

London Trip for the 10th Grade

This year, for the first time, a one-week language trip for the 10th graders to London took place. 35 students started the journey with Mrs Deubler, Mr Flüg and Mr Schimpke.

On Sunday morning, 21 May 2023 at 4:30 a.m., the coach departed, travelling via Germany to Luxembourg, Belgium and on to France to the port of Calais. In Calais we took the ferry to Dover. Once in England, we continued the journey to London. There we were picked up by our host families in our assigned neighbourhoods, Forest Hill and Herne Hill. In the host families, we students lived in groups of two to six.

On the first day, we were given a private tour of the city by bus with stops to explore by foot. As soon as we crossed Tower Bridge, we saw the Tower of London, which is where the Crown Jewels are located. This was followed by other sights such as St Paul's Cathedral, Trafalgar Square, St James's Park, Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey and of course Big Ben. At every corner we saw the traditional telephone boxes, which nowadays are mainly used as a tourist attraction. After the tour, we were allowed to explore London independently in small groups. In the late afternoon, the large group met again to take a ride on the London Eye - from there we had a spectacular view over London at dusk.

On Tuesday, we went by coach to Canterbury, which again we had to wait for due to the enormous traffic in London. Once in Canterbury, we took a punting trip with a very amusing tour guide who told us about the ancient history of Canterbury. Then we were allowed to explore the Old Town. Unfortunately, the famous cathedral was closed due to filming. The teachers however managed to sneak into the forecourt to get a better view of the cathedral.

Wednesday started with a self-arrival to Piccadilly Circus. From there we walked through Soho and visited the biggest toy shop in London, Hamley's, a huge store with over 6 floors to explore. The walk continued through Chinatown and to Covent Garden. From there we were free to move around London, some went shopping on Oxford Street, others visited museums and viewing platforms, while others strolled around the city centre. In the afternoon, we went to see the magnificent musical Lion King. Despite our seats in the last row, we were able to enjoy a breathtaking performance. In the evening, we sadly had to pack our suitcases, as the next morning we had to leave our host families, who had already really become affectionate to some of us.

The last day therefore began with saying goodbye and - as always - with a long wait for our delayed coach. After it finally arrived, we stowed our suitcases in the bus for the day.

Afterwards, we were allowed to choose one of the three morning activities: Visiting the Natural History Museum, which exhibits the famous whale skeleton, the British History Museum, which contains an extensive collection of controversial artefacts from Greece, Rome and Egypt, or the Tower of London to see the royals' shimmering crown jewels.

At lunchtime we stayed near Brick Lane. The journey to Greenwich continued by boat across the River Thames. From there we got one last view of the beautiful city - until it disappeared behind Tower Bridge. From Greenwich, the group walked past the Cutty Sark Museum, through Greenwich Park and up the hill to the Greenwich Observatory from where we could see the breathtaking skyline. (The Prime Meridian could have been seen there for 12 pounds, but it was quite expensive.) Before leaving for the bus, we stopped at Greenwich Market, where we could admire and shop handmade souvenirs.

From there we took the last ride on a red double-decker to the car park of our coach. Exhausted, the whole group drove back to the ferry, which left at midnight. In the darkness, on the stormy and windy deck, we watched the slowly fading lights of England on the horizon.