



Coronavirus

Precautions and risk management

SCHOOL INTERNAL PROCEDURES.

In planning this response we ask schools to confirm that they have testing, distancing, quarantining and infection prevention procedures that make it very likely that all group members are infection free, and that all participants are in good health and not showing and COVID-19 symptoms. Where schools are operating under a “bubble” system we will preserve those groupings in our activity and accommodation plans. Where there is no such system we will treat the whole group as a bubble likely to have no infected persons.

Where our procedures are less stringent than those required by the school we will adapt to the school procedures. Where our precautions might have a cost implication we will consult with the school as to whether to adopt or waive them.

PRE-TRIP ATK TESTS

Our staff and drivers will test no more than 4 days before the trip departs and those test results will be available for the school to confirm. Schools should have an ATK testing regime which will identify any teacher or student infected so they can be removed from the trip list.

GROUP SIZES

We strongly advise considering ways of reducing overall group sizes to around 40 students. This might be achieved by splitting larger groups into 2 and sending them one after another in the same week (3 day camp with a Wednesday changeover) or in successive weeks. Not only does this allow us to distance students in activity groups, accommodation and dining facilities, but it also lets us reduce the number of staff from our side coming into contact with children and makes for a better, more relaxed and less hectic camp which is more cost effective. We accept that administrative issues in many schools may make this impossible, but it is a good risk mitigation strategy which reduces group leader stress and also adds value to the outdoor education programme.

COVID INFECTION RISK MITIGATION DURING THE CAMP

1. All Big Outdoors staff and drivers will show a negative ATK test no more than 4 days before the camp.
2. We will avoid resorts where other groups or tourists are present. With large groups we will try to book the whole resort. If smaller groups we will arrange an exclusive zone within the resort for our group. If camping in public sites we will occupy space away from other campers and demarcated with a boundary rope.

3. We will avoid the use of double beds for two students. In facilities with sleeping platforms for 3 or more students we will reduce the numbers leaving an empty space between each pair of students. Where there are bunk beds we will use only the lower bed. In some accommodation facilities this will mean increasing the number of rooms booked and therefore have a cost implication. We will consult with the school in these cases.
4. We will reduce the numbers in each room as necessary to avoid crowding and allow better distancing. Although we will do our best to negotiate with accommodation providers, this will in some cases have a cost implication in which case we will consult with the school.
5. We advise rooming students by friendship groups wherever possible keeping together individuals who already have close contact within and outside the school setting.
6. Our staff will avoid contact with any person or group which might have infected persons both before and during the trip and will take the recommended precautions for avoiding infection.
7. Our staff (from Chonburi) and drivers (from Pak Chong) have been thoroughly briefed on precautionary measures and told only to come to work if in good health and symptom free. They will be temperature checked on a daily basis.
8. We will minimise contact with other people outside our group. Most of our activities are in remote places where there are no other tourists. If using National Parks we will avoid visitor centres and main car parks and any other places where groups congregate. We will eat at the resort where possible, and if not, will use outlets with proper CV-19 precautions or will have food prepared by our own staff.
9. Masks. We will advise all students and staff to bring 2 disposable masks per day, or two reusable masks, and will stock spares. We will ask students to have masks with them at all times outside the resort and will check this as they board vehicles. We advise wearing masks for any visits to shops, tourist attractions and anywhere where contact is likely with persons outside the group. We consider mask wearing during activities and around the resort to be impractical and unnecessary if all group members and instructors have negative ATK tests. However we will take advice from the school if they wish to change this.
10. We will emphasize hand-washing and will provide soap , alcohol wash or hand gel and ask every student to wash hands thoroughly after activities and again before eating.
11. We will try to minimise use of public toilets by reminding the children to use resort facilities before departure in the morning and at lunch time. Where public toilets are used we will insist on thorough hand-washing afterwards.
12. We will ask hotel/resort staff to disinfect door handles, toilet flushes and other areas where multiple guests might touch the same surface. We will ask van drivers to also

- wash handles etc. in their vans with disinfectant. Where we are catering, cleaned eating utensils will be immersed in boiling water before use. Plates, cups and glasses will be cleaned with detergent and then rinsed between each use. Where the resort is catering we will ensure they have a suitable infection prevention plan in place.
13. We will ask serving staff to wear gloves when serving food to children. Food will be served by staff using sterilised tongs or utensils. Children will not touch serving utensils.
 14. We will discourage any sharing of water bottles, straws, or food. We require each student to bring their own re-usable bottle (which should be labelled with their name) and use that at meal times as well as during activities. Disposable cardboard cups will be provided for hot drinks.
 15. We will wash unpeeled fruit such as apples or grapes with a food-safe sterilising solution.
 16. If requested by the school, students can be asked to wear masks on the vans. This is mainly necessary where there is a possibility of infection within the group.
 17. We advise making the minimum of stops while journeying, either to and from school or to activities. Where stops are unavoidable or considered necessary by teachers, e.g. toilet stops or 7-11 visits, students should wear masks and clean hands with alcohol based hand gel on re-entering the van.
 18. Where we provide a nurse, we will ask her to monitor the temperature of any student who is ill and to be vigilant for other signs of the virus. Any student or adult with a high temperature or other flu-like symptoms will be placed in a separate room and monitored by the nurse. If coronavirus infection is suspected they will be evacuated to hospital (chronic case) or returned home in appropriate transport (in consultation with parents and at parents expense). Where there is no nurse on the trip, we will check temperatures daily and take the same action and in consultation with the group leader, refer any sick student to the nearest medical facility for testing.

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Prepared by Tony Mallia for Big Outdoors Education and Adventure Co. Ltd.

References:

Covid-19 Secure Policy and Procedures: The Outdoor Education Sector guide to regulations and recommendations for "COVID – safe" re-opening of Residential Education Centres.

[https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education and childcare](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare)