



# GYMNASIUM HIMMELSTHÜR

HILDESHEIM, GERMANY



# WHO WE ARE

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## **We are the “Gymnasium Himmelsthür”.**

First of all, the German word “Himmelsthür” translates to “heaven’s door”. We’d love to tell you a cool story, but it’s really just the name of the part of the city you can find our school in. That city is called Hildesheim and it is located in the beautiful north of Germany.

Moreover, “Gymnasium” has nothing to do with sports. It is just the name of a certain type of school. But more on that later.

Our school is home to roughly 1000 students aged between 10 and 18 who prepare for the “Abitur”, the final secondary school examinations which take place after Year 13.

Owing to a nearby manor from the 14th century, the school’s street address is called “At the colts’ paddock”. No wonder the “colts’ paddock” has quickly become a synonym for the school itself with its students embracing the nickname of “the Colts” - “die Fohlen” – for themselves.

And even though a regular school day is certainly not always heavenly, even in “Himmelsthür”, our students give us reason to believe that the “colts’ paddock” is a good place to make and meet friends as well as to learn for life.

# WHY WE WRITE

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We sent you this brochure because our students have repeatedly stated that they would be thrilled to make new friends from other countries. That's why we are kindly inquiring about establishing an exchange programme with us in the future.

We are looking for an exchange with a school in an English-speaking country taking place on a regular basis that could look like this:

- ◆ age group: 14-18 years
- ◆ duration: 7-21 days
- ◆ accommodation: in host families (at no extra cost)
- ◆ programme: The students would spend time with their host families getting to know German family life. They would attend regular school some days with their exchange partners to gain an insight into our school system. But there would also be lots of time for excursions. Of course we would be flexible in putting together a schedule that suits your preferences.

Before you make a decision, please take a moment to have a look at what we have to offer to you.



# WHERE WE ARE FROM

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## OUR SCHOOL

Even though "Gymnasium" is just a name for a type of school and has nothing to do with sports, our sports programme is quite successful nevertheless. In 2015 alone, our "Colts"-teams won three state championships in Lower Saxony and they have just recently added two more in 2017.



Another emphasis at our school is put on arts. The works of our students are regularly on display in our school, but also in expositions around town.



Languages also play a big role, with French, Spanish and Latin programmes in place which our students can choose from Year 6 onwards. But the main foreign language, of course, is English. And certainly our students would be eager to prove to their new native-speaking friends how much progress they have already made.

A modern cafeteria built in 2010 provides food as well as a place to stay and chat in breaks. Two gyms (this time we mean actual sports facilities) and a nearby indoor swimming pool add to the possibilities of a school day at Gymnasium Himmelsthür.



# WHERE WE ARE FROM

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## HILDESHEIM

In 2015, our home city of Hildesheim celebrated its 1200th anniversary. Founded in 815 by Louis the Pious, the oldest son of the famous Charlemagne, the "City of Roses" flourished during the Middle Ages to become one of Northern Germany's leading trade centres.

Buildings such as St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Michael's Church – both of them UNESCO World Heritage Sites – and City Hall were all built between 900 and 1300 AD and are still around to give proof of Hildesheim's long and rich past.

In the last 400 years, however, Hildesheim's influence was diminished as neighbouring cities Hanover and Brunswick grew bigger, but it had originally retained much of its medieval charm and beauty.

And even though much of the original city was destroyed in 1945, there are still a number of places throughout the city in which the old and medieval Hildesheim comes alive again. We would love nothing more than to show you these places.

But Hildesheim is more than just history. Home of 100,000 inhabitants today, it offers everything you need for daily life – from shopping centres to different facilities for leisure time activities.



# WHAT WE COULD DO: HANOVER

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Hanover is the capital of our home state of Lower Saxony and only 30 kilometres away. Hanover is one of the greenest cities in Germany with Lake Maschsee in the centre of town and even the Eilenriede forest not outside, but within the boundaries of the city.

Historically speaking, Hanover's most interesting connection to the English-speaking world is the one to the English royal family. In the 18th century, King George of Hanover simultaneously became the King of England, thus setting off the storied history of the English "House of Hanover" with Queen Victoria as its most famous member.

Today, Lower Saxony's capital is home to half a million people which makes Hanover one of the ten biggest cities in Germany. So if there is something you can't find in Hildesheim, the solution is probably just a 30-minute-drive away.

# WHAT WE COULD DO: NATIONALPARK HARZ

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Like much of Northern Europe, the north of Germany is a rather flat landscape shaped by the glaciers of the last ice age. Hildesheim, however, is located at the edge towards the more hilly centre of Germany.

The Harz mountains, Germany's most northerly mountain range with peaks up to 1100 metres, lies only 50 kilometres southeast.

The Harz mountains owe their historic relevance to the mining business. Back around 1300 AD, it was one of the first places in the world where mining was mechanically enhanced. Some of these impressive installations, also listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, can still be observed in the local mining museum, which takes you not only deep down into the Harz mountains, but also back in time.

And if that part of history is not interesting to you at all, you can still enjoy the beautiful scenery as well as the small Harz town of Goslar with its medieval centre and the century-old "Emperor's residence".



# WHAT WE COULD DO: BERLIN

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Hildesheim is just a three-hour-drive by bus or a 90-minute-trainride from Berlin, Germany's lively capital.

Discover Germany's biggest city and visit all the historic places of the past centuries, such as the 18th century Brandenburg Gate, the iconic symbol of both the division and reunification of Germany in the centre of Berlin. Close-by you can visit the German Parliament, the so-called Reichstag, and climb its dome to look down into the plenary assembly room or enjoy the fantastic view of the very heart of Berlin.

Another must-see is the East Side Gallery, a mile-long remainder of the infamous Berlin Wall, artistically painted by 118 artists from 21 countries in the months after the fall of the Wall, now a protected historical site visited by thousands of tourists every day.

Especially during the warmer seasons a boat trip on Berlin's river Spree would offer you a spectacular view of the most beautiful parts of this surprisingly green city from a different perspective.

# WHAT WE COULD DO: HAMBURG

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With around 1.8 million inhabitants Hamburg is the second largest city in Germany. It is known worldwide for its huge sea and container port – people in Germany also call it “gateway to the world”.

As a typical port city Hamburg has a lot to offer – not only to anchoring guests from the world’s oceans. Starting with famous musical productions such as “The Lion King” and “Aladdin”, the city proves itself to be highly entertaining.

Visitors can also enjoy harbour boat tours with views of the “Elbphilharmonie”, an architecturally astonishing concert hall which has just opened in 2017, and the picturesque “Speicherstadt” with its historic brick warehouses which can only be accessed from water.

Those interested in fashion and design will find countless high street shops as well as unique boutiques throughout town. Further exceptional tourist attractions like the humorous “Miniatur-Wunderland” – the world’s biggest model railway layout – add to Hamburg’s reputation as one of the greatest destinations for day-trippers.

# CONTACT

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We hope that our little brochure caught your interest. We would be elated if you really considered taking up a student exchange with us.

In that case or if you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact us via E-Mail or by phone.

We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Greetings from Hildesheim!

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