

German students visit Rangiora

By DAVID HILL

German Christian students have been enjoying two weeks in Rangiora.

Nineteen students from Lukas School in Munich, Germany, arrived in Rangiora last week to spend two weeks as part of a new exchange with Rangiora New Life School.

Principal Brian Seatter says the 14 and 15-year-old students were welcomed to the school with powhiri and have been joining in with year 9 and 10 classes and will spend next week touring around the South Island.

The exchange follows Mr Seatter's visit to Germany last year, when he visited the school. He has previously lived in Germany for six years.

"I went to their school last July and got to know them and they asked if they could come to our school, so we negotiated the whole thing from there."

Mr Seatter says he hopes it will become an annual exchange, with Rangiora New Life School students visiting Germany in the future.

This is the Rangiora school's second international exchange, as it has been hosting students from Junten High School in Tokyo, Japan, for several years.

Lukas School principal Christina Haerle said it is her first time in New Zealand and she is enjoying her visit.

Her students, who all speak English, said they were enjoying their new school experience, with better hours and the teachers "are not as strict here".

They were also enjoying learning new subjects, including drama and Maori.

The students were also accompanied by their own youth worker Nicki Walter, who said jet lag was the biggest challenge for the students.



Guten tag . . . Students from Lukas School in Munich, Germany, have been enjoying their time in Rangiora.

PHOTO: DAVID HILL

"But they are refreshed because of the good climate and the good hours and good schedule here at the school and the people are really nice, really warm and welcoming."

He said coming from the German autumn to the New Zealand spring also allowed the students to "extend our warm weather a little bit".

Mr Walter said students were enjoying New Zealand food and he had even tried a Kiwiburger at McDonalds.

"You can go round the world, but you can always go to one restaurant and feel like you're at home and that's McDonalds, because the food is the same - except in New Zealand with the Kiwiburger."

Lukas School is a non-denominational Christian school like Rangiora New Life School and is located in the city of Munich, which has a population of 1.5 million. Germany is 11 hours behind New Zealand.