

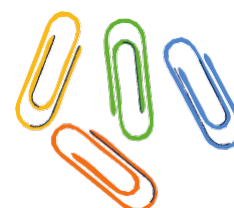


**IES Pedro Soto de Rojas**  
Granada

# E-WELCOME PACK for LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS

<b>School name</b>	<i>IES (Instituto Educación Secundaria)</i> <b><i>Pedro Soto de Rojas</i></b>
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<b>Google Maps location</b>	<a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/kUZ9G6k4dYnHxpZt7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/kUZ9G6k4dYnHxpZt7</a>
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**BASIC**



**2024–25 Language Assistant:**  
**Meredyth Davies, Florida (USA):** [meredyth1201@gmail.com](mailto:meredyth1201@gmail.com)





## OUR STUDY OFFER

Our school offers 7th-10th Grades in CSE (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th ESO), Bachillerato Years 1 and 2 (Grades 11th and 12th) and some vocational training studies in our Trade School related to attention to people with disabilities, the elderly, etc. Most students are usually aged 12-18. We have got around 800 students and group ratio varies 30-33. The number of teachers is around 80.

To know more about it, visit [Education system in Spain](#)

## SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR

Our school year starts September 15th until June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Like most secondary schools, we start lessons at 8:15 and finish at 14:45 (Monday to Friday) with a half-hour break from 11:15 to 11:45. Lessons are 60-minute long.

Apart from traditional holidays (Christmas, Easter, summertime, etc.), there are some days off scattered along the year for national, regional and local festivities. We highlight:

- October 12th: “*Día de la Hispanidad*”
- November 1st: “*Día de todos los Santos*”
- December 6th: “*Día de la Constitución*”
- December 8th: “*Día de la Inmaculada*”
- February 28th: “*Día de Andalucía*”
- May 1st: “*Día del trabajador*”

Our school is barrier-free. We also have an elevator for people with mobility problems.

## ACCESSIBILITY

## INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

Our school is AFS member since 2024 in order to send our students abroad and host international students. Apart from that, we also offer:

- School Exchange with the International Spanish school in Rome (Italy)
- School Exchange with a School in Tuusula (Finland)
- School Exchange with HAP Grieshaber Gymanisum in Reutlingen (Germany)
- School Exchange with Burdeos (France)

Some of our students also take part in different abroad studies programs in Ireland and the USA.



# BILINGUAL PROGRAM

The bilingual program was created by Andalucía's Department of Education in the 2004-05 school year after some years of piloting. The program is one of several measures following the guidelines set by the European Union's linguistic policies regarding the teaching and learning of more foreign languages.

Bilingual programs focus on CLIL methodology (Content and Language Integrated Learning, see below). This means content teachers use the foreign language to teach partially their subjects.

The maxim of the bilingual program is *not to talk like natives but rather to be able to interact with them.*

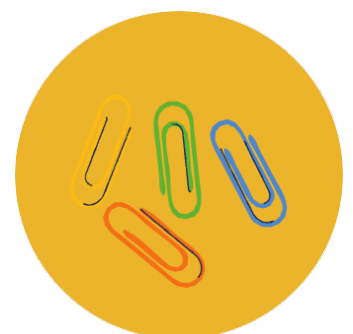
Apart from the **coordinator**, the staff involved in the program are **ANL** (Non- linguistic) **teachers** that teach their subjects partially in English. Every year we also have two **native language assistants** that help us in this program.

Our school offers bilingual education in Grades 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th. As for the groups involved, we have:

- ESO Year 1 (Grade 7<sup>th</sup>): 5 groups
- ESO Year 2 (Grade 8<sup>th</sup>): 5 groups
- ESO Year 3 (Grade 9<sup>th</sup>): 5 groups
- ESO Year 4 (Grade 10<sup>th</sup>): 5 groups

Our school usually offers the following **bilingual subjects**:

- Physical education
- History and Geography
- Chemistry and Science
- Citizenship
- Music





# LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS

## Profile of our ideal Language Assistant

No school has a say about the Language Assistant we would like to have but here are some of the desirable **qualities** we are looking for:

- They are **personable** and **outgoing**.
- They are **open-minded** with regard to new ideas and cultural differences.
- They are **flexible** as schedules change, lessons don't go right, and technology isn't always reliable... Language assistants need to be ready to go with the flow!
- They are **proactive** and actively participate. Teachers and students will appreciate fresh, new ideas!
- They are **creative**. Language Assistants are generally involved in creating a lot of materials and must find different ways to adapt language, locate and implement resources, etc.
- They should like being around children and teens.
- It's helpful to have an **interest and/or experience** in teaching or working with young people.

## General duties by a Language Assistant

The general purpose of a language assistant is to share their language and culture throughout the school. This is done both in classes with students and in simply socializing with coworkers. Here is a list of the basic functions you will carry out:

- **Development of oral skills** (listening and speaking) with the students. You'll find that most of the times you'll be asked to prepare oral activities versus written activities, as the oral component is where it's especially helpful to have a native speaker!
- **Decoration of the classroom and bulletin board** (this is where it might be handy to bring maps, brochures, posters, etc. from your home area)
- **Creation of materials and activities** for bilingual lessons in various subjects
- **Improvement of teachers' competence** in spoken English
- **Finding resources and materials** for bilingual lessons
- **Participation in out-of-school activities** like field trips, school activities, etc.



### Other tasks we would highly appreciate

- Attend our **English Speaking Club (ESC)** at break time with older students and teachers
- Plan and keep our **School Bulletin Board** to display information about different topics
- Update and improve this document for future Language Assistants
- Any other thing you would feel like doing

### Ordinary daily activities by a Language Assistant

Typically, Language Assistants have two main activities:

- Direct co-teaching along with the teacher in the bilingual group (you must never be alone in class)
- Coordination with teachers to plan ahead content, lessons, materials, approaches and so forth

### The Bilingual program coordinator

The bilingual program coordinator is usually a teacher from the English department. Their tasks include organizing teachers' and language assistants' timetables, keeping families informed, planning the future of the program, and evaluating its progress. Because of these time-consuming duties, the coordinator receives a reduction in their course-load in relation to the bilingual groups the school has. Additionally, they serve as a support and resource for teachers in the program

The coordinator also works to build international connections through special projects. This is essential to bilingual programs, as the idea is to foster international and multicultural connections through language study. Your contacts in this matter will come really handy.

### The Orientation meeting

Every year at the beginning of October there is a provincial meeting in Granada for all Language Assistants to discuss some issues related to getting your **NIE** (Número de Identificación de Extranjeros), opening bank accounts, getting healthcare, etc. That day is also perfect for building a network of relations with other Assistants in the vicinity. You will know about it in advance.





## Useful tips for the first days / weeks

- Have a positive and assertive attitude as loads of new things are going to happen to you in the next months.
- Remember that the Bilingual Coordinator is the person managing your stay, timetable, official documents, etc. Any important circumstance should be addressed to them.
- Prepare yourself for some legwork and paperwork (getting your NIE, opening a bank account, etc.) But remember, once it's done you never have to do it again!!
- One of the hardest but most important things will be finding a place to live. See below.
- Get to know your neighborhood well and look for useful places for shopping, banking, playing sports, eating out, meeting friends, etc. A visit to the city Tourist Information Center will certainly help.
- Get to know the VIPs at our school as soon as possible (Principal, Bilingual Coordinator, Head of Department, bilingual teachers, etc.)
- Prepare a highly visual presentation about yourself. After all, this is what you will be doing for the first days non-stop with the different groups.
- Study the school map. There is nothing worse than not knowing where you are heading, where the toilets are or where the language department is in a hall full of students staring at you.
- Get to know your students. The sooner you master their names the better. Always treat students with respect.
- Locate where to find departmental and digital resources - teachers' books, supplementary books, scissors, paper, cardboard, glue, laptops, scanners, printers, batteries, etc.
- Learn how to use of technical equipment as soon as possible (especially White Interactive Boards). There are some different models of them in our school.
- Always ask teachers in advance WHAT they expect from you for the lessons with the students. Try to make teachers plan your work in advance (suggest working a couple of weeks ahead). It's the best for everybody.
- Ask all the teachers you are going to work with to provide you with a copy of the book they are using, the topics to be dealt with, the expected timing, etc. This way you will know what the students are doing at any time and what is to come.
- Always ASK if in doubt. Nobody can expect you to do what you do not know.
- If you are going to be absent from school for any important reason, let the coordinator know in advance. Language Assistants that fail to do this don't look very good to their coworkers. Missing days (except in case of illness) have to be made up later on.
- The first weekends are the hardest ones as you will probably be on your own. Plan some activities for those days with other Language Assistants or teachers.
- Beware of the "roller coaster" effect on your emotions. Some days you will be over the moon while other days you will feel quite down for no exact reason. It is perfectly normal to feel this way when out of your comfort zone and far from loved ones.
- Finally, remember that you belong to a program. You are part of a team working together in and out of your host school. You are not alone here, pull the right ropes and someone friendly will come around.



### Observation lessons

You are welcome to have some observation lessons (for different subjects) before plunging. Check out how lessons are developed, activities carried out, classrooms managed, etc. You could take notes, compare with your own experience, discuss issues later on with teachers, etc.

### Working with students

Exposing students to English as much as possible is one of the main reasons for having Language Assistants in our school. Assistants usually have closer contact with students (because of age mainly) and it is important to consider some aspects about the relationship that they are going to establish. Here are some ideas to bear in mind:

- **Treatment:** Language Assistants must have the same status as school faculty so they must expect the same respect. Because of age proximity, students may think that Assistants are more “friends” than teachers but this should not be the case. For the same reason, Assistants must treat students with respect and watch their manners at all times.
- **Attitude at school:** In and out of the classroom Language Assistants should speak English at all times and try to be extroverted and talkative with students by means of greetings, small talk, etc. It is important to reinforce this kind of social communication so it is automatic as soon as possible, especially at low levels and with younger students. We do not have a dress code; it is relatively informal but use your common sense.
- **What linguistic variety to use?** Everybody speaks their own variety of a language and nobody speaks it perfectly. However, Assistants must be conscious of their register, dialect, etc., and are encouraged to provide the most standard language possible in order to help students.
- **Using the board:** The board is of great help for Language Assistants as it can support them when dealing with difficult names, important information not to be skipped, drawings, etc. For example, the board can be divided in two halves: one part can be more static with information to be kept and the other part can be for information to be erased now and then. The aim is to always keep things tidy and clear. When writing on the board it is a good idea not to lose eye-contact with the students for a long time. Staying aside and writing from the side is a good thing. Finally, the use of digital boards is becoming more widespread as they offer a wide range of multimedia possibilities. In our school nearly all classrooms have got some kind of smartboard.
- **Motivation:** Students usually value and appreciate the presence of Language Assistants in their classrooms. Lessons with Assistants are seen as a special treat in a nearly festive way. Assistants should take advantage of this pro-active disposition on the part of students for language learning.
- **Activities:** When working with students, Language Assistants should try hard to create different, fun, participatory and attractive activities to be taken to the classroom—always bearing in mind students’ age, motivation, level, interests, etc. At first, teachers should guide Assistants when creating materials (even putting them into practice in the classroom). Later on, there can be room for more freedom.
- **Small tasks:** Depending on the type of students, sometimes it is advisable to break up big tasks into little bites which are easier to digest. This way we can evaluate the progress of production or reception sooner in order to detect needs, revision, etc.



- **Variety:** Variety is the spice of life and teaching is no exception. Monotony can be really negative in the classroom and Language Assistants should try to bring new materials, ideas, techniques, etc., into their lessons so they can work with the different typology of intelligences.
- **Project-work:** Projects are great when a unit or topic has been finished as a way to make students put into practice what they have learned. It is necessary to take into account different aspects like students' grouping, typology of final products, middle steps, use of the foreign language, multi-subject approach, techniques and so on.
- **Visual aid:** Again, in relation to the type of students (age, competence, etc.), supporting the Language Assistant's speech with visuals such as body language, images, drawings, etc., can help a lot. Using all the possibilities of smartboards can help you a lot.
- **Error analysis:** When students make use of the foreign language, Assistants should remember a few things like:
  - Avoid constant correction and interruption when students speak in order not to hinder participation.
  - When students are finished, there can be a small comment on basic aspects, general common mistakes, etc.
  - Always cheer them up with positive and encouraging messages to keep them using the foreign language.
- **Questions and answers:** This is the best technique to make students participate and express themselves in the foreign language in the early stages. On many occasions Assistants will have to reformulate their phrases, repeat again and again, choose simpler structures and vocabulary, etc. The ultimate goal is to make students get across the message being sent. In order to check their progress in comprehension, Language Assistants can make short and direct questions to be answered by students.
- **Working with small groups:** There are some teachers who prefer Language Assistants to work with a small group inside the classroom while they work with the big group. This is a great advantage to reinforce oral and listening skills as the number of students is so small that participation is very frequent and high.

Finally, here are some attitudes Language Assistants should **AVOID** when working with students:

- Make negative remarks about the students (their linguistic level, their general competences, etc.)
- Make fun of their mistakes or behaviors
- Make comparisons among them or with other groups

### **Working with teachers**

It is important that this partner work or co-teaching is fruitful so here are a few hints to make it happen:

- **Communicate often:** It is necessary to set a time and a place to meet and plan ahead what is coming in the next lessons. Unfortunately, in the 12 hours a week this time cannot be considered. Teachers and Language Assistants should know each other's emails, phone numbers, etc., for whenever they have to communicate. It is also important for teachers to tell the Assistant if a lesson is cancelled because of a test, a trip, the teacher's absence and so on.



- **Planning ahead:** Improvisation must be avoided at all costs. Teachers and Language Assistants must agree beforehand WHAT is to be done and WHO is to do it (a presentation, a poster, a map, an audio recording and the like). All the materials needed for the lessons should be prepared ahead of time and on time.
- **Preparing materials:** On many occasions teachers may ask Language Assistants to create some specific materials for a lesson or activity. It can be a Powerpoint presentation, a fact file, some worksheets, a poster, a podcast, a video, etc. Here are some ideas when creating materials:
  - Depending on students' age and language level, consider what activities are more suitable. Teachers should give some guidelines regarding this, especially at the beginning.
  - The use of ICT is of great help when creating materials as it has lots of advantages: future editing, up and downloading, sharing, adding, recursiveness, multimedia options, etc. At the same time, the Internet is the best place to find resources on virtually any topic and level so we avoid making everything from scratch.
  - The addition of visuals means some extra help so students better grasp the content they are exposed to.
  - Make the activity as oral as possible by adding dialogues, questions and answers, podcasts, etc.
  - Whenever possible include sociocultural aspects in the activities you create.
  - Consider different levels for different students' competences and abilities
- **Improving the teachers' linguistic competence:** On many occasions, Language Assistants have to help teachers to improve their competence in English. These teachers teach part of their subject (mathematics, P.E, history, science, etc.) in that foreign language so the presence of a native speaker really comes in handy. This help should be especially centered on oral skills like listening and speaking (pronunciation being paramount).

Finally, here are some things Language Assistants must **NOT** do:

- Be in charge of students without the presence of teachers
- Substitute teachers or do their work for them
- Mark tests for teachers
- Criticize teachers or their approach in front of the students

### Final evaluation

Just before you leave, you will be asked to provide the Regional Education Department with some feedback on your experience regarding working with teachers and students, participation in extracurricular activities, helping teachers improve their linguistic competence, etc. This document is important for future improvements to the program.

At the same time, the school will also report on your collaboration with us with regards to attendance, behavior, active participation, coordination, etc.



# GRANADA

## BASIC FACTS

Granada is a very well-known city in southern Spain with over 232,000 inhabitants. It is basically a touristy and university city full of young people. For more information:

- [Link to the official Tourist Board](#)
- [Link to the City Hall](#)
- [Visit Granada Video](#)

## ACCESS BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Our school can be easily reached by public transport:

- [City bus number 8](#) bound Zaidín (stop “Emperador Carlos V - C.P. Sierra Nevada”)
- [Tram-subway](#) bound Armilla (stop “Palacio Deportes”)

Transport cards are cheap and easy to buy / top up at tobacconist's (Tabacos) around the city.

## WHERE TO STAY

Granada, being a touristy city, boasts a wide offer of places to stay ranging from hostels, hotels, AirBnB and the like. When looking for cheap accommodation, try “hostales, pensiones or albergue juveniles”. Usually, Language Assistants book some cheap hostel or hotel for a few days until they find a more definite place to stay in the long run. Most times it will be sharing a flat with other assistants. Alternatively, it is a good idea to share a flat but with Spanish university students (Granada is an important university city, also at international level for Erasmus students). Our advice is to book some place downtown and reach the school by public transport.

## WHEATHER

Temperatures can be extreme in Granada with cold winters (December-February) and scorching summers (June-September), being rain more frequent in spring. In general, sunny days are predominant. Check this [website](#) for more updated information.

## LOCAL PRESS

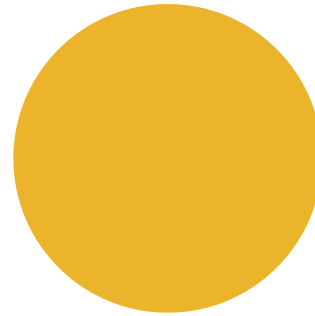
Newspaper [IDEAL de Granada](#)  
Newspaper [Granada Hoy](#)





## LOCAL FESTIVITIES

- ♦ May 3rd, Día de la Cruz
- ♦ Beginning of June, Día del Corpus Christi



## GASTRONOMY

Granada offers a wide range of places to eat, being bars the most common ones along with restaurants. The city center is full of them and, apart from local and Spanish dishes, there are also international options for all tastes.

Generally speaking, we stick to the “Mediterranean Diet”, but globalization and fast food chains are changing that. Something that you should definitely try is **tapas** (very small dishes ranging from meat to eggs to vegetables and are served for free at most bars along with your drinks).

Many restaurants also provide a “Menú del Día” which is basically a traditional Spanish meal at a value meal price. Beware of eating times. You will need to adapt to the Spanish schedule because lunch usually starts at 14:00 and dinner at 21:00. Deserts are highly recommended if you have sweet tooth!!

## LEISURE

- Travelling and discovering Andalucía: Surely you will have plenty of time for leisure activities. If you like monuments, apart from Granada, Seville, Córdoba or Jerez are a must. If you like nature, Sierra Nevada National Park will amaze you. If you like sport, outdoor activities are guaranteed by excellent weather most of the year. If you like good food, here is the land of “tapas”. We recommend you to travel around at the weekends as the surroundings are really amazing. Our closest international airport is Málaga Pablo Picasso. Granada also has a fast train connection with other cities like Málaga, Seville or Madrid.
- Cultural calendar: Granada has a fully-packed calendar with cultural events along the year. Check this [link](#) for more information.





## SHOPPING

For everyday grocery shopping you can go to local supermarkets like [Mercadona](#). Also there are some hard discount stores like [Aldi](#) or [Lidl](#).

If you need something else, try hypermarkets like [Carrefour](#). Then there is in Granada, like in other Spanish cities, the famous department stores [El Corte Inglés](#).

Finally, there are some shopping centers in the city: Serrallo, [Nevada Shopping](#), etc.

## SAFETY

This is a matter of probability rather than a true science. Basic advice and common sense to prevent crime is useful here, just like everywhere else. Andalusia and Granada are relatively safe regions so long as you avoid crowds in touristy areas and don't fall for the tricks of people on the street. In any case, remember:

- **European number for emergencies: 112**
- **National Police number: 091**
- **Granada Local Police: 958 206878**

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY  
YOUR STAY WITH US

