

Diversity at GBG – the effects on us and our future

Our school unites students from a diversity of cultures with a wide variety of experiences, skills and perspectives. We also have an "international class" with eight students, who come from the Ukraine, Iraq and Syria and are part of our community.

Even though a large number of pupils were born and have grown up in Germany, many do not only speak the German language but also the mother tongue of their parent of foreign origin. Of course, there are also a lot of students who have family members abroad, travel a lot, cultivate traditions or have a parent working globally. So obviously, we find a variety of family constellations and cultures at GBG.

Diversity, however, has many more faces than the ones I have just mentioned. Whether ethnic or gender diversity, diversity regarding disabled people or non-disabled ones – all of those faces of diversity contribute to openness and tolerance and allow us to experience life outside of our own comfort zones, which in turn expands our horizon.

The openness of our school to different cultures and students is a particular strength and I see it as an opportunity for all of us. This diversity should be preserved and further promoted.

Our world is growing faster and faster together and technological development and digitalization are rapidly progressing. Today, it is possible to travel five countries in a day. – Thus globalization is yet another reason why we have to learn to adapt and speak a "common language", literally and figuratively!

Our school does not only prepare us for globalization by means of its bilingual profile, making the English language our second working language, but also supports the process of growing together, the exchange between different perspectives and cultures.

When looking at our life after school, we can see that also many companies have already introduced diversity as a management tool and part of their corporate culture because surveys show that culturally and linguistically diverse constellations are more successful: Diversity generates innovation and consequently higher sales. So our teachers do important work and prepare us for our future when they motivate us to discuss politics in our Political Sciences classes or register us for debate championships where we debate current political issues. In all of those situations we have to put ourselves in somebody else's shoes, benefit from diverse views and perspectives and, in the end, do learn from each other to become more creative and successful.

Our "colorful" school life is largely characterized by openness, respect, creativity and understanding for each other. That makes us courageous and helps us to become actively involved in our school's community and to stand up against intolerance such as the one promoted by right-wing-populists who discriminate against people living diverse lives. As "a school without racism, a school with courage" we welcome everybody who is willing and eager to learn - no matter what his or her descent, religion, gender or sexual orientation is. Diversity is inclusive and makes us unique.

Thank you!

Melisa Basdere