

GREENHEART TRAVEL High School Abroad Ireland

Curriculum Guidelines





OVERVIEW OF THE IRISH SCHOOL SYSTEM

Secondary education in Ireland starts at the age of 12 and lasts 6 years. Each year is divided into two levels: Honors (Advanced) or Ordinary (Standard). Please note many schools in Ireland are all girls or all boys schools. Exchange students are usually placed in a public school.

1st year: ages 12-13

2nd year: ages 13-14

3rd year: ages 14-15 (Junior Certificate Examination)

4th year: ages 15-16 (Transition Year)

5th year: ages 16-17

6th year: ages 17-18 (Leaving Certificate Examination)

The school year begins during the first week of September and runs to the first week of June. Also, the school year is divided into three ‘terms’ and they are based on the holidays. There are several periods of vacation (holidays) during the year: 3-5 days of mid-term vacation in October/November, 2 weeks in December, 3-5 days of mid-term vacation in February/March, and 2 weeks for Easter.

The terms are based on holidays and their limits do not represent the beginning or end of courses or modules of study, as the courses Irish students take last for the entire school year. The average week at school is from Monday to Friday and many schools do not have classes on Wednesday afternoon.

Subjects in Ireland

Exchange students are generally placed in either 4th year, which is called “transition year”, or in 5th year. Most Irish schools do not accept exchange students in 6th year. Not all schools offer all subjects. The students should select only subjects that are currently studied in her/his home school. Subject and selection cannot be guaranteed.

Students in 4th year will enroll in the “Transition Year Project”. It is a one-year interdisciplinary program for students who have completed 3rd year. The project is directed towards the intellectual, social, and emotional maturation of the students.

The content of Transition Year curriculum will include elements of the following:

- Social Education
- Moral Education
- Education for living (including home crafts and education for parenthood, employment and leisure)
- Philosophy and Applied Logic
- Music and the Arts
- Irish Studies
- Visual Education, Media Education, and Communication Skills.

Students in 5th and 6th year are allocated a minimum of 5 of the following classes:

Irish	English	Latin	Greek
Classical Studies	French	German	Italian
Spanish	History	Geography	Mathematics
Applied Mathematics	Physics	Chemistry	Physics and Chemistry
Agricultural Studies	Biology	Agricultural Economic	Engineering
Technical Drawing	Construction Studies	Home Economics (Scientific and Social)	Home Economics (General)
Accounting	Business Organization	Economics	Economic History
Art (including crafts)	Music	-	-

Schedule

School in Ireland starts around 9:15 am and ends around 3:45 pm with a 15 to 30 minutes break in the morning and an hour break for lunch around 12:30 pm. These schedules may change with the location of the school. Each class lasts 40 minutes.

School Uniform

In most of the schools, wearing a school uniform is compulsory. You will need to purchase one on arrival. The approximate cost is about €180. Supplies for school (stationery, pens, school bag etc.), and text books are also not included in the program fee and students will be advised regarding their purchase on arrival.

Also, students may have to cover the cost of transportation to/from school. Some students may have to pay for a bus ticket which is approximately €150 per school term or €10 per week. Transition year (4th year) normally has class trips and activities associated with the curriculum. These trips are not included in the school fees and should be budgeted for, normally €150 per term.

Extracurricular Activities

Almost all schools offer extracurricular activities such as sports, social and cultural activities during or after the school periods or during the weekend. They are usually free of charge or at a small extra cost.

- Sport activities: Basketball, soccer, hurling, hockey, tennis, gymnastics, swimming, etc.
- Social and cultural activities: drama, debates, quizzes, exhibitions, films, dances and excursions.

If particular sports or activities are not available, normally the town or village will have club teams that anyone in the locality can join regardless of which school they attend. Students are encouraged to join in order to meet and make friends.

Exams and Results

Depending on the school, teachers grade exchange students on the same level as their Irish classmates. Students should expect to take all assessments.

A = 85-100%	B = 70-85%	C = 55-70%	D = 40-55%	E = Fail
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Transcripts

The student will be able to get a transcript for this program, but they are in charge of talking to the local school about the transcript before leaving the program.

What Should I Do Next?

The best next step would be to meet with your high school guidance counselor or administration to discuss your interest in going abroad. Every school handles exchange students, transfer credits and going abroad differently so there isn't an "average" process that you can be guided through.

You should bring this document with you to the meeting with your counselor so they can get a better idea of what types of classes you would be taking abroad. This helps create a plan for possible transfer credits. During your meeting, you should ask about what credits you need to graduate and if any of those can be fulfilled from transfer credit abroad.

Application Process with Greenheart Travel

We don't usually recommend starting the application process before meeting with your guidance counselor because we want to ensure that you receive sufficient credit from your time abroad. After you meet with them or have a better idea of your school's process, let us know! Our [application process is online](#) and happens in several steps, so it is pretty straightforward and we can help you start whenever you're ready.

In addition to completing an application, you will also be required to submit documents. You can be collecting the documents during the application process, but all documents will be due 14 days after you submit your deposit. The following documents will be required for all destinations:

- Letter of Recommendation (from a teacher, coach or guidance counselor)
- Transcript
- Dear Family Letter (one written by student, one by a parent)
- Parent Questionnaire
- Medical Form
- Copy of your passport

There may be additional paperwork required for specific destinations. Your program manager will inform you of what those documents are during the application process.