

Paulina Pankowska In A Purim Spiel At Her Kindergarten



This is my granddaughter, Paulina Pankowska. The picture was taken at her kindergarten in Kiryat Yam near Haifa in 1994. That year my daughter's family emigrated to Israel. That was Paulina's first Purim Spiel. She is wearing a butterfly costume. My daughter and son-in-law wanted to emigrate because of marital problems, just to change something in their lives. My son-in-law is called Andrzej Pankowski. They have two children: Paulina, who's 15 now, and Daniel, he's at university. They went away in January 1994; at that time it was still fairly calm in Israel. They went there literally on the off-chance, and stayed eight years. They lived in Kiryat Yam at first, and then in Kiryat Chaim near Haifa. When they left, none of them spoke Hebrew. First they had a language training course, a short one. My grandson picked the language up quickest, then my son-in-law. Yes, it's true. And my son-in-law could speak fantastic Hebrew there. Better than my daughter even. My granddaughter, Paulina, picked the language up quickly in kindergarten too. I'll be honest. My daughter and son-in-law had it very good over there. My daughter made very good money. My son-in-law had some transportation firm. Really, they came back to Poland because of Daniel, my grandson. He was turning 18. They didn't want him to go into the army there. Terrible, what was going on there. My wife couldn't bear it. 'What are they doing there? God! They'll get killed!' But that wasn't the only reason why they came back. They were homesick. Not my son-in-law. My son-in-law is Polish, but he says that he'd go back to Israel today. Really, he talks everything in Israel up. He can't make ends meet here. He's got a secondary education and works in a computer shop. And my daughter the same. And since she's been back she's had a rotten job, she's on 2,500 zloty gross. They thought it would be different when they got back. Paulina is at middle school. Daniel is studying international relations at a private college, Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Cracow College. He didn't get into Jagiellonian University, to do American studies. Unfortunately. Even today I've been out round the second-hand bookshops. A second-hand textbook I wanted to buy him on the history of the United States. Couldn't get it. It costs 80 zloty new. But I have to help them, really, because they haven't got enough to keep them. All four got

Israeli citizenship and passports, only my grandson's passport has expired. Daniel didn't have his bar mitzvah there; he's not interested in his roots. My daughter still is. She's really getting into her roots; she wants to know everything about me and all. My granddaughter sort of likes it a bit; she even went with her parents to the festival, in Kazimierz. Now my daughter, my grandson and my granddaughter can speak perfect English. Paulina has just entered an English competition. She came first in her school. Very good marks in all her subjects. And she still keeps in touch with her classmates from Israel, but in Hebrew. And I go to the post office to post the letters.