



International Changemakers 2025 – Thailand Visit

26th June – 8th July 2025

A team of 15 students embarked on a journey where they were truly ‘inspired to make a difference’.



You can see the full story of their journey on the International Changemakers Instagram page at <https://www.instagram.com/internationalchangemakers/>



International Changemakers 2025 – Thailand Visit

Day 1 – Arrival in Khao Sok, followed by a Thai Yoga session



A relaxing welcome to Thailand with a Thai yoga expert

Day 2 – Khuekkhak Temple, Sunova Sustainable Surfboards, Ban Namh Kem Tsunami Museum & Memorial

Wonder and awe at a Buddhist temple!



Making surfboards from recycled Styrofoam

Talking with a tsunami survivor



The size of the tsunami wave!

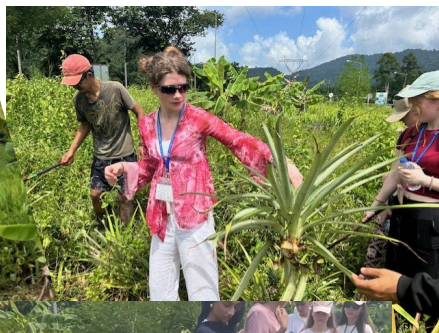


International Changemakers 2025 – Thailand Visit

Day 3 – Khao Sok Elephant Sanctuary & Khao Sok Viewpoint



A chance to walk with the elephants and feed them!



After an hour working in the fields to harvest the crops planted by the 2024 International Changemakers!



International Changemakers 2025 – Thailand Visit

Day 4 – FED Unified Learning Centre (Teaching Science & Cultural Exchange)



A very personal welcome from FED founder and CEO Mr Htoo Chit outlining how FED came into existence and the support it offers the Burmese community in Thailand

<https://fedgrassroots.org/>



A tour of the school and meeting some of the students for the first time.



Teaching for the first time! The team delivered four experiments to mixed age groups in Grade 7 as part of the Great Science Share for Schools – lots of learning on both sides and a fusing of communities through a common language!



School lunch – prepared by CafeLab – the on-site vocational kitchen run by the 16-19 year old students.

It has definitely provided ideas to bring back to The Derby!



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Day 4 – FED Unified Learning Centre (Teaching Science & Cultural Exchange)



The afternoon provided an opportunity to share culture. The children of FED had written their own play outlining their lived experience of their migration from Myanmar – exceptionally hard-hitting and moving.



Identifying similarities through drama – mirroring brought a lot of laughs, smiles and the start of friendships!

And the Great Science Share for Schools dance brought everyone out in a sweat!





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Day 5 – FED Unified Learning Centre (Teaching Science)

The second day of teaching brought a fresh set of challenges for the International Changemakers, as they met those students who had recently migrated and had very little English.



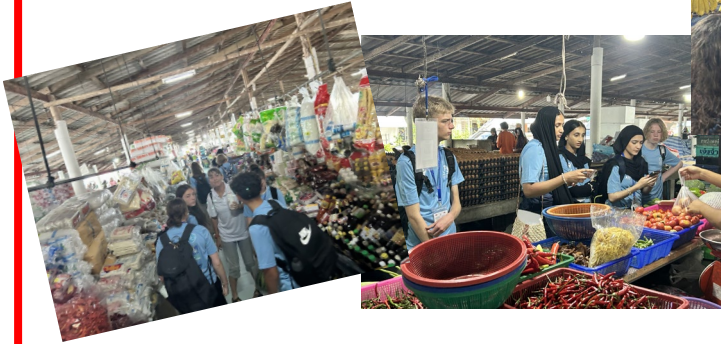
Despite the language barriers, the team rose to the challenge and used the skills they had developed over the previous 12 months to engage and educate this group.

It was clearly cognitively challenging for the students and they demonstrated superb team work to share the strain and remain positive throughout.



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Day 5 – Home Visits



Day 5 also provided the most emotionally challenging experience as the teams visited the homes of three Burmese migrant families – a fisherman's family, a rubber plantation worker and a palm oil worker.

The team visited the local market to purchase some essential goods for the family, showing real empathy with the needs of the community.

All three families welcomed the group into their home, offering food, drink and comfort. They explained their circumstances and how they felt lucky to have escaped Myanmar.



All the students were hit hard by this experience and spoke of how lucky they felt to live in the UK. It is clear that this experience will live long in their memory.



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Day 6 – FED Unified Learning Centre (Teaching Science) & Chong Fa Field Visit



Day 6 brought a first for both The Derby High School and FED ULC as they embarked on a field visit into the rainforest. This was the first time the students from FED had ever experienced Learning outside the Classroom!!!

Led by jungle experts 'Jungle Joe' and Chart – the schools were set a series of challenges to complete on the visit to Chong Fa.



It was a joy to watch the students working to solve the problems and overcome the language barriers, as well as witnessing the excitement on all their faces !





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Day 6 – Thai BBQ & Bang Niang Market

The evening brought a different challenge as the students were presented with a Thai-style BBQ and expected to cook their own food!!



It was clear where the natural chefs were!!!



And then a visit to Bang Niang market to negotiate some bargains!





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Day 7 – FED Unified Learning Centre (Teaching Science & Cultural Exchange)



Day 7 brought sessions 7 and 8 of teaching science – this time it was the older students and The Derby High led with more challenging experiments to demonstrate the impact of ocean acidification.



The closing afternoon brought more drama and dance with performances showcasing Burmese comedy, Thai tradition and the Addams Family!! And a few tears as goodbyes were said.



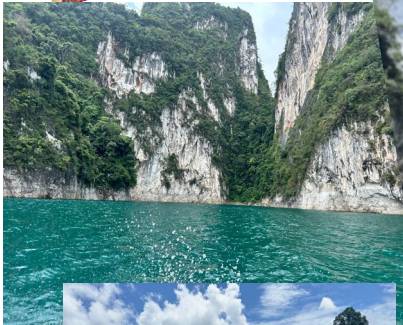


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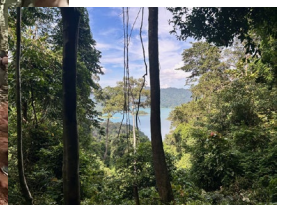
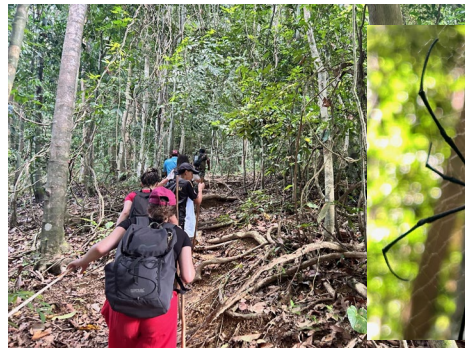
Day 8 & 9 – Khao Sok Visit (Takuapa Market, Rajjabrbha Lake & Rainforest, Phutawan Rafthouse, Morning Safari, Heart Mountain, Bamboo Rafting Viewpoint)



Day 8 brought an early start and a visit to the wet market at Takuapa. This was followed by a visit to Rajjabrbha Dam (which provides 20% of the energy to the region). After a 2 hour longboat ride around the limestone scenery the group arrived at Phutawan Rafthouse – home for the night!



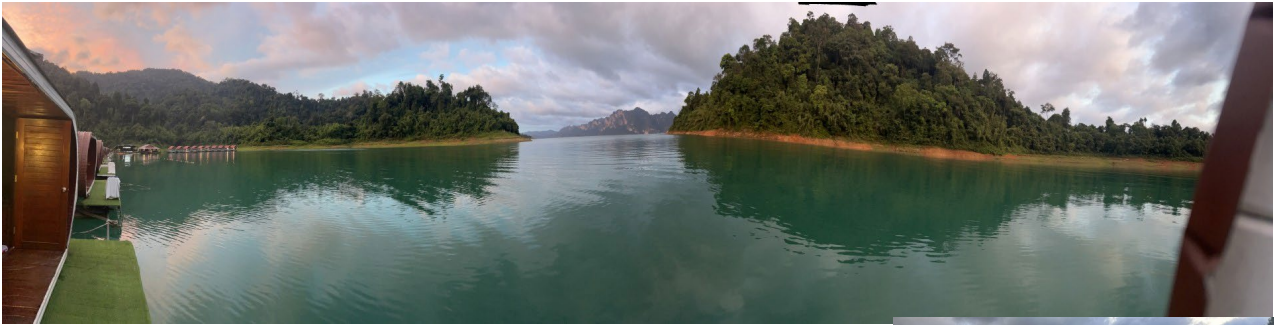
The afternoon was also action packed with a trek through the jungle and into a cave to meet a snake, a huntsman spider and thousands of bats! The students learnt the importance of ecotourism to the local economy and environment – and how finding the balance between money and protecting the rainforest is a challenge.





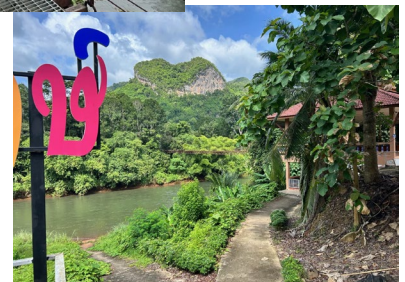
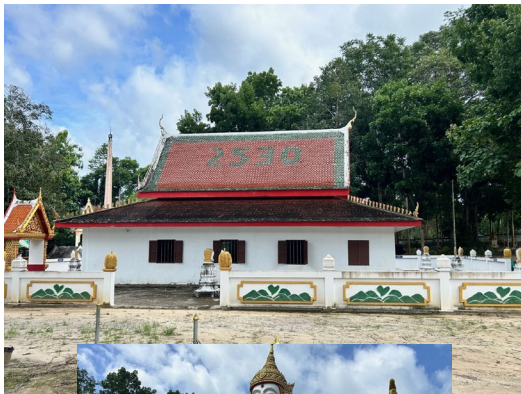
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Day 8 & 9 – Khao Sok Visit (Takuapa Market, Rajjaprbha Lake & Rainforest, Phutawan Rafthouse, Morning Safari, Heart Mountain, Bamboo Rafting Viewpoint)



Day 9 started at 6am with a dawn safari of the lake and sightings of a water cobra, wild bison, monkeys and hornbills.

After breakfast our first stop off was at Heart Mountain for a few photos and a go at the Buddhist Gong!!





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Day 8 & 9 – Khao Sok Visit (Takuapa Market, Rajjaprbha Lake & Rainforest, Phutawan Rafthouse, Morning Safari, Heart Mountain, Bamboo Rafting, Viewpoint)

With lunch waiting at the end of the river the group set off on a bamboo rafting adventure!



Even a sudden rain(!!!) shower didn't dampen spirits after a hot chocolate from a bamboo cup!





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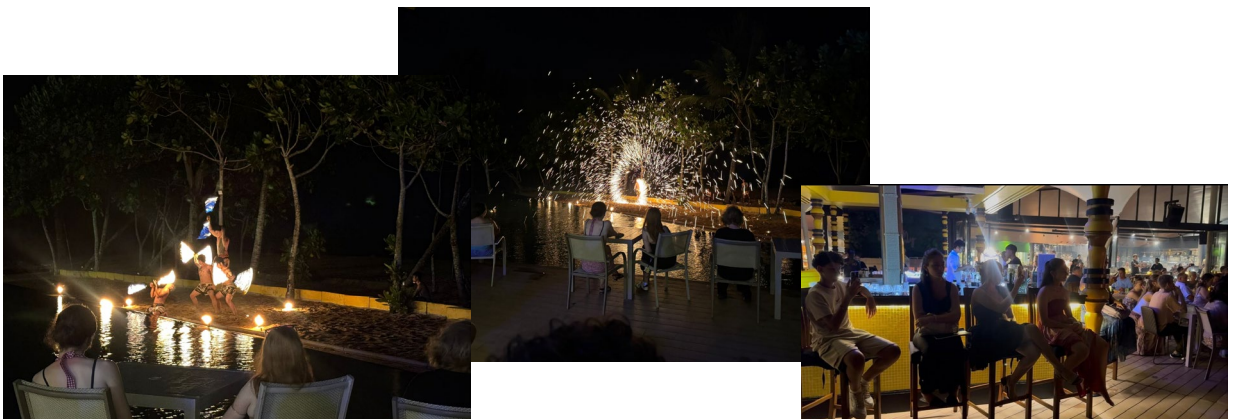
Day 9 – Photo Shoot & Fire Show

A special invite from professional photographer (and friend of Eve Pilmore) Surat Jariyawatanawijit (Joe Surat) provided the International Changemakers with the opportunity to pose for a professional photoshoot in his studio before dinner!



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This was followed by a fire show at the 5* hotel – La Vela





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Day 10 – Royal Thai Navy Turtle Conservation Centre & Beach Clean

A talk from the Turtle Queen – Eve Pilmore – preceded a visit to the Royal Thai Navy Turtle Conservation Centre





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Day 10 – Royal Thai Navy Turtle Conservation Centre & Beach Clean

Following the morning at the turtle conservation centre the team took to the local beach to conduct a beach clean and genuinely make a difference to the turtle population of Khao Lak.



The team were lucky enough to witness a turtle release at the end of the clean – highlighting the importance of removing all the waste.





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Day 11 – Muay Thai & Leavers Meal

A more leisurely start to the day was rudely interrupted by an intense 2 hour Muay Thai session with regional and national champions.



It was then time for the students to get ready for the leavers meal and a celebration of their achievements over the previous 11 days! It was even followed by dancing on the beach!

