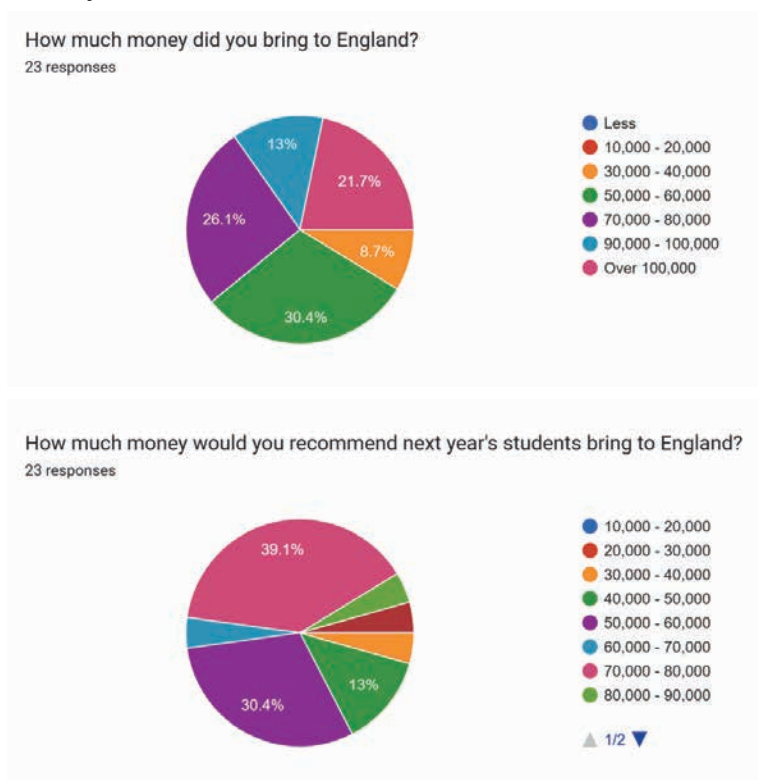
My host family gave me a birthday cake.

In my homestay, in addition to my Japanese friend who is in the same group as me, there was one other student from Italy staying with me. Thanks to the help of my host family, I think I was able to talk a lot. Hobbies, school, culture and customs were the main topics of conversation. Food was also a topic of conversation, because we often talked at dinnertime.

My host family was so kind, and they treated me like a real daughter.

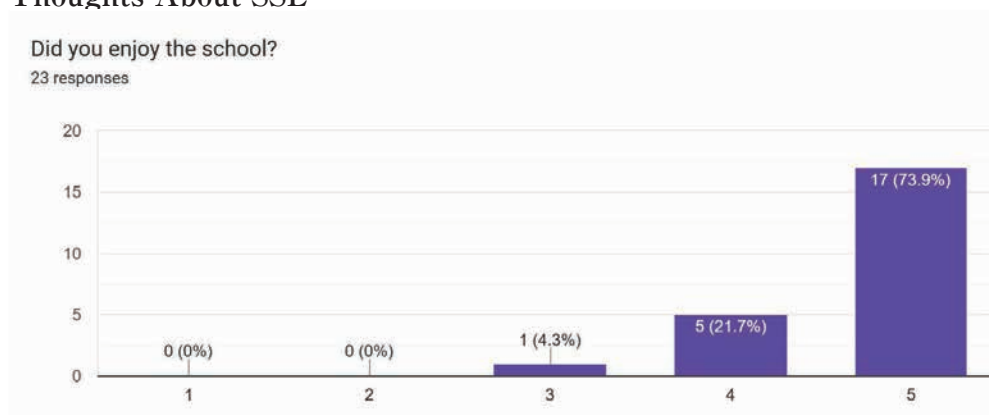
As mentioned in last year's report, it is worth highlighting again the cultural differences regarding expectations with host families. Whereas many Europeans view a homestay as a form of lodging that provides a bed and meals, many Japanese view the homestay as a chance to experience the 'British way of life'. I have mentioned this to the SSE Managing Director, Paul Gallina, in the hope that SSE can place our students with more 'hands-on' host families where possible.

Spending Money



The United Kingdom is no exception when it comes to the rising cost of living and expensive fuel charges. The weak-performing yen means the UK is a fairly expensive country for Japanese tourists to visit at this time. During the final seminar before the trip in July, the most frequently asked question by parents is how much money their child needs for this programme. However, it is very difficult for us to give the parents an exact figure as everyone's financial situation is different. Based on all of the responses, the average amount of money the students brought was ¥64,000 each. After the fact, students thought ¥67,000 would have been more adequate. We will share this information with the parents as a reference to how much money their child should take on this year's trip. As of February 2025, the exchange rate is approximately £1 to ¥190, meaning the recommended amount from last year's participants would equate to roughly £350.

Thoughts About SSE



The staff at SSE create a fun and warm atmosphere. The varied activities and lessons meant there was always something new for our students to experience and enjoy. In the classroom, many students commented that they enjoyed debating various topics, participating in discussions, and playing board games. The most common positive response was having the opportunity to speak English to the other foreign students. Playing table tennis during lunch was also a relaxing way for our students to feel at ease and speak freely with the other international students. There is perhaps an argument to be made that taking a group of 25 students as we did in 2024, as opposed to the 35 the year prior, works better for this program as the classes are mixed with more international students.

Communication with the international students was fun. I interacted with them not only in my class, but also during breaks playing table tennis or other activities. That was fun and interesting.

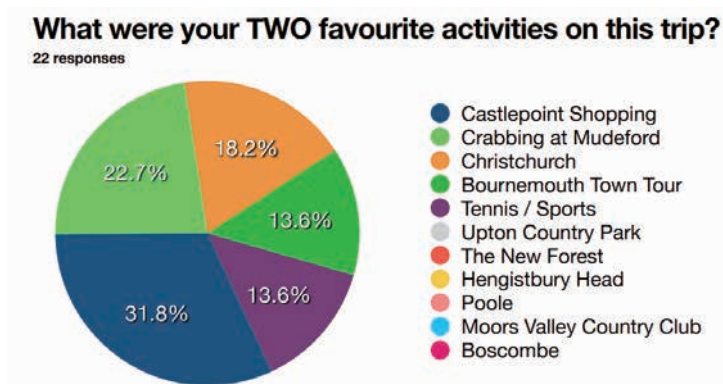
The teachers were all kind so I could enjoy all English classes. Also, many international students had the same English skills as me, so I could learn English without being afraid.

We enjoyed spending time in the cafeteria. We always bought French fries and cookies. They were very delicious. Also, we played table tennis and board games with the school's students. It was fun so I enjoyed lunch time.

I enjoyed making friends, having fun while learning, writing down words I used often, eating and playing!

Talking with foreign friends and teachers. There were Spanish and Turkish students in my classroom. They are funny and let us know about their own country's culture. And my teacher stayed in Japan for a year.

Activities and Excursions



The activities give our students the chance to experience various aspects of 'a British way of life'. They also provide the students with a chance to speak to the other international students outside of the classroom and in a more natural setting. However, from a teacher's perspective, it is slightly disheartening that the most popular activity was Castlepoint Shopping Centre. One of the main reasons for this was that students could purchase many souvenirs, as well as hang out with each other and enjoy talking over lunch in a restaurant or relaxing in a coffee shop. As this programme is fairly busy, I think many students appreciated the chance to spend a short time relaxing with each other.

Experiences like crabbing at Mudeford or relaxing in the grounds of Moors Valley Country Club really are part of the charm of this trip. The weather was fairly good for most of the trip, which meant playing beach volleyball became a popular activity. While playing sports, the students seem a lot more relaxed as it takes away any pressure or anxiety they may feel when trying to communicate in English.

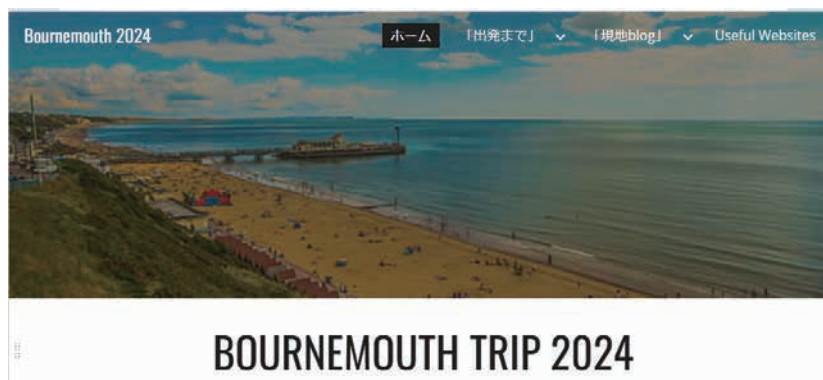
Asides from the daily activities, we also had two full-day excursions on both Saturdays in Oxford and London. Both of the excursions went smoothly, with the exception of one student oversleeping and missing the bus for the London trip. After a desperate attempt to wake them up, which included visiting their house and calling them, they unfortunately missed the trip. They accepted responsibility for their error and luckily were able to spend the day with their host family. In 2023, we were unable to enter Christ Church College as they were fully booked. To avoid this from reoccurring, in January 2024, we made a reservation in advance.

Trip Planning – Timeline

The changes from last year's program have been highlighted in **bold** text. In an attempt to reduce the escalating costs of this program, we were advised by our JTB tour guide to request a quote a great deal earlier than we had previously. We asked for the quotes for the 2025 programme in November 2024. This means we were able to select the tour operator we will be using for the next Bournemouth program well in advance. We have also added 'Check Application Documents for Subsidy for Promotion of International Cultural Exchange' (国際文化交流促進費補助金申請書類のチェックについて) to the list to assist the twenty students who are eligible to receive this subsidy. The updated schedule for the Bournemouth program is as follows:

Action	Date	Responsibility
Request a quote from tour companies	November	Chufu School Office
Decide which tour operator to use	December	International Committee & Chufu School Office
Check Application Documents for Subsidy for Promotion of International Cultural Exchange (国際文化交流促進費補助金申請書類のチェックについて)	mid-February	International Committee & Chufu School Office
Ask SSE for an itinerary	March / early April	Tour Operator
Bournemouth Seminar ① (<i>*reserve the auditorium due to large numbers</i>) Prepare the application forms (英国短期語学研修 応募書類)	Last Saturday in April	International Committee & Tour Operator
Selection process: Conduct interviews	early May	International Committee
Announce successful candidates. <i>*Advise any student without a current valid passport to apply for one</i>	early May	International Committee
Collect passport information & waivers	early May	Tour Operator
Collect passport information for teachers attending	early May	Chufu
Complete SSE Enrolment forms (<i>Excel spreadsheet</i>) <i>*Complete ASAP as they contain information on allergies, which will help SSE to assist us with any dietary needs.</i>	early May	Tour Operator
Student Group Presentations – Introduction (Prepare groups beforehand) Each group will study one of the following topics: <i>Food, Entertainment, Sports, History, Bournemouth, London & Oxford</i>	end of May	International Committee
Student Group Presentations – Each group needs to report to their teacher during a fixed three-week period.	mid-June to early July	International Committee
Bournemouth Seminar ② <i>With the tour operator, students, and their parents.</i>	early June	Chufu & Tour Operator
Criminal background check (犯罪 経歴 証明書)	mid-June	Chufu
Student Group Presentations <i>*A good time to administer the placement tests for SSE.</i>	end of June (LL Room)	Chufu
Create a website/blog for the trip	end of June	International Committee
Bournemouth Seminar ③ <i>With the tour operator, students, and their parents. Share host family information</i>	early July	International Committee & Tour Operator
Decide who is eligible for Grants from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (国際文化交流促進費補助金)	July	Chufu School Office
Administer the 'Student Feedback Questionnaire'	End of Trip	International Committee
Culture Festival Preparation	early September	International Committee

Trip Blog:



The trip blog is a great way to document the trip and share the events of each day with any family or friends who have access to the link (due to security reasons, the blog is not made public). Before we created the website, we issued a consent form to ensure the parents were happy with us uploading pictures of their children.

There is some pressure with the blog, mainly making sure that we have a balanced number of photos of each student. It can also be quite difficult to find time (especially in the event of student illness), to update the website at the end of each day. The QR code above will take you to last year's blog. Please feel free to take a look as it provides insight into the daily routine of the Bournemouth programme.

Key Issues to Discuss Before the Next Trip / Final Thoughts

At the end of last year's programme, we needed to discuss what the ideal number of participants for this trip is. Due to the 2024 Paris Olympics heavily affecting air travel, we had a maximum of 25 participants. Taking less students proved to be much more manageable, especially as there were only a few cases where students became ill.

We created a parent consent form which allowed us to administer a student paracetamol

if they were to fall ill, though thankfully there were not as many illnesses as there were on the 2023 trip. The parent consent form is a useful insurance policy to help students as, in contrast to Japan, people in the UK are discouraged from going to see a doctor if they are showing any flu-like symptoms. Taking less students also meant there was more of an international mix within the school, especially during lessons. Although everything generally ran smoother on this trip than the previous year's, one area of discussion is the use of public transport for student activities.

We were informed by the staff at SSE that they could charter a bus for our activities if we had a group of 35 students, but with a group of 25 students, it was not economically viable for them to provide us with one. This wasn't an issue for activities within close proximity to the school like the Bournemouth Town Tour and Christchurch, but it was problematic on activities that were further away from the school. The trip to Poole was particularly difficult, as we ended up with just 30-minutes to look around due to bus delay and heavy traffic. Although there weren't many vocal complaints from the students, they didn't really have time to do anything in Poole, which is a shame as it is a very beautiful town. Previous trips to Poole have allowed us to go on a boat ride, explore the harbour, and visit the Poole Museum. Regrettably, none of these experiences were possible within such a short time frame. We hope to find a way to resolve this issue through discussion with the language school.

Perhaps the most positive change for the 2025 programme is that all of our students will be placed in the Adult Course at SSE. Up until now, any student 15 years old or younger had to join the Junior Course by law. However, this situation has changed, and it seems that all of our students will be together as a group for the entirety of the programme. This will add more structure to the programme by allowing teachers to be more available to our students, which should enhance the overall experience of everyone involved.

Special Thanks

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Toko Amagasa and Ryosuke Makino for assisting me during this year's programme. I also wish to express my gratitude to our JTB tour guide, Yuko Kitayama. All of them guaranteed the trip was a rewarding experience through their enthusiasm, energy, and a willingness to go above and beyond to assist our students. I would also like to thank the staff at SSE, especially the Managing Director, Paul Gallina, and the Academic Principal, Kathryn Newman. On many occasions they went out of their way to ensure we had an unforgettable trip.



Christchurch



Christ Church (Oxford)



SSE Graduation



Buckingham Palace



Hengistbury Head



Bournemouth



Oxford



Upton Country Park



London



Graduation Ceremony



School Lunch



London



SSE Lunch Room