



GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS

Contents

1. Background to the centre
2. The village of Thaton
3. The climate
4. Thai etiquette and good manners
5. Accommodation
6. The student restaurant
7. The Bamboo Club
8. Programmes and daily schedules
9. Kit list
10. A few rules of the centre
11. Some pointers for teachers
12. Students and mobile phones
13. Code of Conduct and Policies
14. Health and safety
15. Dietary and medical concerns
16. Risk assessments
17. Transport
18. Insurance
19. Cancellation and refund policy
20. **Optional** 'Waivers and Release of Liability' forms

1. BACKGROUND

In 2002, after 20 years of teaching in Hong Kong international schools, Bryan and Rosie Massingham became shareholders in the MRV Project and moved to Thailand to take over the management of the centre and resort. The decision to develop a centre like this was a joint one with our fellow shareholders, Shane and Aed Beary, as we knew that there were few, if any places in S.E.Asia for student groups offering safe and well-organised trips, combined with comfortable facilities.

Ban Thaton, although rather remote, actually is ideally suited for the purpose. Adjacent to a large river, surrounded by mountains, and with fascinating local geography, history and culture, are factors which allowed for the development of outdoor activities and academic fieldwork. Added to these two strands is our community project work, for there are many poorly funded schools which are in great need of assistance and thankfully a great many generous schools who are willing to help improve conditions. We have now hosted many schools from within Thailand, and also from Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, China, Dubai, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Taiwan, U.K., U.S.A. and Vietnam

2. BAN THATON

The village of Ban Thaton, located about 180 km north of Chiang Mai and 100 km west of Chiang Rai, remained a remote backwater until a bridge crossing the Mae Kok River was completed in 1979. Since then a good road connecting Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai has led to an increase in the number of visitors passing through, as well as staying in the village, but despite this, it still remains a quiet and sleepy place.

The area is renowned for its temple complex (Wat), having as it does, numerous chedis, stupas and temples covering a large area. It is also a well-known centre for students of meditation. Numerous religious festivals attract people from all over Thailand and the Abbot is well known and has recently received an award from the King.

The village contains a number of tourist facilities, including the inevitable Internet Café and shops at which drinks and snacks can be purchased.

3. CLIMATE

The area has a typical monsoon climate with three main seasons.

The **wet season** begins in June and last through October. During this period, it rains probably twice every three days, but storms are rarely prolonged and they do have a delightful cooling effect – as well as turning the countryside a verdant green.

Temperatures during the day will reach 30 C, dropping to 20 C at night. September is usually the wettest month and it is possible to have periods of longer rainfall.

The **cool season** is from mid-October to the end of February. At this time, the humid air from the Indian Ocean gives way to dry, cooler air from the north. Daytime temperatures can still reach 28 to 30 C, but after the sun has dropped, temperatures follow quickly and morning temperatures of 10 C are quite common. However as the sun rises, so does the mercury and early morning mists burn off quickly, so that by mid-morning the temperature will be in the mid-20s.

The **hot season** is lasts from mid- March to the end of May, temperatures can rise to 35C to 40 C during the day. The afternoon heat can bring with it impressive storms, with strong winds, torrential rain and spectacular electric storms. However they rarely last more than 30 minutes – disappearing as quickly as they appeared. A subsequent drop in temperature of 10 C or more brings welcome respite. Because of the altitude and surrounding mountains, it does mean that evenings and early mornings are a pleasant temperature despite the daytime heat.

4. THAI ETIQUETTE

Thai value systems regarding dress, social behaviour, religion, authority figures and sexuality are much more conservative than those of the average visitor. Thais are extremely tolerant and forgiving when it comes to the behaviour of non-Thais, but there are a few simple things which would help avoid embarrassment and misunderstanding.

- Revealing clothing should be avoided. Skimpy tops and shorts are not seen as polite dress. In particular in temples, shoulders and legs above the knee should be concealed. If students are working in schools, they should really dress as 'a teacher'. Swim wear should be restricted to the pool area and shirts worn around the rest of the resort.
- The head is the most sacred part of the body, so should not be touched. The feet are the least sacred, so when sitting they should not point at anyone. Putting your feet up on a coffee table for example would be considered extremely offensive. So when sitting on the floor, either sit cross-legged, or with your legs tucked under so that your feet are pointing behind you.
- It is also common practice to leave shoes outside homes and in particular, temples. This is why most Thais wear easy to slip off and on shoes.
- Shaking hands is rare. The common greeting is a 'wai', when the hands are placed together as in prayer and with the head slightly lowered. It is not necessary to 'wai' someone younger or 'inferior' to you. A simple nod of the head and a smile is sufficient and is all that is expected.

With regard the resort, our staff enjoy having student groups here and in particular, appreciate when students are courteous and polite, thus exhibiting typically Thai characteristics. This is very easy to do. For example, acknowledging a simple service such as filling up a water jug can be done with a smile and a gentle nod of the head and would be met with a return smile. Even better would be to smile, nod and say 'Thankyou' in Thai ie Khop Khun Kha (if you are female) or Khop Khun Khap (if you are male.)

5. ACCOMMODATION

There are three accommodation villas which comprise six student rooms – each with six to eight beds and two bathrooms. There are 13 teachers rooms altogether – 7 singles 5, double-bed rooms and 1 twin bedded. Should more teacher rooms be required, then the additional staff will be accommodated in the resort.

We ask that teachers inspect students rooms every morning at 8.15. We do find that not only do rooms become unacceptably untidy if inspections are not carried out, but students often lose things in the muddle and equally often make unfounded accusations of theft, only to find the missing item amongst the untidy piles.

6. THE RESTAURANT

Meals will be taken in our student restaurant with wonderful expansive views across the Fang Valley to the Wa Wee Mountains. Breakfast combines Asian and western foods, lunch is a Thai-Western Buffet and evening meals will generally be Thai although 'chicken and chips' can be requested if absolutely necessary! The food is high quality and we have had very few complaints. The spice in the Thai food is toned down – but chili sauces are available for those who wish to hot it up!

Water is provided at all meals (and there are several water stations around the student village) We are very used to special requests and provide vegetarian, Halal, and other alternatives.

We will ask for any particular dietary requirements and allergies before your arrival, but please note, we do have a general '**no nut**' policy for all student food.

A couple of things would help out our staff considerably.

- Buffet etiquette. Since most meals will be 'buffet-style' students are asked not to 'pile' food on their plates which means that the chafing dishes are quickly emptied and other students are left waiting. Students can return to the buffet as many times as they like and so initially taking 'sensible' helpings would be appreciated.
- At the end of the meal, dirty plates and cutlery should be taken to hatch near the kitchen

7. THE BAMBOO / ADVENTURE CLUB

The Bamboo Club is the place and area given over to students. It comprises a large social area with a bar selling drinks snacks and ice creams. There is a snooker room, table tennis, basketball, volleyball and badminton. There is also a swimming pool for the exclusive use of students, as well as a high ropes course, 12 metre climbing wall with six routes and bouldering wall.

Purchase of drinks and snacks at The Bamboo Club is by use of tokens. 100 Baht 'packets' of tokens are available and staff will not accept cash for purchases made at The Bamboo Club. Any tokens left at the end of the week can be exchanged for cash – or if placed in the donations box, will be used for the community project.

8. PROGRAMMES AND DAILY SCHEDULES

The programme would have been agreed before the arrival of the student group. Should changes wished to be made during the time here, we will do so if logistically possible. Equally, weather or other external factors may also force programme changes.

The programmes are aimed to be led by the instructors. This of course allows accompanying staff to be more flexible in how they wish to engage with the group. We are of course happy for teachers to involve themselves fully in all the activities and indeed to lead any of the activities which they feel comfortable about. For example, whilst instructors are prepared for evening activities, it maybe that accompanying teachers would wish to run one, some or all of these sessions.

The general pattern for the day is as below but again with some flexibility.

7.00 Wake up
7.30 Breakfast
8.15 Room inspection
8.30 Meet in the archery range
8.45 Activities begin
12.00 Lunch
13.30 Meet in the archery range
13.45 Activities begin
17.00 Free time
18.00 Dinner
19.00 Evening activities
20.00 Free time

Bedtime will naturally depend on the age group. However we do ask that a time is given and subsequently 'policed'. Students undertaking any of the activities need their sleep and it is an obvious truth that tired children under-perform and are at a greater risk of having an accident.

Suggested 'latest' lights out times:

Junior students: 21.30

Middle school; 22.00

Seniors: 22.30.

Our Night Duty Staff have been instructed to contact teachers should students be seen out of their rooms or if making undue noise after midnight.

9. KIT LIST

This is not an exhaustive list, but is the minimum required.

(We do have a laundry service with very reasonable prices. Laundry should be given in to the housekeeping office before 8.30 am and collected the next day. Payment with coupons only.)

- A good day pack big enough to carry a packed lunch, two litres of water and a waterproof jacket.
- Good trainer/ sports shoes for walking. These are better than boots as they dry more quickly! Most activities require closed shoes, so please don't come with just sandals.
And a pair of old trainers which you would not mind getting wet/dirty and even leaving behind. (For rafting, kayaking, confidence course)
They will get a good home. These are an often 'forgotten' item.
- Sandals (no heels). Sports type 'Teevers' are ideal. CROCKS are not appropriate for water based activities as they easily come off and will be lost.
- Long trousers (2). Cotton trousers are fine, although light weight synthetic trousers are quicker drying once they get wet. **NOT** denims.
- Long Shirts (2) You want long sleeves to give you protection from the sun and insects!
- Fleece / sweater – it can get cool in the evenings (ONLY when visiting November – February)
- Shorts (2)
- T shirts (4) (Please, no offensive slogans) Girls – this is a 'conservative rural area' so spaghetti string / revealing tops should not be worn outside the resort.
- Swimming gear
- Lightweight waterproof jacket
- Underwear
- Sunhat
- Sunglasses/ high factor suncream or sun block.
- Water Bottle (1 Litre capacity). **We will not give out bottles of water** except on longer hikes where more than 1 litre is required. Students without a water bottle will have to buy one for the week.
- Insect Repellent.
- Wash Kit. (We provide towels).
- Any personal medication/sanitary items.
- Torch/flashlight. A **headtorch** would be most useful, particularly if the group is doing the one day hike in the national park (with the cave)

For fieldwork groups, clipboard, pens, pencils, notebook, calculators and camera are required items

DO NOT BRING

- Expensive clothes.
Clothes will get wet and muddy. Bring **old**, comfortable clothes. Jeans in particular are not good; they are too restrictive, and bad in the heat.
- Jewellery
You cannot wear this during the course for your own safety. Be aware that you will be getting wet, so if your watch is not waterproof it may be better not to bring it.
- Electronic items
It is not a good idea to bring Ipods, MP3 players; mobile phones etc.

PLEASE NOTE THAT OLD CLOTHES OR SHOES CAN BE LEFT. THESE WILL BE CLEANED UP AND SOLD. THE MONEY WILL GO INTO THE STAFF COMMUNITY FUND

10. A FEW SIMPLE RULES FOR STUDENTS

- All school rules regarding smoking and consumption of alcohol will be applied at the centre.
- Students should not go to others rooms and in particular to rooms of the opposite sex.
- We have '**no chewing gum rule**' due to the mess that we often have to clear up!
- Swimming pool –a member of staff must be present at all times. Diving is not allowed. Students should also shower before entering the pool.
- At no time should students use or attempt to use the equipment and facilities (ie climbing wall, ropes course, assault course etc) without the presence of an instructor.
- Guest toilets – there are a few toilets in public areas which are reserved for use by guests eating in the restaurant. Students are asked to use the toilets in their own rooms.
- Other guests / groups and noise. We frequently have other students groups and hotel guests staying in the resort. and we would ask students to respect other people's rights to peace! This particularly pertains to early morning or nights when others are trying to sleep.
- The main resort area is for hotel guests only. Students are asked to remain in the vicinity of the outdoor centre,
- With regard notes above on Thai etiquette, students are asked to dress appropriately and boys in particular not to come to the restaurant 'bare-chested'!
- No students should ever go off-site unless accompanied by an adult and only with permission of the teacher in charge.
- The computer in reception of the resort is **not available** for student use.

11. SOME POINTERS FOR TEACHERS

- Our team of instructors welcomes teacher involvement in all / any of the activities but would request that in activities such as team and leadership challenges, teachers 'take a back seat' and allow the students to get on with making mistakes!
- We ask that a curfew time is set. For young students we suggest lights out at 9.30 pm.; 10 pm for middle school students and 10.30 pm for seniors. The days are long and tiring and tired students are more prone to accidents, and in our experience problems do arise when curfew times are either not set or enforced.
- We would ask if teachers could have students in their rooms at **8.15 am** each morning for a room inspection. Whilst we have an excellent housekeeping staff, they do find cleaning rooms which are littered with filthy clothes and wet towels very difficult. The irony is that it the rooms of older students which tend to be the untidiest and so your help would be appreciated.
- On departure from the centre, students should be in their rooms **15 minutes** before departure time and staff are asked to check rooms and only then 'release' the students to the meeting area for the final farewell.
- Use of laptops / palmtops etc. The policy of schools on this differs and thus is at your discretion. Should you wish students access to the Wi-Fi network, please feel free to provide them with the password.
- Air Conditioners in student rooms. Our staff will open the air conditioners at about 9 pm and they will be switched off at about 7 am. We really do not think they need to be on at other times of the day as we expect students to be outside their rooms and socialising! We therefore hope that you will not succumb to student pressure to 'borrow' your remote control. Of course, if a student is sick and needs to remain in their room, the air conditioner will be kept on if needs be.

12. STUDENT MOBILE PHONES

We would like to suggest visiting schools adopt the following policy towards mobile phones and their usage. Preferably, we would like students **not** to bring phones at all, but understand that this could cause 'ructions' with the parents and anyway, phones are also used as a camera.

However, we feel that their usage at the MRVR should be severely curtailed and a few cases (amongst many) illustrate the issue.

Case 1

A student fell over on a steep section of road and badly grazed her face. Before our instructor could reach her, she had already called her mother, who on hearing her hysterical daughter, became hysterical herself. Our instructor had to deal with a situation which was thus made far worse. It goes without saying that the phone call achieved nothing, except to exacerbate the problem.

Case 2

A student from an Australian school obviously did not fancy the day's hike which was on the itinerary. Feigning illness, he called home. Parents then rang the teacher in charge to say that 'Johnny' was excused the day's hike!

Case 3

A student from Korea turned his ankle on some loose stones. A visit to the hospital confirmed that nothing was broken and that it was a mild sprain requiring 'rest'. A call home from the boy resulted in mother contacting a teacher and insisting that he return to hospital to have a cast put on the ankle until it could be looked at 'by a proper doctor' back home.

Case 4

A girl from Hong Kong, despite our extensive and varied menu, called home several times to complain that her dietary requests were not being met (no dairy or eggs). The teacher confirmed with the father that there was plenty of choice. However a further call from the daughter resulted in her father calling the teacher and informing that he had booked flights for his daughter to be sent home early and insisting we make arrangements to take her to the airport.

The vast majority of students get through the week not even thinking about home, let alone needing to call and anyway, we feel that a 'no contact with home' week is part of the experience!

Therefore we would recommend schools to adopt the following:-

- Students are informed that on arrival or shortly after arrival, that they can call or SMS home to say that they have arrived safely
- Phones are then collected for 'safe keeping', to be returned shortly before departure
- Parents are informed beforehand, that in case of emergency only, they can contact the teacher in charge or the centre itself (+66 53 053 628) who will then arrange for the students to contact parents.

However....we do have an in-house rule that no phones should be brought to the restaurant!

We hope that you can agree to this and in fact it may make life easier for visiting schools when dealing with parents if they are informed these are centre 'rules'!!

13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND POLICIES

A. Code of Conduct

At the MRVR every member of the centre community should be well looked after, treated fairly and should feel valued and respected. In Thai culture this is a central aspect of daily life and thus is also central to our philosophy.

Aim: To help all young people who visit the centre to:

- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Stay safe and be healthy

All visitors at the MRVR should:

- Treat others fairly and courteously
- Respect other peoples' property, and the environment
- Move around the centre without disturbing other user groups
- Co-operate with other users/visitors
- Act in a safe and responsible manner

The centre expects visiting students and staff to take personal responsibility and assist the centre staff to maintain the ethos.

The MRVR expects students to:

- Treat others fairly and politely – don't be unkind, bully, harass or hurt others. Don't be abusive to anyone, physically or verbally.
- Respect peoples' living space and property – don't interfere with or steal other peoples' belongings; don't go into other peoples' rooms particularly those of the opposite sex.
- Help us to look after MRVR – don't damage things or make a mess. Help us by doing your daily duty.
- Think of other people, not just yourself – don't disturb other visitors to MRVR and don't keep others awake at night.
- Be sensible, responsible and safe – don't leave the Centre; don't run in the Centre; don't use alcohol, drugs or cigarettes; don't engage in sexual activity
- Be organised and cooperative – don't be late for meals or meetings; keep your room and belongings tidy; join in with everything.

Guidance for Group Leaders

- Visiting staff should ensure that they implement their institutions behaviour policy consistently whilst at the MRVR and ensure that the young people in their charge are familiar with the MRVR behaviour policy in advance of their visit. Expectations and sanctions should be clearly explained.
- Staff will ensure that there is no differential application of the policy and procedures on any grounds, particularly ethnic or national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability, or sexuality
- Model the good behaviour expected by the young people
- Maintain a positive and constructive working atmosphere

Group Leader documentation sent out to schools:

- This General Information Document is sent to schools as a part of the reply to an initial enquiry. A copy is also on the website
- A 'Request for Information' document is sent out at least one month before arrival. This includes a request for dietary and medical information.

MRVR EXPECTATIONS OF CENTRE STAFF

Before arrival:

- Know your group and their medical, social and dietary issues

Behaviour:

- Be a model of positive behaviour
- Use praise and positive reinforcement to reach your group members
- Encourage tidiness at all time
- Assist other centre staff if required during activities

Routines:

- Supervise children on and off site during activity times
- Take responsibility to monitor them in the centre during 'free time'
- Help with running The Bamboo Club as directed

MRVR EXPECTATIONS OF VISITING STAFF

- Uphold the 'ethos' of the MRVR
- Follow the same principles of Child Protection above
- Ensure the good behaviour of the students at all times
- Follow your institution's policy on dealing with inappropriate behaviour
- Assist centre staff in a general supervisory role
- Take an interested but 'backseat' role during student activities
- Be on hand to deal with behavioural issues or emergencies
- Take responsibility to monitor them in the centre during 'free time'
- Ensure that students' rooms are kept in good order
- Ensure that the curfew times are enforced and that lights out and 'sleep time' means exactly that!
- To inspect rooms at 8.15 am to ensure that beds are made, and that the room is clean and organised.

B. Child Protection Policy

The MRVOEC acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities and complies with best practice requirements.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that, all children have a positive and enjoyable experience at the MRVOEC in a safe and child centred environment.

As part of our safeguarding policy MRVOEC will

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate training opportunities to ensure that high standards are maintained
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals and ensure all staff working with young people will have had a Criminal Record Check undertaken
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved with young people at the MRVOEC. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

Child Safety

1. Make sure that the area you are using for activities is fit for the purpose.
2. Make sure that the weather conditions are not potentially hazardous.
3. Make sure that the protocols for all activities as detailed in the instructor's manual are followed.
4. Make sure all equipment is regularly checked, such checks logged and faulty equipment immediately removed and replaced when possible.
5. Make sure all incidents and accidents are reported to the Head Instructor and logged in the record book. If necessary, a review of procedures should be carried out and appropriate changes to procedures adopted.
6. Make sure that all instructors
 - Carry a mobile phone and/or short wave radio
 - Carry a first aid kit at all times
 - Know how to record accidents or injuries in the incident book
 - What to do in the event of a fire, earthquake or other emergency

Child protection

- Don't be alone in rooms with single children of either sex
- Don't go in opposite sex dorms without another staff member
- Shower and change away from children
- Do not photograph students without the permission of the visiting teacher in charge of the group. And avoid compromising photos
- Physical contact with children should be avoided but if necessary, explained and in view of other adults
- Do not share e mail addresses and 'decline' offers to Facebook. (Use only the centre Facebook page)

C. Outdoor Adventure Activities Policy

1 PURPOSE

These procedures aim to minimise danger inherent in outdoor adventure activities and promote safe procedures relating to the management of students in remote, rugged or potentially hazardous urban, water and other outdoor environments.

2 DEFINITIONS

Outdoor adventure activities are activities which potentially place students at a higher level of risk than is usual at school either because of the nature of the activity eg. climbing, canoeing, rafting, or the area in which the activity takes place eg. remote setting, river or mountain environment or likelihood of bad weather.

Remote is more than thirty minutes access to a fixed line telephone and/or more than twenty minutes from vehicle access; and/or greater than one and a half hours delay for medical assistance. *Non-Remote* is generally within 30 minutes of a fixed line telephone, within 20 minutes of vehicle access and closer than one and a half hours delay for medical assistance.

Leader is the person with the qualifications and/or experience to implement the activities. The leader may or may not be a teacher.

Accompanying adults include teachers, school administrative staff, parents, and activity leaders

3 POLICY STATEMENT

The MRVR is committed to providing quality outdoor education for students and will ensure that all outdoor adventure activities will be conducted with regard to the safety of students in situations of potential risk

recognises the role of parents relating to their child's participation in outdoor adventure activities.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

The school

4.1 It is the responsibility of the school **principal** to ensure that:

all participating teaching staff know and adhere to the requirements of school policies, supervision requirements and safety procedures

4.2 It is the responsibility of the **teacher in charge** to:

to ensure that all that the medical and consent forms are issued completed and the MRV Outdoor Education Centre is given essential information / or to ensure medical forms are carried on the activity

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ensure a minimal environmental impact is adopted

4.3 It is the responsibility of **all school staff** to exercise their duty of care throughout an outdoor adventure activity and ensure that school policies are followed

The centre

4.4 It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that:

that **instructors** of outdoor adventure activities, have relevant qualifications and/or experience to undertake the assigned activities and to include first aid training

ensure that at least one accompanying adult has a recognised current first aid certificate and that a first aid kit is carried.

in consultation and agreement with **school staff**, τo ensure that students are only exposed to challenges, either imposed by the environment or by the task, that are appropriate to their physical skills and emotional well being.

5 SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS

5.1 A minimum of two adults including at least one teacher must accompany all group activities.

5.2 The supervision ratios given under each activity must be followed.

5.3 Administrative staff, parents, activity leaders and other accompanying adults may be used to meet the supervision ratio provided that Head Instructor is satisfied there are sufficient adults to maintain adequate control of the whole outdoor adventure activity and to control each individual

5.4 At the discretion of the **Head Instructor** and **teacher in charge/leader**, the number of adults **may at times** need to be higher than in the stated ratio because of:

- age, experience or capability of the students
- combined experience or expertise of the staff
- nature of the area in which the activity is to be conducted.

6 ACCIDENTS

6.1 In serious cases where medical attention is obviously necessary, the instructor / teacher in charge should send for ambulance or a doctor whichever is appropriate, or arrange transport to the nearest or most convenient medical facility. Parents will be advised as soon as practicable of action taken in an emergency.

6.2 For all accidents / incidents it is the responsibility of the **instructor / activity leader** to complete an Incident Report Form, to inform the **Head Instructor** and to review procedures if necessary.

14. HEALTH, SAFETY AND MEDICAL

It goes without saying that this is of paramount importance and a number of simple precautions should be taken.

HEALTH

- **Innoculations.** It is recommended that visitors should make sure that they are up to date with their tetanus-polio boosters. For others such as Typhoid, Hepatitis B or Japanese Encephalitis, medical advice should be taken.
- **Prophylactics.** This is a 'malarial area', but the incidence is very low and tends to be restricted to remote parts. There have been no recorded incidences in the area for several years. None of the long term expatriate staff take anti-malarials and instead take usual precautions. This involves using an effective anti-mosquito spray and wearing trousers and long-sleeve shirts in the evenings.
- **Water.** Free bottled water is provided in the rooms. Tap water is not potable and it is also advised that bottled water be used for brushing teeth.

SAFETY

- The climbing wall, high ropes and low beams course are 'out of bounds' unless an activity is being run by an instructor
- Use of the swimming pool is restricted to when a member of staff or instructor is there to supervise. This is a strictly NO DIVING pool as it is only 1.2 metres deep. Please shower before using the pool.
- Most activities take place in the sun and the inherent dangers of sunburn, sun stroke and dehydration are very real. Sun hats are essential, as is a high factor sun cream. A high rate of water intake is necessary. There are numerous water dispensers around the resort, jugs of water are provided with all meals, and water is provided for all activities.
- **Fire alarms and drill.** There are two bells which will sound the fire alarm. On hearing this, students should leave their rooms immediately, leave the resort area by the nearest and safest exit and congregate in the car park where they will be registered.

MEDICAL

The resort has a comprehensive First Aid kit and 'mobile' kits accompany all activities. The nearest hospital is in the town of Mae Ai just 8 km away with a bigger hospital in Fang just over 20 km away. We have been very impressed with the level of care at both these hospitals. Rarely do we have to wait for more than 30 minutes and more often, just 10 minutes is not uncommon. The costs are very reasonable indeed and for straightforward cases, the bill will be less than Baht 500 (and this would include X Rays if needed and any medicines). Cash payments is the norm and anyway, rarely will treatment costs extend to a level where you would need to involve insurance companies.

In all cases other than serious injury, students will be taken to hospital in the centre's vehicle and will be accompanied by a Thai speaker.

Local hospital contact details:

Mae Ai Hospital, Mae Ai Tel: 053 459 036

Fang Hospital, Fang Tel: 053 451 444

For serious incidents, there is an emergency ambulance service and patients will be stabilized, taken to one of the above hospitals and if necessary, taken by ambulance to Overbrook Hospital in Chiang Rai (Tel: 053 717 499) or the Chiang Mai Ram Hospital (Tel: 053 895 001)

15. DIETARY AND MEDICAL ISSUES

It would be appreciated if these could be brought to our attention before arrival at the centre (an information request form will be sent several weeks before the trip, or if confidential, to bring details to share with instructors when necessary in order to ensure that students can carry out activities safely.

We can cater for most dietary requirements and will need to know about allergies etc beforehand. A 'request for information' will be sent before the group arrives.

16. RISK ASSESSMENTS

All activities have been risk assessed and the assessments are available on request.

For climbing and high ropes elements we only use CE rated equipment (the worldwide accepted industry standard). All equipment is checked prior to use, is logged and replaced on a regular basis. All waterborne activities require students to wear buoyancy aids. All our buoyancy aids provide 7.25 Kg buoyancy (above minimum requirements). An instructor on each trip will carry a full rescue kit.

All treks and activities off-site are accompanied by guides and instructors with radios / tele-communication facilities.

Most trek routes are within a few km of tracks which are accessible by the centre's four wheel drive vehicles should there be a need for emergency evacuation. Specific evacuation procedures are available on request

17. TRANSPORT

For the majority of visiting groups, transport from the desired pick-up location will be by 10 seater minibuses, **all of which have seat belts**. One of our guide-instructors will meet the arriving group and organize the transfer. More often than not, an extra vehicle will be on hand to transport luggage. Occasionally, 44 seater coaches will be used for large groups. It should be pointed out that these do not have seat belts.

All vehicles are instructed not to exceed 80 km per hour and there will be at least one adult per vehicle in addition to the driver.

For local journeys, local 'taxis' called Song Taeows' are used. Students sit on two benches with up to 12 persons per vehicle. **These vehicles do not have seat belts.**

An adult will be in each vehicle and is instructed to sit at the entrance to the cab.

Drivers are instructed not to exceed 50 km per hour.

Please note: Should you wish for local transport to be provided by minibuses with seat belts, this can be arranged, but at an extra cost of about Baht 120 per student per day.

18. INSURANCE

AIG - S.E.Asia. - Local representative of the NEW HAMPSHIRE INSURANCE COMPANY
Policy type - TRAVEL AGENT NAC (covers entire period on tour with us, travel, accommodation, activities, from pick up to drop off).

The Thai Insurance cover is low by western standards. We recommend that students secure their own travel insurance cover before travelling, as such insurance provides high levels of cover for relatively low premiums.

19. CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

We are aware that numbers attending will fluctuate from the original numbers booked. However our costings are based on the original number booked, but we will under certain circumstances refund part or whole of the payment for individual students if any of the following apply:-

- a) Cancellation more than one month before the arrival date: 100% refund
- b) Cancellation more than two weeks before the arrival date: 50% refund
- c) Cancellation less than two weeks before arrival date: *No refund

*Refunds, total or partial will however be considered if the student is unable to travel due to sickness or due to family circumstances such as serious illness or death.

20. OPTIONAL WAIVERS and RELEASE OF LIABILITY: PARENTS AND SCHOOLS

A few schools have requested these, however, please note **WE DO NOT INSIST** that schools provide these. They are **entirely optional**. However below are two documents for waivers and release of liability which **you may choose** to use **if you wish**.



**Maekok River Village Outdoor Education Centre
Waiver and Release of Liability**

The activities at the Maekok River Village Outdoor Education Centre (MRVOEC) are challenging and at times strenuous. The activities incorporate a variety of activities including hiking, camping, rafting, canoeing, biking, low beams, climbing wall as well as teambuilding challenges and games. The chance of minor injuries is likely, the chance of an accident causing serious injury is rare. However given the nature of these activities, there is always a possibility of this happening and therefore parents/legal guardians are asked to sign this Medical Care Authorization Waiver and Release of Liability form.

Medical Care Authorization: Parents / Legal Guardians

The undersigned, parents/legal guardians, hereby authorizes the employees of Maekok River Village Outdoor Education Centre to secure routine medical care or emergency medical care for the student at the sole cost of the parents / legal guardians.

Student's Name: _____ Age: _____

Parent(s) / _____
Guardian's Name

Address: _____

Emergency Contact Number: _____

Details of Insurance Policy: _____

Release and Hold Harmless

I (we) understand that at the MRVOEC, my child is expected to follow all the rules presented by the MRVOEC staff. I (we) fully realize that participation in an outdoor activity programme involves physically and psychologically challenging situations and that some could result in injuries. I acknowledge that the MRVOEC will inform my child of all required safety regulations and that my child's failure to follow regulations and instructions could result in injury.

I (we) acknowledge that my child's participation in the programmes at the MRVOEC means I accept the risks attached to these activities.

I (we) agree to hold the MRVOEC and other participants harmless for any and all damages my child might sustain or suffer in connection with my child's participation in the activities at MRVOEC.

Signatures of Parent (s) or Guardian (s)

I (we) have read and understood this Medical Care Authorization and Waiver and Release form.

I (we) realize it is legally binding agreement and may not be modified or rescinded except by another written document signed by the Managing Director of the MRVOEC.

Parent / Guardian: Name

Parent / Guardian: Name

Parent / Guardian Signature

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date: _____

Date: _____



**Maekok River Village Outdoor Education Centre
Waiver and Release of Liability**

The activities at the Maekok River Village Outdoor Education Centre (MRVOEC) are challenging and at times strenuous. The activities incorporate a variety of activities including hiking, camping, rafting, canoeing, biking, low beams, climbing wall as well as teambuilding challenges and games. The chance of minor injuries is likely, the chance of an accident causing serious injury is rare. However given the nature of these activities, there is always a possibility of this happening. The School Principal is asked to sign this Medical Care Authorization Waiver and Release of Liability form having received similar authorization and indemnity forms from the parents/guardians of all students participating in activities at the MRVOEC.

Medical Care Authorization: School Principal

The undersigned hereby authorizes the employees of Maekok River Village Outdoor Education Centre to secure routine medical care or emergency medical care for students at the sole cost of the parents/school. (Please delete whichever is appropriate)

Name of School: _____

Name of School Principal: _____

School Address: _____

Emergency Contact Number: _____

Details of Insurance Policy: _____

Release and Hold Harmless

I understand that at the MRVOEC, students are expected to follow all the rules presented by the MRVOEC staff. I fully realize that participation in an outdoor activity programme involves physically and psychologically challenging situations and that some could result in injuries. I acknowledge that the MRVOEC will inform the students of all required safety regulations and that failure to follow regulations and instructions could result in injury.

I agree to hold the MRVOEC and other participants harmless for any and all damages the students might sustain or suffer in connection with their participation in the activities at MRVOEC.

Signature of School Principal

I have read and understood this Medical Care Authorization and Waiver and Release form.

I realize it is a legally binding agreement and may not be modified or rescinded except by another written document signed by the Managing Director of the MRVOEC.

Name of School Principal (Please print)

Signature

Date: _____