

London 2012

The Diamond Jubilee Celebrations, the Olympic Games, now the Paralympics – this year has been full of exciting events (and still is!) and some students and teachers of the Realschule Augustdorf have been part of it.

So what did we see and learn during our stay in March earlier this year? Was there anything different?

Of course it was ☺ !!

So let's start with some differences.

In the first place, we have never before left with a student having no identity card. A girl had checked her rucksack three times to tell her mum that she had not forgotten anything, but on the bus there was no sign of this document. We decided to take the risk and leave for Dover. Fortunately her mum found the card later in a flower bed next to the drive and followed us as far as the service 'Retzer Mark' near Bochum! If she hadn't found it, our student possibly would have got into trouble and would have had to stay in France. But of course, if the girl hadn't been so excited she wouldn't have lost her identity card.

Secondly we took the ferry from *Dunkerque* to Dover. The journey took two hours and the border control was even stricter than in Calais ☹. But the ferry was bigger and more comfortable than the truck ferries of Seafrance in Calais.

We arrived in foggy weather and could not clearly see the White Cliffs of Dover...

... but we arrived in London in sunshine and had a great time in the **Tower of London**. It was the first time that we had planned to visit the Tower. As we had booked a tour we were disappointed to find out, that the Yeomen were only responsible for adult tourist tours and not for school classes. So we teachers only got a brochure and had to guide our group ourselves. But it worked ☺☺.

The Tower of London is terrific! Here you can get an idea of what Britain and the monarchy is like: We admired the well-protected Crown Jewels, watched the ravens on the lawn, saw the Traitor's Gate, climbed up different towers where famous people had been imprisoned and finally explored a great exhibition in the oldest part of the area, the White Tower.

Some differences of day 2: We saw the Queen!!!! At least some boys believe they did. When we stopped at Buckingham Palace, most pupils used the time to walk around and catch a glimpse through the iron gates. There was a kind of garden party going on in the palace garden, and among lots of elegantly dressed people the boys spotted an elderly white-haired lady wearing a hat and dressed in pink. Back home I checked the British newspaper reports to find out that on this occasion the Queen was dressed in red. So I think the boys were right and I envy them a lot. If only I had known that there was a reception...

But a couple of minutes later all of us saw an orange helicopter take off from Buckingham Palace – and no doubt, either Prince Harry or Prince William must have been the pilot!

What else was different and important or interesting?

Just guess:

The Natural History Museum?

That was OK, but not more.

The Tube? The London buses?

The Houses of Parliament? Covent Garden? St. Paul's Cathedral?

A boat tour to Greenwich? – No!

It's PRIMARK in Oxford Street!!!

If I hadn't seen all the shopping bags filled with T-shirts, pullovers, jackets and high-heels (really high heels!) I would have believed that our pupils' motifs to take part in our trip were the sights, London's violent past or the fantastic modern buildings like the *Gherkin* or the *Shard*.

But now I know better: If you go to London one day, don't miss Oxford Street. PRIMARK is a must ☺.

So London 2012 was a big success: we had fantastic weather conditions, an attractive programme and a group of young people who knew how to behave and who tried to test their English skills.

Are you interested, too? Then test yourself and complete the following if-clauses: (a tip: you find most of them in the report ☺)

1. If enough pupils are interested in travelling to London, there _____ (be) a trip in 2014.
2. If you _____ (go) don't miss Oxford Street.
3. If I were you I _____ (visit) the British Museum, too.
4. If the girls hadn't gone shopping at Primark, they _____ (save) their pocket money.
5. If the teacher _____ (not see) the shopping bags, she _____ (believe) that students are interested in the sights.
6. If somebody hadn't lost the identity card, the bus _____ (can start) punctually.