

Lexington Sister Cities Student Exchange Program



County Kildare Ireland

2017 Student Exchange Application

Click to insert a current photo.
Make sure it is a close-up, like one
you would have with a driver's
license. An informal photo is
okay.

Name: _____

School: _____

Age by July 1, 2017 _____

(Must be 15 by July 1, 2017)



Lexington Sister Cities
200 East Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507
859-258-3137

Lexington – County Kildare Exchange Program

Dear Parents:

We are excited your student is interested in participating in the 2017 Lexington-County Kildare Student Exchange. The purpose of this exchange program is to provide a genuine cultural and family experience in another country for high school students of Lexington, Kentucky and those of County Kildare, Ireland.

As parents/guardians, you must be willing and able to receive an Irish student in your home for the same length of time as the American student is in Ireland. The Irish and Lexington students will be together for both parts of the exchange program.

To be selected for our program, students should exhibit maturity, flexibility, an interest in the Irish culture, and qualities that would make them a good ambassador for Lexington, Kentucky, and the United States.

Students must turn 15 by July 1, 2017 to participate in the program. **Please note that students over the age of 18 before August 1, 2017 will not be considered for this program.**

Applications are due to the Lexington Sister Cities office by Friday, November 4, 2016.

Applications can be emailed to smartin@lexingtonky.gov, mailed, or dropped off to:

**Lexington Sister Cities
ATTN: Sarah Martin
200 East Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507.**

Applications should include the following items:

- Completed Lexington-County Kildare Student Exchange Application
- \$25 Application Fee
- Current Photo
- Two recommendation letters from a teacher or counselor. There is a recommendation form attached to the application that student's should give to those they wish to write a recommendation. (These may be turned in separate from the application if the teacher wishes to send it in separately. Letters should be received by the scheduled interview time for the student.)

After applications have been received, an interview date will be set up. Our main means of communication is through email, so please ensure all email addresses are listed on your son or daughter's application.

Upon acceptance into this program, monthly orientations will be held to prepare your student for the trip.

You will find on the next page a list of "Frequently Asked Questions" about our exchange program to County Kildare. Please read through this sheet prior to your scheduled interview.

Please sign and date the end of this application to indicate your consent for your son or daughter to submit an application.

Thanks for your interest in our program. We look forward to meeting you and your student at the interview.

Lexington-County Kildare Committee

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 2017 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. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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. Once accepted, a \$200 non-refundable deposit is due to Sister Cities at the first orientation. 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.
7. What are some other costs we may incur?
 - a. Other costs for the students include spending money for gifts, souvenirs, et cetera; as well as obtaining a passport if they do not have one already.
8. When are the interviews for the exchange?
 - a. Interviews will be scheduled either mid-November or early December. Interviews will only last about 30 minutes per family. If possible, both parents/guardians should attend the interview.
9. 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. Monthly orientations will start in February. Orientations are MANDATORY for participation in the program. At least one parent should attend each meeting with their student.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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.

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. Can my child drive while in Ireland?
 - a. No.
15. 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.
16. 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.
17. 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.
18. 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:

Sarah Martin
smartin@lexingtonky.gov
859-258-3137

Lexington Sister Cities Commission
200 E. Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507
Fax – 859-425-2053

Facebook – www.facebook.com/lexingtonsistercities
Instagram - @lexingtonsistercities
Twitter - @lexsistercities
Blog – lexingtonsistercities.blogspot.com



Lexington–County Kildare Student Exchange 2017

Student Exchange Application

Email completed application to smartin@lexingtonky.gov; or fill out in **PEN** and **paperclip** together for mailing.

Please include the following items with your application:

- A current photo of yourself.
- \$25 application fee.
- Two letters of recommendation from a teacher or counselor. (Include attached form with recommendation.)

Student Information:

Name _____

(List your FULL NAME as it does or will appear on your passport.)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Cell _____

E-mail _____ Date of birth _____

Gender _____ Grade _____ School _____

Your Home:

Mother/Father/Parent's Name _____ Cell _____

Address (if different than yours) _____

Place of employment _____ Job title _____

Work phone _____ E-mail _____

Mother/Father/Parent's Name _____ Cell _____

Address (if different than yours) _____

Place of employment _____ Job title _____

Work phone _____ E-mail _____

Siblings:

Name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

With whom do you live? _____

Are you able to host a student of the opposite gender? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What will the student's sleeping arrangements be during their stay in Lexington?

- ☐ Share a bedroom with counterpart
- ☐ Share a bedroom with sibling of same gender
- ☐ Have a private bedroom

Do you have any pets? If so, please list. _____

About you:

What are your favorite subjects in school?

What are your least favorite subjects in school?

What are your interests outside of school?

Do you play any sports or are you involved in any clubs/organizations? Please list:

Describe your personality.

Why do you want to participate in the Lexington – County Kildare Student Exchange?

Why do you think you would be a good candidate for the Lexington – County Kildare Student Exchange?

What are your plans for hosting your student?

Have you ever hosted an exchange student before? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, describe your experience? _____

Have you ever traveled without your family? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, to where and how long? _____

Are you applying for Governor's Scholar Program or Governor's School for the Arts this year? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(NOTE: GSP and GSA directly coincide with this program – you will not be able to do both.)

Are you participating in any summer programs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, explain what programs and dates: _____

Do you have any allergies or medical conditions? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list: _____

For Parents:

What do you think your responsibilities to this student will be?

Describe your family rules.

Do you give permission for your child to be photographed, either individually or as a group, during their exchange experience? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Parent/Guardian Permission:

I/We, _____, parent/guardian to _____, hereby give permission for my/our child to submit the enclosed application for the 2017 Lexington-County Kildare Student Exchange Program.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Lexington – County Kildare Student Exchange

Guidelines for Letter of Recommendation

Student Name (First, Middle, Last)

To the Recommender:

This student is applying for the Lexington-County Kildare Student Exchange for summer of 2017. If chosen, the student will travel to County Kildare, Ireland for 10 days to experience Irish culture and everyday life. In addition, the student will host their Irish counterpart in Lexington for 10 days. Your candid appraisal of the student's propensity for a successful experience abroad is an important part of their application.

Students are evaluated based on:

- Their motivation for travel and participation in our program
- Flexibility in handling new or difficult situations
- Hosting and family support
- Ability to be a good ambassador for Lexington, Kentucky, America, and their school.
- Character
- Leadership; Community & School Involvement
- Maturity
- Interest in cultural diversity

Please attach this form to your letter.

Teacher's Name: _____

School: _____

Subject Taught: _____

Years you have known this student: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Letters of Recommendation are due by November 4, 2016.

Send or email to:

Sarah Martin
smartin@lexingtonky.gov

Lexington Sister Cities Commission
200 East Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507

Thank you for your insights and support of the program.
Your assistance helps us create a wonderful experience for the County Kildare and Lexington students.

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