

# REPORT from Isaac VICKERS

## of Middleton Grange School

Hi my name is Isaac, I am 14 and I am a year 10 pupil. I have been on an exchange trip to Japan. We went to a smallish called Kurashiki which has a small population of about 80,000 people. The trip was amazing and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The trip showed me a lot of the Japanese culture and of their way of life. There 15 of us on the exchange and we were picked from different schools around Christchurch. For the two weeks I was staying there, I was staying with a Japanese family and experiencing their food. The Japanese food was mostly delicious apart from some strange things. One of these was a paste called Nutto - I found out later that this foul tasting thing was rotten or fermented beans.

While I was there I endured four days of school. On the first three days we just joined into the school schedule that our hosts were assigned. However on the fourth day of school we tried out some different activities such as Kendo (stick fighting), tea ceremony, complicated paper cutting and helping to teach an English class. I think Kendo was the best because our teacher was crazy. The Japanese school was very interesting but also very different to the school I know. School lunch was provided and was a bottle of milk, either bread or rice, a choice of meat and salad and a soup of some kind. On the other days of our trip our group went around visiting different attractions and landmarks. Some of these were: Hiroshima Peace park, Miyajima Island, Universal Studios, an amusement park, a few temples and a castle.

I think the trip was very well organized and our leaders did very well keeping us under control. I think there was a good mix of fun, sightseeing and schooling. My most enjoyable experience would have to be Washuzan Highland park, where we had the whole part to ourselves. There was a roller coaster, Ferris wheel, bungee jumping and a giant drop. My most interesting encounter was at Miyajima Island. To get there we caught a ferry across from Hiroshima. Here there were deer roaming around freely in the middle of the town. Also there weren't many cars around and there was one big temple along the shoreline. There were many shops on the island and they lined some of the main streets. When we arrived in the morning there weren't many people but when we left the crowds had started to form.

I had an amazing time in Japan and hope to visit the country again some time in the near future.

**Isaac Vickers**

