

Dear Parent / Guardian,

We hope that your child has a brilliant time at SOULMATES WEEKEND 2020!

We thought it might be helpful to provide a list of things to bring and some additional information. There are some guidelines; an information sheet (which the group leader will fill out) and a 'to-bring' list for you to kit your children out.



* **Group leaders have full responsibility for your child at all times. Please ensure that you have completed and returned a parental permission to the group leader before the weekend. It is particularly important that you advise them of any allergies, or medical conditions which your child has.**



* **Groups need to walk between venues for different activities. A warm coat (and/or waterproof), and a change of footwear are advisable.**



* **Every year we end up with lost property- some of which is never claimed (even after we stand at the front of the church and wave it around!) It is a good idea to mark your child's name inside their coat / other belongings.**



* **All meals are provided for all participants. We take allergies and food intolerances extremely seriously, but the onus is on the parents to inform the leaders, the leaders to inform IMYC and the child to request the particular option when receiving food.**



* **Please note: some people attending the weekend have nut allergies. Please make sure that your child does not bring any food, snacks or cosmetic products containing nuts or nut derivatives to the weekend, and remind them not to buy any foods containing nuts over the weekend.**



* **We recommend that valuables are left at home as we cannot take responsibility for any items lost, stolen or broken. Your child may wish to bring a small amount of pocket money to spend during the Friday night café or their free time on Saturday afternoon.**



* **Please note: overnight accommodation is very basic (church hall floors) and washing facilities are limited.**



SOUL MATES PARENTAL INFORMATION

Who organises Soul Mates weekend?

Irish Methodist Youth And Children's Department (IMYC) organises Soul Mates weekend with a committee of volunteers who are passionate about children learning about God, the Bible and themselves.

What is Soul Mates?

It is the national Children's discipleship weekend organised by the Methodist Church In Irelands youth and children's department.

When is Soul Mates?

It is the first full weekend in March. It runs from the 6 - 8th March 2020 this year.

Who is it for?

The weekend is for children aged between 9 - 13 years of age.
All children must come as part of a group from the local church.



Additional needs provision

All children of all abilities are welcome at the weekend. IMYC, Soul Mates organising committee and the group that the children are coming with will all work together to facilitate all children. It is important that at the booking stage leaders and IMYC are made aware of anything that may help your child.

Where is Soul Mates?

Lurgan Town, Northern Ireland. (North Western District, under the new Methodist Connexional Structure)

Travel for Soul Mates

Travel is organised by the local church. This may involve mini buses, big buses, trains or parents being asked to taxi. This is organised by the local area, not by IMYC.

Child safety at Soul Mates

1. Allergies/ Intolerances

Our catering team and food suppliers at the weekend work hard at monitoring the food we provide for all the children. If your child has an allergy/ intolerance to a food group/ food, then their carer must provide this information to the group leader who will then communicate with IMYC. This year we are asking that parents/carers provide a picture of the child so that we can identify and provide the appropriate food for the child during meal times. We are a nut free zone.

2. Volunteers

All our volunteers are police checked, trained in their areas of service and have been asked for character references if they have not volunteered with us before.

3. Venues

We use a variety of churches across Lurgan town. All churches provide us with fire and health and safety information which is used throughout the weekend. The majority of our programme happens in the Jethro Centre in the town.

4. Lurgan Town

The children and leaders will be walking around the town as they move from different venues over the weekend. Volunteers are placed on the roads during times of mass movement. Footpaths and pedestrian crossings are at every major junction. The Police are also informed that we will be there during the weekend.

5. First Aid

Soul Mates weekend organise to have a first aider on site throughout the weekend. Details of the local hospital (Craigavon is not far away) and the out of hours doctor is provided to assist the leaders. IMYC and group leaders hold the medical information for your children during the weekend.

6. Prayer Team

We provide a trained and responsible prayer team which are available during the main worship sessions over the weekend. We always pray in twos and no-one serving under IMYC is ever permitted to pray with your child on their own at the weekend. Children are invited to come for prayer individually, with their friends or as part of their group.

7. Sleeping Arrangements

Leaders sleep separately from the children while being in the same room. This means they are responsible for the children and are observing the Taking Care guidelines.



Weekend Details

Worship Celebrations

We worship God through singing praises, prayer, reading the bible and speakers. It is led by volunteers who are supported and guided by IMYC staff. We use many mediums of communication, such as, drama, video clips, interviews, creative prayer, age appropriate teaching and songs.

Suppers

Each evening we provide supper for the children and leaders. Again there is a variety of things provided. Water, juice, pancakes, muffins, fruit, biscuits etc Those with allergies are catered for specifically and are asked to make themselves identifiable.



SOUL MATES PARENTAL INFORMATION

Breakfasts

Each morning the children receive a variety of breakfast in their sleeping halls. Cereal, juice and the Soul Mates favourite breakfast - Eggy Bread.

Saturday Lunch

This is provided by the catering staff at the primary school. This is a hot meal, with a choice to suit everyone. Again allergies are catered for.

Saturday Dinner time

This year we are providing hotdogs, drinks, crisps, chocolate and fruit for everyone. This is being provided by an experienced catering team from a Methodist Church.

Seminars

Seminars are an opportunity for the children to learn about various topics in smaller numbers. They take various forms and encourage the children to think about their faith and participate in a different way from the main worship celebrations.

Workshops

These provide opportunities for the children to burn off some energy, have fun and get involved through sport, dance, craft, quizzes etc. The children are asked to choose an option for each workshop session. The leaders will book these, depending on availability at time of booking.

Soul Stars

There is a trophy. One act per group can register to perform an act of dancing, singing, joke telling, recorder playing, basically displaying whatever talent they wish. The group leader will talk to the children and see who or what they would like to do, if anything. Watching and enjoying is just as much fun as taking part. All acts are vetted to be age appropriate.

Money needed

There is not a lot of free time in the programme for the children to go shopping. There is an opportunity before tea time on the Saturday and there is also an opportunity for take away when the children go back to their halls for sleeping. Leaders may organise this.

See weekend timetable below.



SOUL MATES

PARENTAL INFORMATION

WEEKEND TIMETABLE

FRIDAY

18:30pm Arrivals & registration

20:00pm Worship Celebration

21:15pm Supper

21:30pm Entertainment

SATURDAY

8am Breakfast

9am Worship Celebration

10:30am Seminar 1

11:25am Seminar 2

12:30pm Lunch

14:00pm Workshop 1

15:30pm Workshop 2

17:30pm Dinner time

18:30pm Worship Celebration

20:00pm Supper

20:30pm Soul Stars

SUNDAY

8:30am Breakfast

9:30am Worship Celebration

11:30am Hometime