

My experience in Ireland 2014

At the end of the summer holidays 2014, I went to Carna, a small village at the west coast of Ireland in County Galway. I experienced a lot of completely new and different things. Life in the countryside was the biggest change for me. Thinking of staying in the middle of nowhere for eight weeks was a strange feeling at the beginning but eventually, it was actually a better experience for me than staying in a city, which is part of my daily life in Germany. The school I went to is very different to the *Goethe Gymnasium* in many ways: One big difference is the amount of pupils. At *Scoil Phobail Mhic Dara*, which is the name of the school, there are less than one hundred students and in the year I went to there are only 15 students. Therefore, the atmosphere in class is completely different - in my German form there are 30 pupils - because the teacher can watch every student at the same time, which can be positive but also negative for a student.

The subjects the pupils have at school are the next big difference between the two schools! In Ireland, you have more practical classes than in Germany. They have for example woodwork, metalwork and home economics. These subjects were completely new and interesting for me and I think it's good to have some practical classes you can learn something for life in instead of having only theoretical subjects like in Germany.

Finally, the most visible difference was, of course, the school uniform! At the beginning, I felt really strange and I didn't have a good feeling going to school because you don't seem to be individual anymore; but after a few days wearing the uniform I got used to it and at the end, it was so normal that it was weird going to school without a uniform in Germany.

The way of living in Ireland is different to ours as well. Teenagers in Ireland, for example, are a lot more musical than young people in Germany. Nearly all of them can play at least one instrument and are really good at traditional Irish music. In addition, nearly all boys of the Carna secondary school play in the Gaelic football club. Gaelic football is a mix of rugby and soccer and is one of the national sports in Ireland.

Life in an Irish family is a bit different, too, for example the food they eat. In Ireland, you eat potatoes and meat or fish every day. It's always the same and people mostly work as farmers or fishermen.

To put it in a nutshell, I experienced a lot of completely new things in Ireland and I really enjoyed my stay over there, even though I ate potatoes nearly every day!

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