



Sat/Sun 29/30 Aug

Arrival/First Day

Our new September group of children have arrived safely in UK for a month of fun and of course health benefits too. They are even smaller than I remember when I met them in March for the first time in Belarus. So cute, it's gonna be a great month.

We eventually got the children to Scotland on Saturday after some delays on the M6. It was great to bring them into the hall, introduce them all and see them nervously join their new families for the start of their journeys together.

A huge thank you to our interpreters Yulia and Lena for their help, especially Lena who escorted all 12 children all the way from Belarus to Manchester on her own with Yulia joining us from one of our sister groups.

The children were very tired after a long journey to Scotland so after exploring their new houses, having something to eat, shower and a quick phone call home it was time for bed and for many they were out like a light when their heads hit the pillow. As expected we had some homesickness, tears and missing the folks back home. Sleep is normally the best medicine and in many cases this proved to be true.

Sunday saw the children start to settle a little bit more. Many had trips to the shops to be measured for shoes and some were even buying clothes and toys with many families bumping into each other in Livingston Shopping Centre.

The afternoon saw us all meet for a picnic at Polkemmet Country Park. This was a great opportunity for the hosts to share experiences so far and for the children to be children with their friends from Belarus and Scotland. The weather was very kind to all and it was a lovely relaxed time for all to spend together.

The late afternoon and evening saw many families meeting up in smaller numbers to help the children settle and get to know their friends and family better.

All in all it's been a good weekend and a good start to the visit. Yes we have had challenges but with 12 new children and 11 new families that was expected and everyone is doing really well with the circumstances they are faced with. We have a great team of host families and the visit is shaping up to be a really good one.

Tomorrow is that start of the activities and what a start we have planned more on that tomorrow



