

# BORDER NEWS

NEWS FROM THE CHRIST CHURCH BORDER KAREN MINISTRY



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- BCTFN funding
- Child protection training
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- February visit



## Congratulations Class of 2020!!

### The Graduation Ceremony !

Rev Norman and Sue were honoured to attend this year's graduation in early March.

The Bishop of the Karen people was present with his wife and other local clergy and we all had the privilege of awarding certificates and prizes. It was such a joy to see proud parents, excited students and weary teachers at the end of another busy year!

Another joy was meeting several Alumni who now live and work at Noh Boh themselves. One is even waiting to hear if he has been accepted by Singapore Diocese to commence Theological Training! This is great encouragement to all who support students at Noh Boh that the impact on students' lives is long lasting and life changing.



### March 2020 visit- Child Protection Training!

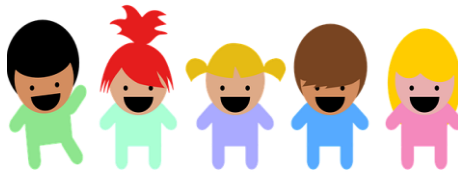
As Christ Church has just completed a review and implementation of all Child Protection Policy and Practices for the children and young people’s groups, Child Protection Representative Sue Jones felt parts of this policy needed to also be also used for Noh Boh. Currently people are hired on the basis of trust, as most staff are relatives or former students. Volunteers from overseas come from some governing bodies who already have checks. However we need to have more rigorous measures.

There are almost 100 boarding students (ages 11 - 22 yrs) and some rather old buildings in need of renovation for health and safety. Safeguarding students will need more work in the year ahead, but as a start Sue was invited to lead two training sessions with the current teaching staff.

We began to look at the basics, what is Child Protection, why do we need to be concerned, does Abuse happen in every culture and what can we do better?

In our two 3 hour sessions we covered a good deal of ground and did some fun exercises together in-between the tough realities. We worked together on listing the particular risks and issues for the Academy and the younger teachers in particular were well aware of them. Finally we came up with recommendations for further training, better checks for volunteers, and guidance and lessons in the curriculum for students. The need for renovation on a regular basis is a much bigger challenge for the committee and probably needs a regular programme of work over a five year period to ensure the health and safety of staff and students.

When Sue and Norman leave in June Sue’s role has passed to Clare Messink and Wezi Mukaka.



Keeping our Children Safe



### CCB KAREN MINISTRY MISSION

“To provide spiritual and practical support working towards a greater degree of self-reliance the Karen community living in the Thai- Myanmar borders”



## Noh Bo visit February 2020 - Painting

Late February is an exciting time at Noh Bo Academy. Classes are wrapping up and students are focusing on revising for their final exams, while looking ahead to the graduation celebrations soon to follow in March. The Christ Church Bangkok volunteer trip in February took advantage of revision week to give the empty classrooms a good clean - and fresh coats of paint!

In anticipation of the volunteers' arrival, the Noh Bo students and staff chose the paints for their learning spaces: lavender, spring green, salmon pink, and goldenrod. Though a number of the day students were away from the campus for revision week, the many boarders still at school eagerly greeted the first volunteers to arrive and completed painting of the first classroom within a few hours!

From taping to priming, the students proved ready to learn and immediately put these new skills to use. They were so enthusiastic that the number of painters often exceeded the available brushes and rollers! Nevertheless even those with empty hands quickly found work cleaning desks and mopping floors. Within the span of two days, four of the classrooms have been completely transformed. Where once the monotony of grey concrete walls was broken only by a white board, the classrooms are now a riot of colour.

The photos of the students as they settled into their newly painted classrooms show beyond words the joy and pride they felt. They had gained new skills while completely transforming their learning environment. As we work, together, towards greater sustainability for Noh Bo Academy and the larger Karen Ministry, we celebrate these achievements together.



## CCB February Visit!! By Jackie from BWG

On the 15th - 18th February I was fortunate to be invited along on The Christ Church Bangkok Karen Ministry Trip to visit to Noh Bo Academy and assist in the painting of some of their classrooms.

It is in such a remote location, 100+kms from Mae Sot, close to the Karen Refugee Camps. Without organisation like these providing additional educational opportunities, their young would have very little chance of a successful future. This is one of the organisations The British Women's Group has supported for quite a few years, and now with first-hand experience of the school, teachers and children would say it is money well spent.

For this trip I was with Sue Jones-the vicars wife (and a fellow BWG member) who was also on a first visit and five other church members: Chris R-the organiser, Sara-a doctor and great asset (and her two children) and last but not least newcomer Robert-a music teacher from Rugby International School near Pattaya.

We flew into Mae Sot then had an "adventurous ride" in the church's pickup truck, which I have to say has seen better days but was thankfully up for the task.

I went thinking I would be doing hands on painting, but with the amount of willing student volunteers we took mostly a back seat and let them at it! However we did do some "quality control" as they initially "enthusiastically" slapped "a lot" of paint onto the brushes and rollers and then the walls!! Sara's children also couldn't wait to join in too. Once they were let loose with the colourful paints the following rooms were done in quick time over the next two days. A fun time was had by all.

As the number of volunteers gave me more free time, I also was able to get another group of students together on one of the days and we went on a trash collection and general clean up mission around the compound. Do love me some trash clearing; you can see the result immediately which is rewarding in itself.

Meanwhile Robert was preparing music lessons he would be giving to some of the students.

There was a football tournament going on at the academy whilst we were there and seems to be the focal point for the area; bringing other teams together to compete in a fun activity, watched by supporters, the academy even has a female football team which I was pleased to hear.

The large football pitch is in the centre with the classrooms, student dormitories, food hall, teacher and volunteer accommodations surrounding that, with mountains as a backdrop.

On Sunday morning we went to a church service at the newly built church across from the academy, Sue had been told the congregation when singing "sounded like a Welsh choir", high praise indeed. Although at first I presumed this might be a "slight exaggeration" but have to say their voices were in total harmony and this all with no musical accompaniment, lovely.

To be honest I was looking around to see where the speakers were but no it was the congregation.

Product for sale:

Before we left on the last day the headmistress Candlepaw (interesting name I thought) kindly gave us each a gift which consisted of fabric and items made by the student and ladies in the camps. Beautifully made fully cotton pieces of fabric, sarong length (I'm actually using my piece of fabric as a pretty TV dust protector, hiding the eyesore when not in use) table mats, purses and bags are available for sale via CCB!

AS PART OF OUR SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT AND TO PROMOTE GREATER SELF-RELIENCE, CCB SELLS ITEMS MADE BY THE NOH BO STUDENTS AND LADIES IN THE CAMP



## Music by Robert !!!

It was a privilege for me to visit Noh Boh, to meet the students and staff, and to teach some music lessons. I arranged for the Pembroke College Cambridge Choir to visit last July, so I was also curious to follow in their footsteps. I was struck by the friendly and open nature of all the young people and their willingness to try something new. After careful thought, I decided to introduce each class to some basic music notation and then to compose a short song in English. Their singing in assembly had already greatly impressed me - making music is clearly central to the Academy. When I left it was nice for me to buy them a Yamaha guitar, which I know will be used by many students. I look forward to my next visit and to hopefully spending longer in a special place.



## CCB donated apples for each student



## British Community in Thailand Foundation for the Needy (BCTFN)

Following another really successful Ploenchit Fair this year, the BCTFN responded very positively to our request for help in providing new sporting equipment for students at Noh Boh.

Much equipment was in poor repair and the full grant that we applied for was granted: 80,000 Baht. This has been very well received, as you can imagine, and will be in place for whenever the new term can begin.

Pictures are to follow next time



## Trash cleaning with Jackie!!

As part of our mission, we wanted to educate students on the need to look after the environment and recycle their waste. Jackie rounded up some enthusiastic student volunteers for trash collection and carried out a general clean up around the compound. Ongoing maintenance is also the key to taking pride in their home and environment. We are planning to implement some recycling initiatives.

# What your donations can do

The work of our Karen Ministry continues, and we have a full budget for 2019. Your contributions are greatly appreciated. Here is a picture of how your donations can help.

## Mae La Camp Support for a nursery

School student	1,600 baht per year
Support for a nursery school teacher	6,000 baht per year
Nursery School food supplement	2,200 baht per month
Caring for an orphanage child	5,120 baht per year

## Noh Bo Academy Students and staff

Day Student	8,000 baht per term
Boarding Students	12,000 baht per year
Teachers(13, including Principal)	Average salary 3,500 baht (\$75) per month
Staff (1 office – 3 cooks - 2 supervisors)	Average salary 2,500 baht (\$46) per month

## Noh Bo Food and Nourishment

The largest portion of the budget is food - essential in a boarding school for refugees. We need 65 large bags of rice each month for 10 months, at about 850 baht per bag.

The school also spends about 46,000 baht a month on fresh produce, giving an annual food bill of approximately 927,500 baht (\$31,000).

## Education Materials

Each year supplies of paper, exercise books, text books, pens, markers, etc. is 40,000 baht (\$1,333). Arts, crafts and sewing materials are extras, depend on special donations

## Uniforms

**Noh Bo students** take great pride in their uniform.

Annual cost for students is	18,000 baht (\$600)
Teachers uniforms per year	9,000 baht (\$300)
Sport kits per year	10,350 baht (\$350)

## Utilities

Electricity approx 4,700 baht (\$156) per month  
 Gas bottles at 300 baht (\$6) per month.  
 Water at 300 baht (\$6) per month  
 Internet provision is expensive – 2,675 baht (\$93) per month

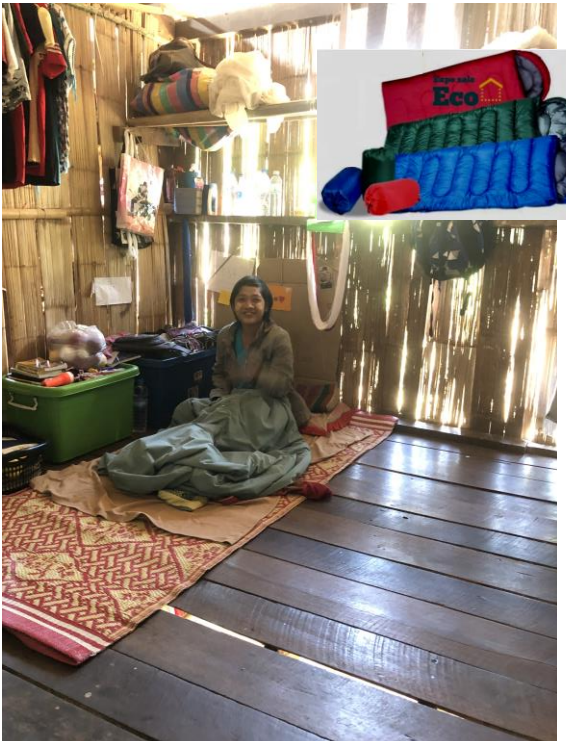
## Health and Wellness

Toiletries for Student cost about 40,000 baht (\$1,333) a year.  
 Medicines, dental and hospital bills average 3,000 baht (\$100) per month.  
 Blankets are needed in the cool season – 100 baht each for 100 students – 10,000 baht (\$333)



## Thank for the Sleeping bags!!

It can get really cold over the winter months (below 11°C) and the dormitory hardly provides any shelter from the freezing winds. The students and teachers who live in the dormitory were so thankful to the donors who provided 77 sleeping bags to keep them warm at night.



## HOW TO MAKE A DONATION:

**Cheques made out in foreign currency** attract very high transfer fees in Thailand (\$60).

**Cheques in Thai Baht** are no problem.

**Electronic transfer is best!**

Please email us on [karenministry@christchurchbangkok.org](mailto:karenministry@christchurchbangkok.org) to let us know when you make a payment, so that we can ensure that it arrives and issue a receipt.

### Bank Account for Karen (New) A/C:

Siam Commercial Bank

A/C Name:	Christ Church English
Branch:	CP Tower
A/C No:	168-225-876-6
A/C Tape:	Saving A/C
SWIFT code:	SICOTHBK

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!!

