



The trip to Nicaragua was something I will remember forever. I have built some incredible friendships and have enough memories to talk for hours on end. Each day was filled with different challenges and experiences that allowed me to grow as a person. Living in such a different environment tested me in many ways and made me realise the support I have around me. I was so thankful to make strong friendships almost instantly, having people who can pick you up from your lowest of points but can make the best experiences even better was vital. Our group left Nicaragua like family. We had gone through so much together and been there for each other through everything.

I am much more appreciative of everything we have, and often take for granted. Things like clean cold water, actual beds and the variety of food that is always available to us. This was especially clear after completing our project phase, where we slept for 9 nights on a concrete floor, sharing a hose pipe for a shower and eating rice and beans with every meal, including breakfast!

Returning home put into perspective just how close we had become, it was very strange to have actual peace and quiet for a change, but I missed being surrounded by friends and each day bringing a new adventure. I was relieved to not have to worry about working out our daily food budget, and know that we all enjoyed our first few meals back at home!



I want to thank everyone that made the Nicaragua expedition possible, and everyone that was so generous when our group did fundraising activities. I am so thankful for the opportunity I was given and will never forget it.

***Emma Boughton – Y13 Student***

This summer, 18 of us went to Nicaragua for a month where we were challenged with organisation skills, surfing, painting a school's classrooms and climbing mountains and volcanos.



We signed up to the trip two years prior and my small fundraising group of five worked hard to fundraise the money. We did this by selling refreshments at parents' evenings, open days, the bus stop afterschool and many other things. This taught me how to work for what I desire, makes goals and achieve them, and organise my time alongside school work.

My least favourite moment was getting ill and sleeping on the floor for 10 days. But my favourite moment was attending a traditional Nicaraguan festival in the central city of Leon and getting invited on stage to dance! I also loved working at the school and playing/teaching the children as it was extremely rewarding.

The trip taught me a lot of things; it taught me how to budget, it taught me how to be patient and appreciate others' needs, but most importantly, it taught me to be grateful for what I have (a bed and pillow, plenty of food always available, an inside toilet that flushes, not having to purify water, a house without gaps in the walls, a good health care and a loving family).

***Ellen Goggin – Year 13 Student***

This summer I had the privilege of being able to go to Nicaragua. It was the most eye opening and breathtaking experience. I was able to be part of local communities and have an insight to their culture. Climbing Volcanoes, jumping off waterfalls, sand boarding down a volcano, surfing and watching turtles lay their eggs was some of the incredible opportunities I was able to complete. My favourite part of the trip was spending time with Nicaraguan children and experiencing a week in their life. We played kickball, football, card games and many other activities. As a team we painted 6 classrooms, desks and outside walls. To the children at the school this was improving their education and showing us how different our lives are. On our rest days we were able to go to various cities including Granada, Leon and Matagalpa. During our time in the cities we tried local dishes, bought t-shirts and other gifts and danced to local music. Lastly, we were able to experience some breathtaking views from the top of volcanoes. My personal favourite was getting up at 2am in morning to climb a volcano and watch the sunrise and to then swim in a lagoon. Nicaragua was the best experience and I would recommend anyone who is thinking of going should go on the next trip as you will have the best summer ever!



***Emily Steadman – Year 12 Student***

This summer I visited Nicaragua, Central America. I went for a month to experience their culture, spectacular views and their way of life. The trip included treks in rain forests, living with a traditional Nicaraguan family, visiting coffee and cocoa plantations and exploring the main cities. We travelled around the country booking ourselves accommodation in different hostels as well as camping in local campsites surrounded by their wildlife. We also did charity work at a school painting and refurbishing classrooms. We had quality time to spend with the local children that came and visited us every day. This was a very rewarding time of the trip!

On our rest days we'd explore the cities and spent time talking to the locals. Our Spanish as a group expanded and we were able to communicate well with local people. We spent time on an island which included activities like surfing, watching turtles lay their eggs, beach days and ferry rides.

Our treks were incredible, we walked up volcanoes in amongst many rain forests. The weather was humid and sunny, we saw a variety of different animals and plants, even a sloth crossing the road. Our breath was taken away. Also, we had the chance to jump off a waterfall and swim around the rocks. Something I have always wanted to do!

The food out there was certainly different, when staying with families we tried different sorts of dishes like their traditional meal Gallo Pinto (rice and beans). I also had my 16th birthday out there which I will never forget as my group made it so special, I made many new friendships that will last a long time. I would 100% go again with no doubt about it, I had the trip of a lifetime and wouldn't change a thing.

***Chloe Roads – Year 12 Student***