



Marienau

wir *leben* Schule



Marienau school · Schule Marienau
Boarding school · Internatsgymnasium



Why Marienau?



Why Marienau? That is the question I asked myself when I came here from Frankfurt as the new principal.

First, there are the people. There is the surrounding area: the buildings and, above all, the natural environment. Marienau radiates openness, receptiveness, uniqueness - and a certain feeling of being at home, of being safe. You come here and you find something that touches a longing deep inside you. It is the desire to have work and private life become one, so that work as a truly fulfilling experience is filled with an entirely new meaning. You realize that this place is for the whole person, be it as a teacher or as a student, and the students in our care feel it, too.

And, of course, there is that great tradition, the pedagogical heritage of the country boarding schools based on the ideas of Hermann Lietz. For the founders of our school, Dr. Max and Dr. Gertrud Bondy, the goal had always been to foster a relationship of friendship and mutual respect between student and teacher, to develop democratic principles and to develop the ideals of the German youth movement: to educate students to think and act independently, and to raise children in the spirit of solidarity and humanity; that is, to help them become individuals who are politically and socially engaged in their community, willing to take responsibility for themselves and others, and able to practice tolerance. In this endeavor, classroom instruction, arts education, and sports have always formed a synthesis enabling our students to realize their full potential. This is the tradition we stand in and that we continue to build on and develop.

I would like to invite you: come and take a walk around campus, through school buildings and student housing. I would like to invite you to a chat with staff and students. I believe that this way, you will find your own answer to the question: "Why Marienau?"

Heike Elz
Principal



Educational Philosophy

Marienau is more than a school; for our boarding students it is a second home. Teachers and students do not only interact in the classroom, but also in living quarters and during leisure activities. Because of this, the role of the teacher and the interaction between student and teacher are markedly different from those in conventional schools. In our understanding, teaching and educating form a unit. Since its formation in 1923, Marienau has been a member of the organization of German country boarding schools (Landerziehungsheime, or LEH for short) and stands in the tradition of German progressive education and therefore holistic education, according to the motto "Learning with head, heart, and hand."

As a UNESCO school, Marienau develops the awareness and understanding of the mutual dependency between man and nature, utilizing interactions with different cultures, as well as incorporating ecologically and experientially oriented projects into the curriculum. All of this would not be possible without modern technology, which we monitor with interest through our classes in i.e. information technology and biotechnology.

Learning environment Marienau



Small classes and a friendly, personal atmosphere in which students are supported individually and are able to learn without fear - those are all parts of our concept in Marienau. Our motto is "We live school". In the spirit of the democratic roots of our school, we work to develop a sense of responsibility, tolerance, and social engagement in our students. The many rights and opportunities to participate in shaping our school are accompanied by communal responsibilities: mentoring younger students, setting and cleaning the tables at dinner time, or taking care of the school - owned ponies are just some examples. Annual exchange programs with schools in different regions of the world and extended stays abroad foster intercultural learning and are one of our school's responses to globalization. In addition, UNESCO projects foster student interest in other cultures and living conditions in different parts of the world. Marienau has been a UNESCO project school since 2003.

Extracurricular activities in Marienau



A good school may also be identified by what opportunities it offers outside the classroom. There are many of those in Marienau. In numerous clubs, students have the opportunity to freely develop their interests and actively engage in sports, artistic, or technical programs.

One focus area is the stage. Even fifth graders are introduced to presenting in front of an audience, be it through artistic performances, rope-skipping, reading and literature competitions, or musicals.

Another focus area is sports. There is a wide variety of clubs and programs available. Martial arts like Aikido have their place alongside archery, badminton, tennis, gymnastics or dance. The campus includes a tennis court and a modern athletic field equipped for team sports like soccer, basketball and hockey, as well as the whole range of track and field activities. Our golf teachers take their students to the nearby golf course every week to prepare them to participate successfully in tournaments.



Pedagogical concept

Marienau set as its goal to focus on the individual, in the classroom as well as in the boarding school. As far as instruction is concerned, this means small class sizes, an attractive range of foreign language offerings, and individualized instruction. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning. Not a consumerist attitude to learning, but rather active engagement with the subject matter, are at the center of our work. We realize these goals through the use of individualization, cooperative learning and portfolio work. Independent and group work complement each other here. Naturally, we also employ successful 'traditional' methods like lecture, discourse and projects if and when they are appropriate. A skills and methods curriculum reaching across subjects and grade levels ensures the systematic integration of all those components.

In keeping with this approach, our school connects instruction with excursions, trips and travel abroad. Intercultural learning is practiced 'on location': in Spain, France, England or Israel and in frequent UNESCO-projects. For class trips in the middle grades, programs are based on the concepts of experiential education.

Taking responsibility



One tried and tested characteristic of Marienau is the school assembly, which is a kind of school parliament with equal representation of students and staff (there are 20 members, 10 of whom are students).

The goal is to have students invested in the community they live in, beyond just their personal interests and those of their peer group. Through training sessions for class speakers and Cornetts, we prepare our students for these tasks.

Cornetts are students who support the dormitory house parents in supervising each dorm. They handle a number of tasks independently. The role of Cornett is one of responsibility and requires well-developed social skills - being able to communicate respectfully with other students as well as the ability to enforce rules are necessary, as are natural authority, honesty, the ability to deal with conflicts, empathy and fairness - for the Cornett carries a wide range of responsibilities.

Students also develop their social skills as mentors for younger students. In addition, they are encouraged to participate in the weekly social and community service program in the local kindergarten, retirement home, volunteer fire department or the soup kitchen in Lüneburg.

Student housing and groups



Our students reside in modern, comfortably furnished double and single rooms in houses integrated into our wooded campus. Lower and middle grades students share double rooms, upperclassmen are housed in single rooms. Every student has enough personal space to decorate and arrange his or her room according to personal preferences.

Each house comprises about 10 students of either the lower-, middle-, or upper grades. There is also one dorm which combines different age groups. Each house is looked after by an adult, usually a teacher, who also lives in the same house, frequently with his or her family. In addition, each student is also part of a so - called table group, a group that eats together at lunch and dinner time and organizes regular activities. The groups are made up of students from different houses and are looked after by another staff member.

Admissions requirements

The Abitur (German high school graduation exam) is a state exam with the written component provided by the state education department. Oral exams are given by school staff. The results at Marienau school compare favorably with other area schools.

Capacity:

Total capacity 330 students, of those, 150 boarding students and about 180 day students.

Class size:

from 15 to a maximum of 22 students.

Foreign Languages:

English (from grade 5)

French, Spanish, Latin (from grade 6)

Spanish as a third language (from grade 10)

Speciality subjects:

Biotechnology/ biochemistry within the scientific focus area.

Athletic show / arts / theatre within the artistic/creative focus area.

Economy/ Government within the social science focus area.

Areas of specialization in the upper grades:

natural sciences, language studies, social studies, the arts.

Homework:

Boarding students in grades 5 through 10 participate in a teacher supervised study period (5:05 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.) in their houses. Students in grades 11 and 12 attend teacher supervised study halls offered in a variety of classrooms at different times.

Day students attend a 90 minute study hall in the afternoon, which is also supervised by a teacher.

Academic support:

There are school-wide competitions, extracurricular programs for gifted and talented students and individualized support in math/ English/ methods for students in the upper grades.

Remedial classes are offered in all major subjects for grades 5 through 10. Additional classes support students with dyslexia and learners of German as a second language.



Schedule

The day to day routine is shaped by three major components: instruction, extracurriculars and study periods. Those are interspersed with the meals, which students attend in their table groups.

The day begins with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. and ends with "lights out" which is, depending on student age, between 8:30 and 10:30 p.m. A number of evenings are filled with special events: table group activities take place on Thursdays, obligatory cultural events are frequently scheduled on Wednesdays.

Every month, two weekends are school weekends, which offer a rich variety of activities and clubs for boarding students after Saturday classes. The other weekends many students spend at home, while those who stay on campus are looked after by staff members. Those weekends provide opportunities for trips to Lüneburg or Hamburg, allowing our students to get to know the area. Frequently, our students from abroad are also invited to spend the weekends or vacations with their German friends.

Campus / Location



Marienau is located about 85km south-east of Hamburg on the northern edge of the Lüneburg Heath.

The campus includes 200 acres of woodland, a pond, pastures, barns, and school and dormitory buildings. Although the school began in a traditional manor house and its accompanying buildings, today's campus combines traditional and modern architectural elements. It has an air of openness and coziness at the same time. The different functions - dormitories, instructional facilities, maintenance buildings, cafeteria - are intentionally interwoven. Close by is the river Elbe, a popular local recreation area. Marienau is a part of the joint community of Dahlenburg, a town located halfway between Lüneburg and Dannenberg.

The old Hanseatic League city of Lüneburg with its historic city center, cinemas, theatres, university, museums, and restaurants is always worth a trip. The area also features numerous excellent opportunities for horseback riding and golf. Luhmühlen is famous for its international riding competitions.



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Commercial manager: Maik Lüdemann
Assistant principal: Walter Dömmecke
Assistant Boarding school administrator: Tobias Karrasch

Status:

Marienau is accredited by the state as a Gymnasium (German high school). Exams given and certificates issued by the school have the same legal status as those issued by state-run schools. Marienau is a member of the organization of German country boarding schools ("Vereinigung Deutscher Landerziehungsheime") and the organization of independent schools of Lower-Saxony ("Vereinigung der Freien Schulen Niedersachsens").

Marienau school is a non-profit organization.

Board of Directors:

1. Chairman: Jan Behrmann
2. Chairman: Dieter Plate
3. Chairman: Cornelia v. Ilsemann

Förderverein (FFM):

Former students have formed the club "Friends and supporters of Marienau" in order to provide scholarships for students in need, foster contacts between former students and support and advise current students in their career choices.

Chairman FFM: Arndt Baumann & Esther Hey

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