



BCYS Lourdes Pilgrimage - Room Sharing and Small Group Allocation Policy

Official Room Sharing Policy

This policy outlines the guidelines for room sharing and small group allocations during the pilgrimage to Lourdes. It is intended to ensure the comfort, dignity, and safety of all participants.

1. Accommodation will be gender specific

All shared room arrangements will be strictly single-sex.

1. Leaders and Young People

In line with safeguarding best practice, **leaders** (18+ having left school) **will not share rooms with young people** (under 18s). Separate accommodation will be arranged to maintain appropriate boundaries and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all participants.

No exceptions will be made to this policy, irrespective of personal relationships or preferences.

2. Room Assignment Process

Hotel rooms will sleep either 2 or 3 individuals. Room assignments will be coordinated by the pilgrimage organisers. Participants may indicate a **preference** for a roommate on their booking form, however while all preferences will be considered, **no requests can be guaranteed**.

3. Standards of Conduct

Participants are expected to behave respectfully and considerately toward their roommates. This includes:

- Maintaining appropriate personal hygiene
- Respecting quiet hours and shared space
- Communicating courteously in case of any concerns
- We ask that individuals do not enter any room other than their own

Any conduct that causes discomfort or distress to a roommate must be reported to a group leader immediately.

4. Overnight Safety

Once young people have been asked to return to their rooms for the night, we ask that they then remain there.

There will be a number of "on duty" leaders overnight who will check everyone is in their rooms and remain available throughout the night.

The list of those leaders will be available in the hotel foyer. All other leaders will remain "on call" in the case of a serious emergency.

Official Small Group Allocation Policy

Small groups play a vital role in ensuring effective communication, care and safety throughout the pilgrimage.

1. Purpose of Small Groups

All participants will be assigned to a small group. These groups are designed to support personal and spiritual development, foster community and inclusion, assist with logistical coordination and ensure that safeguarding and supervision are maintained.

2. Group Composition

Small group allocations will be made by the pilgrimage organisers and will consider age / group size / safeguarding / overall group dynamics.

To support balanced and effective groups, **larger friendship groups may be split across different small groups**. This helps ensure that all participants are included, groups remain manageable in size, and everyone has the opportunity to meet and build relationships with others.

Each group will be led by at least 2 young leaders, with a ratio of 2 leaders to every 10 young people.

3. Year 13 Participants

Participants in **Year 13** will form a **separate group**, designed specifically to support their unique stage of development and to encourage leadership, reflection, and mature engagement with the pilgrimage experience.

4. Requests and Preferences

Participants may indicate a preference to be grouped with specific individuals on their booking forms. **While these preferences will be taken into account where possible, they cannot be guaranteed**. Final groupings are at the discretion of the pilgrimage organisers.

5. Leaders and Young People

In accordance with safeguarding best practices:

- Each small group will include a safeguarding trained and DBS verified adult leader.
- Leaders are assigned based on experience, availability, and suitability for the group they are leading.
- **Leaders will not be placed in small groups solely with young people with whom they have a personal relationship (e.g., family members), unless appropriate safeguards are in place.**

6. Group Participation Expectations

Participants are expected to:

- Attend all small group gatherings and activities
- Actively participate in discussions, reflections, and prayer
- Treat group members and leaders with respect and kindness

Participants must remain with their assigned group during all scheduled activities unless instructed otherwise.

Changes to Room or Group Allocations

All participants, parents and carers will be informed about room and group arrangements at the pre-trip meeting.

Requests to change groups will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and are subject to approval by the pilgrimage leadership. All changes must be managed by the coordination team to preserve safety, balance, and fairness.

By confirming participation in this pilgrimage, each individual acknowledges and agrees to comply with this Policy.

For any queries related to accommodation, please contact the pilgrimage coordinator.