

Lexington-County Kildare Student Exchange

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. How long is the exchange?
 - a. County Kildare students visit Lexington for 10-12 days; Lexington students travel to County Kildare for 10-12 days as well.
2. What are the dates for the exchange?
 - a. While we don't have exact dates for the 2018 exchange, we can give some approximate time frames. County Kildare students will travel to Lexington first, usually around the first ten days of July. There will be a few days between the County Kildare students departing Lexington before the Lexington students will depart for Ireland, during mid-July.
3. Can my student apply for two Sister Cities programs?
 - a. No – students should only submit one application to Sister Cities. Students will not be considered for multiple programs.
4. Is there a chaperone for the students?
 - a. Yes. The chaperone is usually a teacher or member of Lexington Sister Cities. They will be available at orientations for parents and students to meet and get to know.
5. Who will my student stay with during the exchange?
 - a. Your student will be matched with a student from County Kildare – that will be their host family while they are in Ireland.
6. How are the host families in County Kildare selected?
 - a. The Sister Cities Committee in County Kildare (called the “Twinning Committee”) selects their host families in a similar process to ours. Because County Kildare is a smaller community, the committee members usually know the families really well even before selection.
7. How much does the exchange cost?
 - a. Other than the \$25 application fee, the cost will be around \$1,500, depending on current airline prices. Upon acceptance, a \$200 non-refundable deposit is due to Sister Cities. Once the airfare is found and held by the travel agent, payment will be due to Sister Cities. If necessary, payment plans can be arranged. However, the full amount of the airline ticket will be due at least 90 days from departure. Scholarships are available for financial need – the scholarship application can be found on the website.
8. What are some other costs we may incur?
 - a. Other costs include spending money for gifts, souvenirs, et cetera; as well as obtaining a passport if they do not have one already.
9. When are the interviews for the exchange?
 - a. Interviews will be scheduled either mid-November or early December. Interviews will last about 30 minutes per family. If possible, both parents/guardians should attend the interview.
10. What happens after my student gets selected?
 - a. The Lexington-County Kildare Committee will inform the student and their parents at the interview when the acceptances will be emailed out to the students. Once the student receives their acceptance email, they will be given a date to accept their spot in the program by – this date is usually 24-48 hours after the acceptance email is sent.
 - b. Once students have accepted their spot in the program, a \$200 non-refundable deposit should be sent to Lexington Sister Cities. This will be applied towards your airfare.
 - c. Orientations will start in February. Orientations are MANDATORY for participation in the program. At least one parent should attend each meeting with their student.
11. What is provided to my student while they are in Ireland?
 - a. While your student is in Ireland, accommodation and meals will be provided by the host family. Exceptions may include if the students are out together and they get ice cream/coffee/etc. This would be something your student would use spending money for.
12. What are we expected to provide for the County Kildare student while they are in Lexington?
 - a. While the County Kildare student is in Lexington, you are expected to provide meals and accommodations. Treat them as an additional child in your family – anything you would pay for your own child, you should pay for the County Kildare student as well.
13. Are there group activities planned by Sister Cities?
 - a. Yes – both in Ireland and in Lexington the committees plan groups activities and dinners.

14. What if my student gets sick while in Ireland?
 - a. Just as you would care for a sick child in your home, so will your student's host family. We ask that you check with your insurance company before your child departs to make sure you are covered for international expenses.
15. Can my child drive while in Ireland?
 - a. No.
16. Can my child drive their County Kildare student while in Lexington?
 - a. Yes, if they have a valid driver's license that permits them to drive others in his/her car.
17. Can I call/email/text my child while they are in Ireland?
 - a. Yes – BUT we prefer that this is done only occasionally. The students are in Ireland to immerse themselves in culture and family life – this cannot be done if they are on their cell phones too much. This will be discussed during our orientations.
18. How does the committee decide how to match the students?
 - a. We gather information from both applications and the Lexington student's interview to try and match based on: common interests, age & gender (if you have specified you cannot host a student of the opposite gender, you will not be expected to), and other specifications such as pet allergies.
19. My child is hoping their counterpart will end up being their best friend. Is this the case?
 - a. While many great, lasting friendships have been made on our exchange programs, not every match is perfect. Both committees do their best to match the students, but sometimes the students do not end up being best friends. However, they are both still provided with a great opportunity to have a cultural experience that they should take advantage of, regardless of their similarities to their counterpart.

For other questions about our exchange programs, you can contact Lexington Sister Cities at:

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