

International Excursions: Premier basketballers tour of Japan

With the growing enthusiasm for and participation in basketball at TGS, two teams embarked on a tour of Japan which saw our students play against top high school sides from Tokyo, Yokohama and Kyoto. The teams consisted of a number of the top senior

side players, as well as some of our younger students who have shown promise through their junior campaigns in the previous year. The aim of the tour was exposure to basketball on the international stage, as well as the opportunity to celebrate a different culture and way of life while doing so.

In Kyoto, our students had the opportunity to stay in the dorms of Hieizan High School, which was nestled into the hillside overlooking the greater Kyoto area. Here



they received their first real exposure to the dedication and intensity that the local students had for their chosen sports, in which we saw local students spend three to four hours after school participating in their chosen club. Prior to game day, we were asked to lead a training session with the Hieizan girls and boys squads. Although there was a language barrier, basketball became our common language, and some strong friendships began to form.

Our students were also able to experience the local beauty, cuisine, and history in the various cities we stayed in. This included a number of temple/shrine visits, some great ramen and some serious shoe shopping in Harajuku. The tour was an absolute success, with our students buzzing from the excitement of what the world has to offer and the anticipation of the basketball season ahead!

 TakapunaGrammarBasketball

Visual arts USA trip



The art trip to New York and Washington DC was an exhilarating blend of cultural immersion and artistic inspiration. We marvelled at iconic masterpieces in the Met, MoMA, and Smithsonian museums and the National Gallery of Art. One student captured our collective sentiment, remarking, "Seeing these artworks in person changed how I view art — it's not just about technique, but the stories and emotions behind each piece." The trip wasn't just about sightseeing; it deepened our understanding of art's role in society, sparking debates on culture, politics, and identity. The memories of bustling cityscapes, quiet museum corners, and thought-provoking conversations will continue to inspire our artistic journeys long after the trip's end.

Languages trip to Japan

We explored Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and Hiroshima during our two week stay. We walked a lot and made good use of the subway and train systems, with the bullet trains being a hit. One of the highlights was experiencing a homestay with some local families from Hieizan High School near Kyoto. The students were extremely lucky to be able to immerse themselves in the language and culture during their stay. They were all very spoilt and were able to

do a lot of sightseeing and participate in a variety of cultural activities, including cooking, flower arranging, and dressing in traditional clothing. We also joined in with junior high school classes' and experienced eating at the school canteen. We took a class in Kyoto's traditional textile dyeing, with students making t-shirts, bags or hangings. Overall this was a wonderful life-changing experience that opened our students' minds to a very different culture,



which is already showing its worth back in classroom theory work.