

"My time in Lourdes was the best time of my life. Knowing I was part of something special, by contributing to giving our children such a wonderful time, is priceless. Both them and I will have special memories that will last a lifetime."

**Annabel, first time helper**



## Travel and accommodation

HCPT charts planes from the UK and has built strong relationships with hotels in Lourdes. These are carefully selected and well used to accommodating HCPT groups.


## Cost

HCPT takes children on the basis of their medical and social needs and raises the funds for the sponsorship of all the children. Parents are welcome to contribute to the cost, if they wish. Leaders and helpers pay their own costs, but grants may be available in some cases.

If you would like details of how your child can join HCPT's next Easter Pilgrimage, or you would like to accompany a group as a voluntary helper please contact us:

HCPT, Oakfield Park, 32 Bilton Road, Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 7HQ  
01788 564646 [hq@hcpt.org.uk](mailto:hq@hcpt.org.uk) [www.hcpt.org.uk](http://www.hcpt.org.uk)

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 give with confidence



## Easter pilgrimage holidays to Lourdes





## HCPT's Easter pilgrimage to Lourdes is a life changing experience for children and helpers alike

HCPT was formed in 1956 when a young doctor, Michael Strode, took four disabled children to the shrine of Lourdes in the south of France. From the outset he insisted that the children should be treated just like other visitors to the town and should be accommodated in hotels rather than hospitals - an idea that was revolutionary.

Now, every Easter, HCPT takes over 1,000 disabled and disadvantaged children on a week long pilgrimage holiday. The children are joined by volunteer helpers. The children and helpers come from all walks of life and may belong to any religious background, or none at all. Everyone travels in small groups from all over the UK and beyond.

The aim is to give the children a safe, fun, meaningful and enjoyable holiday. A stay will typically feature visits to the Lourdes Grotto, outings to local attractions, cafés, and trips to the mountains or seaside.



HCPT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It expects all of its trustees, volunteer helpers and staff to share this commitment.

HCPT regards preparation as a key part of the trip. Children come as part of a locally organised group which has a Group Leader. The leader arranges meetings between helpers, the children and their parents, so they all have the chance to get to know each other before the pilgrimage. Regular home visits ensure that the children get to know and have confidence in their helpers.

### Care

The children are assisted by volunteer helpers, many of whom are young people. Doctors, nurses and chaplains also travel to give specialist support. Group Leaders are all previous helpers with a track record in caring for disabled children. All volunteer helpers are carefully vetted, undergoing an interview and reference process, as well as Enhanced DBS checks or PVG scheme memberships. Children receive the highest level of care and attention while away from home.

During Easter HCPT has its own medical organisation in Lourdes which has close links with the local medical services in order to provide a comprehensive service in case of need.



"I really enjoyed myself in Lourdes. Everything was so amazing. I had so much fun. On the trip I met people like me and it made me feel better. I felt I belonged"

**Anna, aged 10**

