

Junior Residential Summer Programme

(July only)

Our Junior Residential Summer Programme is run at King's Hospital College, Palmerstown, Dublin 20. It is just off the main Dublin-Galway road, past Palmerstown and Liffey Valley Shopping Centre. It is a safe, secure, relatively small school set in a hundred acre campus of green fields and trees but is only 20 minutes from city center and 15 minutes from Dublin airport. There are extensive playing fields including all weather tennis courts, football pitches etc. and a 20-metre heated indoor swimming pool on site.

Accommodation, which is very well maintained, is provided in 4, 5 or 6 bedded en-suite rooms. The 4 and 5-bed rooms have a toilet, shower and wash hand basin; the 6-bed rooms have 2 showers, 2 wash hand basins and a toilet.

Leaders are accommodated on the accommodation corridors, generally, in twin rooms. Each 2 twin rooms share a bathroom (but they are not en-suite). There is a small sitting room in each area with continuous hot water for tea/coffee etc. and a TV.

There is an elaborate security system in place with coded access to the different areas and a particular system for the night time. In the case of a fire, all security systems are automatically shut off and there is immediate access to exits.

The sports facilities are first class. The gym is state of the art; completed about 3 years ago and many professional sports people train there before important events. The swimming pool is impressive, well maintained and warm. It has won several awards for cleanliness and pool maintenance. Generally this school takes its sports seriously and this is reflected in the type and maintenance of its facilities.

There are several bright, airy recreation rooms and the classrooms are also large and bright.

The dining hall is very large and airy. Food is prepared by an outside catering company. Obviously all children do not like all the food but the meals are well prepared, nutritious and varied. There is fresh salad and baguette-style bread at each meal.

Laundry is done once per week.

There is a shop on the premises where students can purchase drinks, phone cards, post cards and stamps.

There will be some access to computers for students who wish to send or receive emails.

All students taking this programme will have morning classes from 09.30 to 13.30, with one coffee break and a shorter break in the classroom, on 5 mornings per week; 1 full day excursion each Monday; 2 afternoon excursions in city centre and 3 afternoon activities on campus along with evening activities every evening. All excursions are by private coach and the coaches are operated by the same family for the last 10 years. Irish supervisors accompany students on all excursions and activities organized by Alpha.

The Centre has a Centre Manager and a Director of Studies. There is a prescribed syllabus for the junior programmes and the Director of Studies, in conjunction with the Alpha College Academic Manager, monitors the teaching team and ensures the academic quality of the programme. The levels are aligned to the CEFR (Common European Framework). The syllabus covers the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing as well as pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar activities. Classes are generally task-based and always interactive with students and teachers continually working together to improve language output. Class work includes individual, pair and group work, teacher-led discussions, debates, presentations, written tasks and listening exercises. All classes include topics on Irish history and culture. Mobile phones must be switched off during class times.

Students are tested on their first morning in school and placed in classes at appropriate levels. Maximum morning class size is 15. 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.

Students are presented with an end of course report and certificate on completion of the course. The certificate includes the dates of study and the level of English studied.

All of our teachers have a primary degree and post-graduate EFL teacher training. Many of the teachers in our junior centre come back to us year after year and we have built up a strong core of widely experienced teachers.

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 (CEFR) level format. 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 campus activities are taking place 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, Irish for a Day, and cultural excursions outside of Dublin.

There are 2 half-day excursions per week. These include guided walking tours in city centre, visits to places like Kilmainham Gaol, Guinness, Powerscourt, the National Art Gallery, the National Museum of Ireland, GAA Museum, shopping etc.

The afternoon activities include football, volleyball, tennis, rounders - with mini-leagues each week. There is swimming every evening around 8. There is always a lifeguard on duty when we use the pool. Other evening activities include table tennis, chess, fancy dress, talent competitions, karaoke, and treasure hunt. The arts room is staffed and open each afternoon when children are on campus. There are 2 discos on site each week – generally on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

There are 6 Irish supervisors constantly on site and each of them has first-aid training. They are very friendly and helpful and actually love what they are doing.

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

All junior students are met at the airport on arrival and returned to the airport on completion of their course. If students come without a leader they are checked in and left to the security checkpoint. Our representative will wait to see that they have gone through security and will not leave the airport until the plane has taken off.

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 and handed to them on their first day.

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.

Sundays are free; some leaders bring their students on extra excursions or some prefer to go shopping in the very modern, extensive shopping mall just 5 minutes walk away from the school. Individual students are not allowed leave the campus at any time unless accompanied by a teacher or Alpha supervisor.

Alpha Young Learners



We need to be informed in advance of any special dietary or medical requirements and will need to have a medical authorization form signed by the parents or guardians of each student. If students are sick we bring them to the doctor or if necessary arrange for a doctor to visit the school. Students should bring the European medical card provided by their insurance company.

Students do not need to bring bed linen but they should bring towels – and of course some warm clothing and a waterproof jacket. We provide padlocks for the lockers in the bedrooms but we ask for a small deposit for the padlocks. The deposit is returned to the student when the padlock is returned on his/her departure. We also request a deposit of €20 from each student against possible damage. This deposit is returned to the student provided nothing has been damaged by the student during his or her stay.

Nearer to the time of arrival we will send out some arrival information and emergency telephone numbers for the college.