



Welcome to your UK & Ireland High School Programme

HELP & SUPPORT

In case of serious emergency, where police, ambulance, fire service or coastguard is required, call 112.

Going abroad is the perfect test run for high school students to experience life outside their often sheltered and comfortable 'home bubble'. This is a way for students to get a clear picture of what they want and what they are capable of for when it's time to leave the family home. This experience can be a serious "wake-up call" about the way the world works.

By going so far from home, students might feel disoriented, lonely, and are often forced to reach a level of independence that university students hit, but on a much larger scale, as the added cultural differences have an even greater impact.

After going abroad as a young adult, students might find themselves compelled to explore the option of universities or jobs farther from home. Culture shock pushes everyone to their limits and teaches them what they're capable of handling and adapting to. Not to mention, going abroad makes for an incredible application essay or interview topic!

Please keep in mind that while a homestay abroad is not the only way to have a well-rounded, whole-hearted, and culturally immersive international experience, it might turn out to be one of your favourites! After all, your best souvenir will not be the fridge magnet, the T-shirt you got on one of the trips, or your photos; it'll be the relationships and friendships you've built and the wisdom you've gained.

Before arrival in Ireland you will be introduced to the **Educatius Student Resilience Initiative**. This is a free online programme designed by health professionals to help international students develop the resilience and coping skills needed to thrive whilst studying abroad.

Sessions will be offered pre-arrival and once you are in Ireland. We recommend that you take some time to engage with this initiative and hope you find it useful.

What can you do if you think you have culture shock and/or are feeling lonely?

- Remember that most people living in or visiting foreign countries have these feelings. You are not the only one feeling this way!
- Talk to your host family or Local Coordinator and ask for suggestions. Talk to the other exchange students: they may be feeling the same!
- Exercise, do sports, go for a walk.

- Relax, take a deep breath, and enjoy this amazing opportunity to live in a different country and learn about the world.
- Get busy with a hobby or activity or join a club. It's a great way to meet like-minded people and make friends.
- Plan new tasks each day that will help you meet new people and accomplish something like preparing a new type of food to eat, talking to someone new, or accepting an invitation to go somewhere.
- Take care of yourself by getting enough rest and eating healthily. Everything seems worse if you are physically tired or don't feel well.
- Find the humour in situations. Being able to laugh at some of your mistakes is healthy.

Educatus strongly advises all students to take part in extra-curricular activities. Your school will have a list of extra-curricular classes or groups and these will be promoted at the beginning of the school year and throughout. Some schools may have more clubs than others. In any case, it's great to get involved in things outside of school and make friends with people who have similar interests!

This is the most successful way of making friends with like-minded people and helps you create a social life away from home and lessons. Sitting alone in your room not talking to anyone is obviously not going to help you at all - **you have a unique opportunity to live in another country - go and see what this culture is all about!**

Your Local Coordinator will also assist with helping you find groups such as external sports clubs or drama societies based on your interests and your timetable. They will help you, but the **ultimate responsibility for finding activities outside of school is yours – be proactive!**

If you find that you need to talk to someone but don't feel you can talk to your Local Coordinator for any reason, please reach out to the Educatus Independent Listener. You will be given the phone number during Soft Landing Camp and/or at the Student Orientation.