

Group Leader Handbook



Bray Language Centre
Spring / Autumn Programme

Leader Name: _____

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Welcome

Bray Language Centre has been welcoming students from all over the world since 1995. We know that you and your students will experience that welcome for yourselves.

We will provide a friendly, warm and welcoming learning environment for you. All students regardless of age, race, religion, gender or English level are treated equally.

Our aim is to provide high quality facilities and courses that exceed the expectations and needs of all our students. We spend a lot of time in planning our courses so that both you and your students have a positive and fun learning experience.

Students will have English classes five mornings per week and we expect each of them to work hard at improving their English.

We also offer a varied and fun activity programme on five afternoons, evening activities twice per week and an excursion on Saturdays.

Both students and leaders alike will stay with a carefully-chosen, friendly family who will make you feel at home and give you some insight into Irish life and culture.

We hope you will enjoy your English Language and Activity Course with us, make new friends and most of all improve your English.

Kieran Farrell
Director



Before You Travel

What documents do I need?

For entry into Ireland you will need a valid passport issued by your own country or a national identity card if you are from an EU country. A special visa is required for some nationalities. Please check the regulations when you make your travel arrangements.



Do I need Medical and General Insurance?

Yes. Unless you are from an EU country, or a country which has a health agreement with Ireland you will need medical insurance. We also recommend that group leaders have travel insurance to cover loss of possessions etc.



Valuables

BLC accepts no responsibility for loss of money, valuables or personal belongings in school, in the host family home or while engaged in activities or excursions. Before travelling seek advice from your parents and group leaders about how to secure your cash and valuables while on the course. Do not carry large amounts of money with you and do not leave your valuables unattended at any time.

What clothes do I need?

Apart from everyday clothes and personal wash kit, you should remember to pack a warm jumper or two, a rain jacket, hat/cap and umbrella.

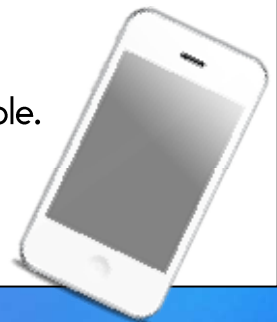


Will I be able to use my mobile phone?

Mobile phones are the most convenient way of communicating but they can also be expensive. Use of Viber, WhatsApp, etc. can save you a fortune on call charges. Wireless broadband is available in the school and most public places.

Cheap, pay-as-you-go SIM cards are available.

999 is the number for emergencies - fire, police or ambulance.



You do not need to bring towels but you will need at least one international power adaptor.

What will the weather be like?

Check the weather forecast and prepare for mixed weather. In Spring and Autumn the weather tends to be cool, windy and sometimes wet.

Student Welfare

The safety and enjoyment of every student and leader is very important to us and during your stay we will provide:

- A warm welcome.
- A tour of the school and the surrounding area.
- Emergency 24/7 telephone numbers.
- All the information you require to participate in the programme.
- An organised activity and excursion programme.
- Comfortable and clean accommodation with a friendly family.
- Trained, friendly and helpful staff.
- Qualified and experienced teachers.
- First Aid Qualified staff members.
- Health and safety information including emergency evacuation procedures for the school and road safety.

 Céad Míle Fáilte 

We want you and your students to enjoy your stay, make new friends and practice their English.

There are many things you can do to help your students.

Encourage students to:

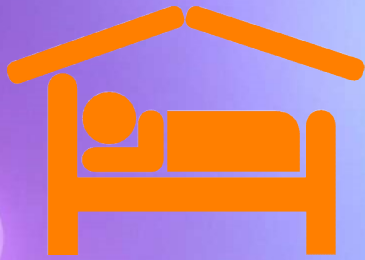
- Enjoy themselves and be happy.
- Speak as much English as they can.
- Try as many different activities as they can.
- Be courteous and polite towards everyone.
- Take care of their personal valuables at all times.
- Be careful when crossing the road; remember we drive on the left in Ireland.
- Always arrive to their lessons and activities on time.
- If they see anything or anybody strange please tell one of our staff immediately.
- If they have any problems speak, to you as group leader, their teacher or their host mother.



Don't Worry,
Be Happy!



The People Who Take Care Of Students



The Accommodation Officer

has worked hard to provide you and your students with a carefully-chosen family who will provide you with a warm welcome and care for you during your stay in Ireland.



The Group Leader

As Group Leader, you are the adult who accompanies your students on their journey to Ireland and looks after them and their interests during the course. You will act on your students' behalf and communicate with members of our staff to help resolve any problems they may have.



The English Teachers

are all qualified and have experience of teaching teenagers. They prepare and deliver well structured and varied lessons to ensure that all students have the opportunity to improve their English in a positive learning environment.



If you or your students have any difficulties, talk to the teachers or the Accommodations Manager. They will be happy to help! If students have an emergency, ring the emergency contact numbers on your ID card.



What is Expected of Your Students?

Respect	Students must treat all staff, host families, members of the public and each other with respect at all times.
Please/Thank You	Students must remember to be courteous and show good manners at all times.
Speak English	Students are expected to try and speak English at all times whether at school, during activities or in their host families. This applies even when talking to people of the same nationality.
No Bullying	Bullying is the deliberate and/or repeated action of making another person unhappy. Bullying of any type will not be tolerated and may result in students being sent home. Students are expected to report any bullying to a member of staff.
Integration	Students are expected to try to integrate as much as possible with all students of different nationalities and with members of the host family.
Individual Students	Students who are part of a group are expected to try to include and be friendly towards all the students who have travelled on their own and are not part of a group.
Centre Rules	All students are expected to follow the rules explained by their teachers during the first class.
Travel & Walking	When walking to and from school and on excursions, students should always be aware of what is going on around them. They should always travel in pairs, never travel on their own, and always tell their Group Leader/Centre Manager/Activity Leader/Friends and/or Host Family where they are going.



Arrival

You will be greeted by a member of our staff at Dublin airport and brought by coach to the centre. On arrival, the Accommodation Officer will meet you off the coach.



What Happens Next?

Once the students and leaders have alighted from the bus they are introduced to their host families.

The families receive the final draft of the student programme and a reminder of the arrangements for the first two days.

If there is an activity for your group on the day of arrival, the families drop the students to it and pick them up afterwards. Students and leaders receive all necessary documents; final activities programme, ID card, bus/rail travel pass etc. from the Centre Manager.

The families drop the students to school on the first morning.



Departure for Groups

The host families for all students and leaders will take you to the school for departure by coach to the airport.

In general, groups depart Bray 4 hours before their flight is due to depart Dublin Airport.

The School Day

Time	Students	
08.30-09.00	Arrive at school	
09.00-10.30	Lesson 1	
10.30-11.00	Break	
11.00-12.30	Lesson 2	
12.30-13.00	Lunch	
13.00-17.00	Afternoon Activity	

Placement Test



Before your group arrives, your students will have completed a placement test online. This tests their level of English, so that we can put them in the right classes for their levels. The test focuses on grammar and vocabulary, and your students will know what level they have been placed at before arriving in Ireland.

On the first day of the course, once teachers have completed an induction to the school with the students, they will evaluate the students in relation to speaking and listening.

If a student is not satisfied that they have been placed at the correct level, they should speak to their teacher about it. He/she will talk to you as group leader and a decision will be made about what level the student best belongs at. If the student is not moved, the teacher will closely monitor the situation for a few days to ensure that the student is happy and learning at his/her current level. If necessary a further re-appraisal may take place after two more days of classes.

BLC Teachers



All of our teachers are professionally trained with specialist qualifications in English language teaching such as the Cambridge Certificate and Diploma, in addition to educational qualifications from universities and colleges. All of our teachers are experienced in teaching young learners and teenagers.

Teaching Resources

Our teachers will use a wide variety of supplementary materials including appropriate resource books and authentic materials, such as newspapers, magazines and TV news. All of our class rooms have white boards, projectors and internet connection to enable teachers to access online teaching resources.



What are the School Rules?

- 1) Students must attend their lessons and be on time for lessons every day.
- 2) Students must listen to the teacher and follow instructions.
- 3) Mobile phones must be turned off during the lessons and activities.
- 4) No eating or drinking in the classroom.
- 5) Speak English at all times.



It is important that Group Leaders enforce these rules with their students.

Teachers will assess all students daily incorporating speaking, listening, writing, vocabulary and grammar. This continual assessment will be used at the end of the course to determine the students' level for certification. During the course, students will be asked to complete a project which they will be asked to present at the end of the course.

Do Students have homework?

Yes, homework is given every day. It should take around 20 minutes.

Class Attendance

Attendance is expected at all classes and punctuality is essential. We have clear procedures in place for dealing with classroom attendance.

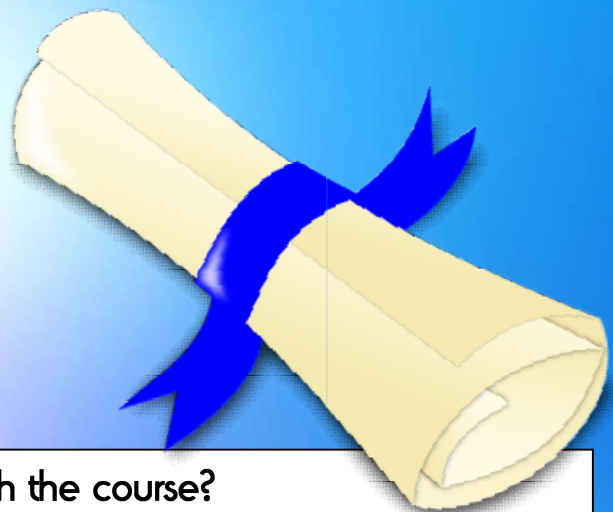


All teachers will take a class attendance at the beginning of class and straight after the break.

Any student that is not in class at this stage will be marked as being late on the attendance sheet.

The teacher will contact the Group Leaders immediately and inform them that a student is not in class.

The Group Leader will endeavour to locate the missing student and get him/her to class as soon as possible. This will usually entail, ringing the student's mobile number, contacting the host family or contacting the Bray Language Centre Office.



What do students get when they finish the course?

Students receive a certificate at the end of the course based on their teachers' assessment of their attainment at the level for which they have studied. The assessment is based on the teachers' observations, the students' weekly assessment(s).

The Activity Programme is divided into 3 parts:

Afternoons

Evenings

Weekends

Afternoon Activities

are organised for all students each afternoon from 13.00 to 17.00 approximately. All students are expected to attend and to participate fully.

During this time all activities will be supervised and led by Activity Leaders and Group Leaders.

In general, activities consist of half-day excursions to Dublin and other places of interest.



Evening Activities

Some groups choose to book evening activities, and others prefer their students to stay at home and spend some time with their host families.

Saturday Excursions

usually consist of a visit to a place of historic or cultural significance, and some free time for shopping and recreation in Dublin.



On Sundays students usually spend the day with the host family, meet their friends in town or go on extra organised trips with their Group Leaders.

Students are expected to observe the following rules during activities and visits.

Always be on time.

Be careful crossing roads.

Speak English.

Listen to the Activity Leaders and follow their instructions.

Wear your seat belt on buses, coaches and in cars.

Respect members of the public when on activities outside the school.

The Activity Programme



Students, Group Leaders and Host Families will receive a final programme of their activities on arrival. Group Leaders will also receive 'Activity Venue Information Sheets' containing lots of information about each venue prior to their visit.

Afternoon Activities

When your group is visiting a venue, Group Leaders will be told in advance what time the group will need to leave the school. Group Leaders are asked to gather their group together and meet with the Activity Leader who will act as your tour guide. The Activity Leader will bring you to the venue by bus/train, engage your students during the visit, and bring the group back to the school.

Weekend Excursions

For excursions at the weekend, students and Group Leaders are told where and what time to meet in advance (normally the school or the train station). The Activity Leader will act as your guide for the day for the venue(s). Students and Leaders should remember to bring appropriate clothing and lunch with them.

Group Leaders are asked to help with active supervision of students when on excursions, and to encourage students to engage fully with each activity. Group Leaders can also help by discouraging students from using their mobile phones while on an excursion.



Students will need to bring their bus/train travel ticket every day. If students forget their ticket, they must pay their own travel fare for afternoon activities. Replacement travel tickets will be charged for.

Host Family



We have taken care to choose a home where we think you and your students will be happy. Living in an Irish home can be a very enjoyable experience, but students should be prepared to adapt as it will be different from living in their own home. The way students approach their hosts will influence how the families approach them, so students should be polite and friendly, and willing to help.

How are students expected to behave with Host Families?

We recommend that students join in family life as fully as possible and behave with respect and courtesy at all times.

Students should learn the house rules clearly at the very beginning i.e. use of kitchen & bathroom, laundry etc.

Students should always ask before taking something from the kitchen unless they are told otherwise, and never use the phone or internet without asking first.

Bathroom



Sometimes busy families need a rota system to manage the morning rush! Please ask students to be aware of others in the house and not to spend too long taking showers/ baths in the morning.

Be considerate of the time and hot water usage.

House Key



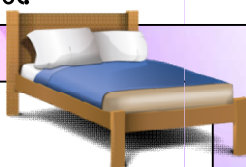
Unless students are over 18, they will not receive a key to the host family home.

Laundry



Laundry is done once a week. It is best for students to be organised, and to make sure that they have enough clothes to last seven days.

Bedroom



Your students' rooms will be cleaned and their bed linen changed once a week. In the meantime students are expected to keep their room tidy at all times.

Meals



Host families are expected to provide 3 meals a day for their student – breakfast, a packed lunch and dinner. We expect the family to provide a varied and nutritious diet. We would always recommend that students should tell the Host Family of any special dietary requirements or about any particular likes/dislikes.

Breakfast

Should consist of a combination of the following - milk, juice, cereals, yogurt, fruit, bread or toast and tea/coffee.

Packed Lunch:

Should consist of 2 sandwiches + fruit + a snack (chocolate bar or a pack of crisps) + juice/water/soft drink.


Dinner:

Home cooked meal with dessert or starter eaten with the host family.

Meal Times:

It is hoped that the family and the student would eat their meals (especially dinner) together. Students are expected to eat the same meals as the family, unless they have special dietary requirements. You must inform your host family if you intend to be late or if you will miss a meal.

Student Rules:

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1. Students must pay for any damage caused in the host family home, in school, or while engaged in social or other activities.
 2. Students must arrange their own travel insurance before arrival in Ireland against any expenses which might arise due to accident or illness, together with loss of luggage, personal effects and money.
 3. Students must carry their school ID Card and Bus Card with them at all times.
 4. Students are not allowed out after dinner in the evenings. (This rule does not apply if they are out with a responsible member of their host family, or if the programme indicates that there is an organised activity taking place for your group).
 5. Host parents have been instructed not to give students a key to the family home. Students should not ask for one, nor should they request that a key be left out for them. (This rule does not apply to students 18 years of age or older. Also, if special circumstances apply, a key may be given after consulting with Bray Language Centre.)
 6. Students should not use the host family telephone or any other devices without first seeking permission.
 7. Smoking is not allowed at any time either in school or in the host family home.
 8. A student may be required to return home early at his/her parents'/guardians' expense in the event of a serious breach of school rules, including the possession or consumption of illegal substances or alcohol, or any behaviour deemed by the management of the school to be of a very serious nature.
 9. All text books must be returned in acceptable condition on the last day of class. A charge of €20 applies for damaged or lost books.
 10. Students should not carry large sums of money or valuables with you. They should be locked in their luggage or left with the host family for safe keeping.
 11. Students may not attend discos etc. unless they are organised by Bray Language Centre for their particular group.
 12. Students are not allowed to go outside Bray at any time unless accompanied by their group leader.



What Happens If Students Break The Rules?

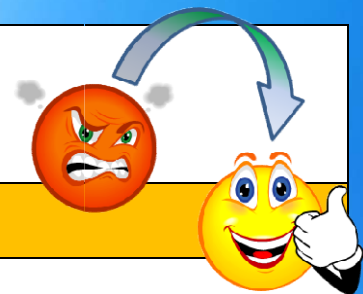
If a student is late for class or does not do their homework	The student will get a warning the first time. The second time, the teacher will report the student to the group leader.
If a student loses or defaces a text book	The student must pay £20.
If a student damages school or host family property	The student must pay to have the damage repaired or the item replaced, if necessary.
If a student steals	The group leader and parents will be informed, and the police will be contacted.
If a student stays out later than they should	The student may have detention during afternoon activities.
If a student possesses or uses alcohol or illegal substances	The student will be sent home at the parents' expense.










What Happens If A Student Has A Complaint?

Making a Complaint

About	Speak To	When
Tuition	The Group Leader	Before the next class begins
Activities Programme		In the morning before classes, at break time (11.00) or at lunch time (12.30)
Accommodation		In the morning before classes, at break time (11.00) or at lunch time (12.30)



What Should A Student Do If They Have A Problem?

Problem	Speak To
 I don't like the food	Tell the host mother what you like to eat. If you find it difficult to do that, speak to your group leader.
 I am ill	If you are at home, speak to your host mother. at all other times, speak to your group leader. If it is a serious illness ring the emergency numbers you will have been given on arrival.
 I have hurt myself	At home, speak to the host mother. In school speak to the teacher or group leader. If you are seriously injured, ring the emergency numbers you will have been given on arrival.
 I don't get on with my room mate	Speak to the host mother or your group leader.
 I don't understand my teacher	Speak to the teacher after class. You can also speak to your group leader.
 My class is too easy or difficult for me	Speak to the teacher about it and explain your situation. If he/she thinks it appropriate, you will be moved to a different level.
 I am not happy with my host family	Speak to your group leader and they will try to resolve any problems you have.

About Ireland



Temperatures in the spring/autumn range from 5-15°C.



The unit of currency is the Euro.



Most shops open from 09.00-18:00 Monday to Sunday. Most convenience stores stay open until 21:00 or later.

Thank you!

Students will make a very good impression by saying 'please' and 'thank you'!