

# German Exchange Visit to Viersen 12-19



It has become a well-established tradition for a group of students in Years 9 to 11 to visit same-aged peers at our partner school, the Erasmus-von-Rotterdam Gymnasium in Viersen near Düsseldorf.

As has been the case in the previous six years, both students and teachers received a very warm welcome at the airport which was followed by seven exciting days with the host families and the rest of the exchange group during outings to Düsseldorf and Venlo and the climbing wall in Mönchengladbach.

I would like to thank Mrs Andrews-Snell from our school and Mister Kels and Mrs Kozian in Germany for supporting me in making this such a unique and successful experience for our students.

Miss C Fabian



The German exchange has been an amazing experience and one I will never forget. It allowed me to get an insight into the German lifestyle and compare it to my own. My host family were particularly nice and very welcoming and I got on really well with my exchange partner. Although there is an obvious language barrier, the partners are chosen well, so that you have things in common making the conversation flow easier. At the weekend, we met up with other students exchange partners, luckily who were my friends. We went to Oberhausen to a massive shopping centre and in the evening we went to a light parade, which is a tradition in Germany allowing me an insight into German culture. On the Sunday, it was my birthday and originally I was apprehensive about going as I was away from home. However, in the morning I went downstairs to a surprise breakfast meal which the family had prepared. They also had gifts for me which I thought was very thoughtful and made me feel at home. Throughout the day I relaxed and in the evening, Lisa, my exchange partner had organised a surprise birthday gathering and all my friends turned up to help me celebrate, which was lovely.

The German exchange was one of the best experiences I've ever had, and I am so glad I chose to do it. I hope to do it again as leaving your exchange partner is very sad and almost everyone cries. As you spend so much time with all the exchange students and get to know them very well, you really bond in the week you have together which makes it very hard to say goodbye!

Katie Collins

The week in Germany has been amazing and I would without a doubt visit my host family again. All of the exchange partners were lovely and my family in particular were very friendly and welcoming. Over the weekend, I met with other exchange partners, travelled to the Netherlands and went shopping and ice skating. We also learnt a little bit about the German culture and traditional food, visiting the St Martin's Day Parade which included a huge bonfire and primary school children singing. However, the highlight has to be receiving bags of sweets at the end of the parade! On one of the nights, all of the student exchanges organised a meal for us which everyone really appreciated and enjoyed. In my opinion, leaving our partners at the airport had to be the most difficult thing. When the time came to say our final goodbyes, all of us were in floods of tears. I didn't want to leave. Overall, I think the exchange has been a wonderful experience and I would definitely take part again.

Olivia Gregory



The week in Germany has been very good and my host family made me feel very welcome and comfortable in their home. I got on well with all the exchange partners and often met up with other host families after organised activities and at the weekend. We went ice skating outdoors during the week and I enjoyed it a lot, despite the rain. Viersen was very easy to find our way around after the team rally on the first day and we often walked to places in the town centre. We travelled to the Netherlands as it was only 30 minutes away from where the host families lived. We not only had fun with friends and family but also experienced some German traditions and culture, for example, the St. Martins Day Parade and foods like Sauerkraut and Currywurst. The highlight of the week was the climbing wall and we bungee jumped from the top of a church hall. Overall it was a great experience, I will miss everyone and I would love to do it again.

My experience in Germany was definitely one I won't forget! My exchange partner and her family made me feel very welcome in their home and if I had the chance, I would, without a doubt visit them again. During the weekend we visited the city of Cologne, we went to the cathedral with another exchange pair and then went shopping in the city centre. After we got home, we went to see a St Martins Day parade with another group of exchanges, which was a fun experience and a first for us from England. The whole week was full of different activities and even on an evening, we went out to meet others and do things such as going to the Netherlands to play Laser Tag and going out to eat in a restaurant. Overall, the trip was fantastic and I can't wait to see the German students again in Spring!

Shivani Patel



**If you would like your child to take part in the next round of the German exchange, hosting a student in your home between 13th–19th March 2015, please contact Miss Fabian at the Academy!**