

## Saturday 1st & Sunday 2nd June

### **Journey, Arrival and the First Weekend.**

The journey started in the Cherikov villages at 11pm Friday night our time when most of the children were picked up by bus. A bus journey of around 5 hours took them to Minsk picking up the Mogilev children on the way. A 3 hour flight to Manchester and then around 5 hours to Broxburn. 18 hours after starting out in Cherikov the children arrived in Broxburn, missing a whole nights sleep. Given all of that they were so well behaved on all legs of the journey. A huge thank you to Katia and Ira for looking after them so well on the journey and guiding all 22 children through 2 airports.

Their arrival at the hall in Broxburn was greeted by all of the host families and friends. A great welcome for them. There were a few tears from some children on their arrival but more from the hosts with some emotional meetings taking place. It was so great to see the new children settled with their hosts and the returning children reunited with their hosts. Dinners, baths and early to bed was the order of the evening with most children understandably in the land of nod by 8pm. This resulted in a few early rises but the prize goes to the Smiths for a 5.30 rise with mum Mags joining in the early morning fun cooking pancakes for breakfast at 6.

Sunday was spent by many families visiting the shops for some new clothes and shoes, barbeques in the sun and meeting with friends and wider family. One funny story from today was Zhenya, one of our most energetic children, being wheeled round Tesco in a shopping trolley. Then he got out and wanted his host dad Steven to go in and he would wheel him round.

A nice story from today. Palina who has said very few words since she was in an orphanage last year, and not one word all Saturday, even on the phone

to Dad and Katia our interpreter, spoke her first few words of the visit to her host sister Katherine this morning. It was so nice to see her playing on a swing today with Katherine and laughing and smiling and definitely enjoying herself. Looking forward to hearing Palina saying her first words in our school. One step at a time though, but it would be so great to see her confidence grow throughout the visit. She is a lovely wee girl and has great first time hosts who are very sensitive to her needs and are happy to let her get comfortable with sister Katherine and watch their relationship grow and hopefully Palina's confidence.

All the children appear to have settled in well, some like they have never been away and that is a reflection on our great team of very dedicated and loving host parents and our two brilliant interpreters.

**Stars of the weekend:** The whole group – families, children and interpreters for a great start.

**Kenny Turnbull**



### **Tanya's First Day**

Tanya has had a lovely first day at Gambado and then in our sunny garden with all the family xx

### **Dima and Natasha's First Day**

We invited Natasha, Lauren and Karen over for Sunday brunch and the kids had great fun!



## Nikita's First Day



Nikita and our daughter, Elvie and some of her friends in the street had a water fight - Here is a photo of the two of them with their water guns. After dinner, we all went along to the Sports Centre and played badminton.....very badly :-)

## Sergei's First Day

Sergei had a great time on Sunday with Beau in the garden. They played football, wizzed around on their bikes and bounced about on the trampoline.



## Andrei's First Day

He's settled in well with his two new brothers, Andrew and Alistair, after a bit of a wobble in the hall to begin with. We were at the Broxburn Parish Church JAM (Sunday school) barbeque yesterday, great weather and with a few of the

other children there also, it was a lovely afternoon. They played football, had races and tucked into the burgers and sausages.





## **Veranika, Palina, Dasha, Masha and Lera's First Day**

The Gardeners (Palina) were kind enough to host a BBQ on Sunday. The weather was amazing (unlike last year!) and the children spent the afternoon laughing in the sun.

Palina hogged the swing with a huge grin and the sight of three girls chattering in Belarussian on the trampoline, with a Scottish boy just grinning beside them without a clue what was being said, showed the boot on the other foot and was lovely to see. Role on June with more fun like this!

