

Junior non-residential Summer Programme (July only)

Our junior non-residential (host family) summer programme is run in St Tiernan's Community School, Balally, Dublin 16. This is a middle-class residential suburb minutes away from Dundrum Town Centre, one of the largest and most exclusive shopping malls in Europe and very near the new tramline station which brings passengers to city centre in 20 minutes.

Students are tested on their first morning in school and placed in classes at appropriate levels. Maximum class size is 15. Our classes last from 9.30 to 13.30 with one coffee break and a shorter break in the classroom. The teaching standard is high; students have a text book, a journal in which they are encouraged to write about activities, excursions and the like. Each class prepares, with the class teacher, a small sketch or musical item and presents it to the whole school every second Saturday. Prizes are awarded to the best 3 classes.

All of our teachers have a primary degree and EFL teacher training. There is a prescribed syllabus for the junior programmes and the Director of Studies for the centre, in conjunction with the College Academic Manager, monitors the teaching team and ensures the academic quality of the programme. Students are presented with an end of course report and certificate on completion of the course.

We encourage our young learners to take an examination as part of their programme. Our examination of choice is the TIE (Test of Interactive English) which we believe is very appropriate for short-stay students. Students do not fail this test; they are scored at their language level and results are presented in Council of Europe level format. The TIE is approved in Italy for Credito Formativo. Further details on this examination may be found on www.acels.ie. We also prepare young learners for the Trinity Examination. On some of the afternoons when the activities are taking place on campus we give students who are taking these examinations extra help to prepare for the examination. Alpha College should be informed as soon as possible of the name, date of birth and estimated English level of students wishing to take examinations

Full day excursions take place each Monday. The places visited on the full day excursion include Glendalough, Kilkenny, Meath, and Kildare.

There are 2 half-day excursions per week. These are to places like Kilmainham Gaol, Guinness, Powerscourt, Art Gallery in Merrion Square and National Museum of Ireland on Kildare Street, shopping etc.

We provide an evening activity in the school from 7 – 9 p.m. on 2 or 3 evenings per week. Activities can be sports or video or karaoke and there is a disco in city center every second Wednesday. Students are brought to the disco by private coach.

We help leaders or teachers who accompany their students to organise other evening activities such as bowling, cinema, swimming etc.

The host families for juniors are located as near the school as possible. Many (most if we can) of the students can walk to school each day. It is our policy to have students in little groups on roads or in estates so that they are never alone. In general we try to have the younger kids as near to the school as we can but the biggest problem with the very young students is that not all families are prepared to accept them. For this reason we prefer not to accept students under 13 years of age in our host family school.

Some of our students (usually aged 16+) take a bus to school each day - but a 10-15 minute bus trip in the local area; not a trip through the city centre.

The biggest single nationality is Spanish and it is very likely that students from other countries would share with Spanish, French or Italian students in twin rooms. There are a few families with single rooms but they are in the minority. If a student particularly wants a single room it is best to mention this as soon as possible and we will do our very best to make sure that he or she gets a single room.

There are 5/6 Irish monitors/supervisors who accompany students to all excursions and are present for all activities. They are very friendly and helpful and actually love what they are doing.

All students are met at the airport on arrival and returned to the airport on completion of their course, checked in and left to the departure gates. Students are given an ID card on arrival. This ID card contains the address and telephone number of their host family as well as emergency telephone numbers.

Students are expected to obey school rules. The atmosphere in the junior summer school is relaxed and friendly but there is a code of discipline and students are expected to observe this code. Rules will be explained to them on their first day and are outlined in their handbook.

Smoking and the use of alcohol or drugs are strictly forbidden. Students found to be in breach of these regulations, or students who behave in an anti-social manner, e.g. shoplifting, bullying, aggressive behaviour, non-compliance with main school rules will be sent home. In such cases it is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to purchase a return flight ticket and receive the student in his/her home country.