

# A class trip to London

## Arrival

On Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 the London trip of the Berufliches Gymnasium Gesundheit & Pflege und Technik grade 12 and a part of the Fachoberschule Technik grade 12 began with the fact that most of the students and the teachers Mr. Hardekopf and Ms. Harde met at Bremerhaven main station, from there we took the Deutsche Bahn to Bremen main station. After we had arrived at Bremen's main train station, we took the tram to the airport. There we met the rest of the students who were driven there by car.



After collecting and discussing the further plan, we went to the luggage drop off and then to the security check where we and our bags were searched. Luckily there were no difficulties and we were able to go straight through to our gate, which was not open at that time. After two hours of waiting, we were finally able to board the Ryanair plane. Unfortunately, we couldn't all sit together, which fortunately wasn't the problem as it was only a short flight of one hour and thirty minutes. After a small safety briefing, we were able to start flying. Above the clouds we had a beautiful view on the sky and the clouds. With a bumpy landing we arrived in Stansted. There we had to pick up our luggage and then walked to the train, which was under the airport. From Stansted we took the Stansted express to London to Oxford circle station. There, our teacher tried very hard to get special week tickets with which we had 2 for 1 offers. With the tickets we could then take the subway to Lancaster Gate. From there it was only a 5-minute walk to our Lancaster Hotel.

## Lancaster Hall Hotel

On our trip to London we stayed at the Lancaster Hall Hotel, where we were accommodated in the adjacent hostel. There we lived in a room with two to four classmates. The room equipment included beds and a table with chairs, as well as a sink with counter space. A wardrobe was not available, but some coat hooks and a little shelf for shoes.

The sanitary facilities were not in the rooms but for the community in the corridors. For the cleaning of the rooms there was staff on site and included in the price, which is usually not the case in a hostel.

If something was wrong during the stay, you could ask for advice at the reception and there was always someone present as a contact person.



## Activities

Our day started after breakfast at 9am. We walked about 30,000 steps a day and went all over London by underground.

We walked through the surrounding parks, were we lost one classmate and he needed to find his way back to us, and visited some of London's markets.

After the planned program with many sights, we still had enough free time in which we walked through the streets of London and went shopping or even experienced the nightlife in London.

Sometimes we were so exhausted after the program that we took some rest in the hotel.



## Street Life

Street life in London is very different from that in Germany.

In London there is left-hand traffic which is unusual if you are a tourist. But with a little practice, we managed to cope with the situation and got along. For the cabs and buses there was an extra lane on the streets, but I think the extra lane was only for buses and the cab drivers just took advantage to reach their destination faster.

In London there was a different traffic light system than in Germany, where only one direction of each street gets green. That's why every pedestrian there just crossed the street when there was no car in sight.

Unlike the cities of Germany, London does not have one big centre, but many small hotspots. In addition, there are hardly any benches and garbage cans in London, quite the opposite of Germany.

In London there are many street musicians who we met on every side of the road and sometimes our classmates danced to the music. Among all the street musicians was one, who is popular on social media and he flashed us with his music. (@charliemaxmusic)

To get from one hotspot to the other, we often took the subway. At first that was not easy, because we had to understand system of lines. But once we understood it, it was actually quite easy. Sometimes we just drove with the right line in the wrong direction.

On the first day our teacher bought us tickets for the whole week to drive with the public transport. Some of our classmates lost the tickets and needed to buy some new ones with their own money.

Some tickets were already invalid from the beginning and the classmates always had to ask for a controller to open the barrier, so that students could get to the subway.

In London we don't need cash because we can pay on every spot with card. That makes it really easy to pay.



## Food

There is a huge variety of food options in London. The city has become a culinary melting pot that has something for everyone. Whether it's traditional English dishes, international cuisine or street food, you'll find it everywhere in London. If you want to try English cuisine,

you should try fish and chips, which is a typical dish of fried fish and French fries. The Sunday roast consists of roast beef, Yorkshire pudding and vegetables and it is also very popular. If you like it a little more unusual, you can also try haggis, a traditional Scottish dish made from sheep musings.

For lovers of international cuisine, there are countless options in London. For example, you can enjoy Indian, Chinese, Japanese or Thai cuisine. Italian food is also very popular in London. There you can find a variety of restaurants serving pizza, pasta and more. The street food in London is also particularly recommended.

There are many markets and food trucks that offer a wide variety of different dishes. A well-known market is the Borough Market, where you can buy fresh bread, cheese,

meat and fish, among other things, and also taste them on the spot. Overall, the food in London is very varied and there is something for every taste. Whether you want to eat traditional English or international, whether you want to eat in an upscale restaurant or at a market - you are sure to find what you are looking for in London.



## Sightseeing

On the second day we started our cultural sightseeing tour in London.

We started with a visit of the Portobello Road Market in Notting Hill, the most famous road market in London where you can find literally everything from clothes to all kinds of food and a lot of other cool things. A special thing in London is that you can pay with your credit card everywhere even the street artists or at a road market.

Our next step was a walk-through Kensington Gardens to visit first the Kensington Palace where we also took a group photo. At every historical sight we had an interesting talk with Mr Hardekopf about the history and the Royals which had to do with it.

After that we walked through the park to the Hyde Park and through the triumphal arch to get to the Buckingham Palace where we saw the Queen's Guard. They still all wore grey uniforms because the Queen had died and the dark uniforms are a symbol of grief.



From the Buckingham Palace we walked to the Trafalgar Square to have lunch. From there we could see Chinatown and a big demonstration on Trafalgar Square. It was a railway strike where the workers demonstrated for better payment and some people were demonstrating for the women in Iraq who are killed when they follow their religious rules.

After our lunch break we visited the National Gallery, one of the most important art galleries in Europe with about 2300 paintings. There we had some free time to look around the gallery where we saw a lot of famous paintings.

The last point of the program for this day was an evening song in Westminster Abbey. On the way to this famous cathedral we saw the White Hall, the Houses of Parliament and of course the Big Ben. The evening song was an interesting impression. It was like a small church service but with most of the attention on the stunning choir. The Westminster Abbey is the most important church in England since 1066.



On Sunday we first travelled with the underground railroad to the Docklands where the first harbour of London once was. The first cargo ships were sailboats which were pulled into the harbour by horses. Now there are a lot of skyscrapers and office buildings.

From the Docklands we walked to Greenwich and towards the Old Royal Naval College which is in the old Palace where Henry VIII was born. There we visited the church inside of the palace and walked through the big inner courtyard. Later we walked up a hill where the Royal Observatory was. There we enjoyed the great view over the palace and the maritime museum. The maritime museum presents all kinds of stories about historic ships and the life on sea.

After visiting the maritime museum we took the riverbus to the Bankside Pier to walk to Shakespeare's Globe to watch "A Winter's Tale" by William Shakespeare. The experience we made in the theatre was great and the performance was actually pretty funny since they changed a few things. Sadly we only had five seats and therefore the rest of us had to stand.

There were three acts of which the second was in the outdoor theatre, where all of us could sit down. This was very refreshing. Back in the indoor theatre we took turns who got to sit, so that not all of us would have to stay standing the whole time.



On Monday we took the national railway to Windsor to visit the home of the royals. Arriving in Windsor we first had to go through a comprehensive security check, just like at the airport. Immediately after that we made our way to St. George's Chapel because it was supposed to close early. The church was richly decorated and equipped with many tombs of kings and queens. It was a splendid private church for the royals.

After the church we went to the Royal Collection and State Apartments which are the official historical collections of for example weapons and predatory goods. We could also take a look at the rooms of the royals in Windsor.

In the evening we went back to the hotel and some of us were dressing up to visit the Royal Opera where we saw "Turandot" by Puccini. It was a really new kind of experience and very impressive.



On Tuesday we went to St. Pauls to take a look at the big dome. After that we went to Tate Modern, one of the most important galleries for modern art. After our astonishing trip through Tate Modern we went to the Borough Market to have a lunchbreak. The Borough Market is a street market mainly for food. It is also the place where the scenes from Harry Potter in the Diagon Alley were made.

After our break we went to the Tower of London. Therefore we went over the Tower Bridge. The Tower of London was constructed by William the Conqueror in the 11th century and is the first and most important palace of the Royals because it was the first fortress at the Thames where attacks of other countries could be defended.

On our last full day of our trip, we had a self-organized tour to the London Science Museum or the platform 9 ¾ from Harry Potter. After that we had free time to go shopping and to relax because of the exhausting week.

### Departure

On Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023, the day of our departure we went for breakfast and cleaned up until we had to be out of the hotel at 11 o'clock. From the hotel we walked to Lancaster Gate until we took the central line to Oxford Circle, where we changed to the Stansted Express and drove to the airport. When we arrived at the airport, we had time for lunch. After two hours of waiting, boarding began and shortly afterwards the plan started. Unfortunately not everyone could sit next to each other. The 1-hour flight was over faster than you thought and we finally arrived back at Bremen airport. From there we parted. Many were picked up, others went by tram and train to Bremerhaven and were then picked up there.

