

Information for Applicants to the Assumption College Primary English Program

December, 2018

Thank you for expressing interest in joining the friendly and professional team of teachers here in the Primary English program at Assumption College. These notes have been prepared to give you some detailed information about working here.

1. Information about the school

Assumption College Bangkok Primary Section is a highly reputable school for boys located in the heart of Bangkok with an enrolment of approximately 3000 students.

The Director of Assumption College Primary Section is Bro. Seksan, supported by Brother Phuvarin and several senior teachers on the school board including Miss Wilairat (Head of English Programs Department).

The Head of the English Program is Mr. Martin Cooper, a teacher from England who has worked at Assumption since 2006. He is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the English Program, in cooperation with Miss Wilairat and Brother Seksan.

Mr. Christopher Tingle is the Assistant Head of the English Program. Chris, who is an Australian teacher, focuses primarily on student welfare and curriculum matters. Chris has been living and working in Thailand since 1999.

2. What is the English Program?

The English Program began in May 2002 to meet a growing need in the school community for students to increase their ability to understand and use English naturally. Students learn English, Mathematics, Science, Computers, Health and Physical Education with foreign teachers.

The English Program basically operates as its own school within a very big school and we encourage a 'friendly community' feel by regular EP Assemblies and regular contact with parents.

In 2019 there will be approximately 600 students learning in the Primary School EP in classes of 20-25 students with a team of 32 foreign staff to teach the students.



3. English Program Teachers

We have a professional, friendly and supportive team of English Program teachers. One of the best things about working in our program is this positive and professional environment.

All EP teachers must be qualified with a Bachelor Degree in Primary or Early Childhood Education or a recognised equivalent. We also employ some Secondary trained teachers to teach students in upper Grades. It is preferable if our teachers have EFL or ESL training or experience but all teachers are supported with these skills.



4. Teaching Matters

The EP Curriculum for *Mathematics, Science, Computers, Health and Physical Education* is a translation of the Thai Curriculum.

The Grade 1 English Curriculum combines thematic units which aim to rapidly build vocabulary and focuses heavily on phonetic skills using the British *Jolly Phonics* Program. The English Curriculum for Grades 2-6 is primarily based on the Singapore Ministry of Education English Syllabus with influences from Australian, American and British Curriculum documents. It incorporates activities based around text types and associated grammar.

Teachers from each grade meet each week for discussing common issues and problems, sharing ideas and planning lessons.



Staff are required to be on duty from 7.45 am to 4.00 pm Monday to Friday. Teachers teach a *maximum* of twenty hours face to face per week. Face to face teaching consists of 50 minute periods. An example of a class timetable is below. The coloured periods are when students learn with foreign teachers:

	1	2	3		4		5	6	7		8
Time	8.00-8.30	08.30-09.20	09.20-10.10		10.25-11.15		12.05-12.55	12.55-13.45	13.45-14.35		14.50-15.40
Mon	Homeroom	EP Skills Reading groups, spelling, phonics, etc	English	Morning Break – 15 Minutes	Thai Subject	Lunch Break	Thai Subject	Maths	Science	Afternoon Break – 15 Minutes	Thai Subject
Tues	Whole School Assembly	Science	Maths		Thai Subject		EP Skills Reading groups, spelling, phonics, etc	English	Thai Subject		Thai Subject
Wed	Homeroom	Thai Subject	Thai Subject		English		Thai Subject	Thai Subject	Maths		Thai Subject
Thur	Grade Assembly	English	Thai Subject		PE		EP Skills Reading groups, spelling, phonics, etc	Thai Subject	Science		Maths
Fri	Whole School Assembly	EP Skills Reading groups, spelling, phonics, etc	Thai Subject		Thai Subject		Thai Subject	English	Health		Thai Subject

Each class is appointed a Thai Co-Teacher who shares the responsibility of the students' welfare. The Co-Teachers are not usually in the classroom when the foreign teachers are teaching which ensures that students must speak English.

Teachers have several 'free' periods each week that are intended for staff meetings, lesson preparation, marking, assessment, program preparation and maintenance of classroom displays.

Teachers of Grade 1, 2 and 3 classes are referred to as *Homeroom Teachers*. They teach their own class English, Mathematics, Science, and Health, as well as reading and spelling. They are also responsible for the welfare of their own class as teachers are in Western Countries. Grade 1-3 teachers are allocated units of work to plan and prepare, which are then shared with other staff in their grade.

Teachers of Grade 4, 5 and 6 classes are referred to as *Specialist Teachers*. These teachers specialise in teaching either English, Mathematics, Science, Health, Computers and/or Physical Education (PE) to more than one class. Most of these teachers also have a Homeroom class and are responsible for the welfare of the students in their own *Homeroom* class.



5. Assessment/Reporting

Thai culture places great importance on regular testing of students' progress. Although regular formal testing contradicts western educational practice, foreign teachers must accept this philosophy if they are to work in Thailand.

In addition to regular on-going assessment, English Program teachers are required to set formal exam papers for students four times per year.

Report Books are completed primarily by the Thai Co-Teachers although foreign teachers are required to write a general comment for students in their Homeroom class twice per year. There is a Parent Day to provide parents with information about their son's schooling for the year and how they can assist in his development.

6. Classrooms and Other Learning Areas

All EP classrooms are air-conditioned. They are spacious and comfortable areas for teaching. Grade 1-3 classrooms are fitted with interactive whiteboards. Grade 4-6 students bring their own iPad to school to use as a learning tool, and their classrooms are fitted with Apple TV, LCD Projectors and computer input. Teachers are expected to use technology in their teaching.

Other designated EP learning areas include the EP Science Lab (*used for Grade 4-6 classes*) and the EP Computer Lab. Both of these facilities have been purpose built for EP's needs and are of a very high standard.

The EP Library now contains approximately 13,500 fiction and non-fiction books, the majority of which are purchased through overseas publishers. Teachers can arrange to use the library for lessons.

EP teachers are expected to maintain educational displays in their classroom and other areas of the school to provide a colourful learning environment for our students.



7. English Program Teachers' Room

The Teachers' room is occupied by foreign teachers and four Thai colleagues. Each teacher is allocated their own work station in the room. The Teachers' Room is intended for preparation of work, marking and regular staff meetings. Facilities include a microwave oven, refrigerator and tea/coffee making equipment.

There are common computers in the room for staff to use. The room also has a wireless hub to enable teachers to use their own laptop computers to access the internet and EP server from their own desks.

EP also has a designated meeting room. The EP Meeting Room is intended for consultations with parents and other visitors to EP, as well as weekly grade/subject meetings.

8. Teaching Resources

The school is very well equipped with very modern facilities including Computer Laboratories, Science Laboratories, Music Laboratories, Specialist Art and Craft Rooms, Libraries and a newly renovated swimming pool. New teachers are generally impressed with the resources that the school provides.

Prior to moving to Bangkok many new teachers ask what teaching resources they should bring with them. The best piece of advice offered by a former staff member on this topic is bring your favourite resources only. New teachers *may* like to bring rewards for students such as stickers, stamps and other small souvenirs from their country. History shows these are much appreciated by and 'motivational' for the students.

9. Staff Dress

Thai culture holds teachers in high esteem and foreign teachers are expected to be dressed appropriately.

Male teachers must wear dark coloured business trousers (not cotton pants), black leather shoes, a long sleeve business shirt and tie to work. Shirts should be either white (*Mondays to Thursdays*) or pale colours (*Fridays*).

Female teachers at Assumption College wear a uniform. All new female teachers are given fabric from the school shortly after commencing work. Teachers must arrange for a tailor to make the actual uniform. It is necessary for female teachers to bring suitable clothing to wear prior to the completion of their uniform. *Suitable* clothing for female teachers in Thailand is a skirt (minimum knee length and not denim), smart blouse (not fitted or 't-shirt' type material) with covered shoulders. Shoes must have closed or peep toes. They must have an ankle strap and appear to be predominantly closed (not sandals or similar). Female teachers *cannot* wear trousers when teaching.

Both male and female teachers require clothes suitable for teaching outdoor or sport activities from time to time. During these periods teachers must wear jeans or long track-pants (not shorts), a T-shirt and sport shoes.

10. Meals

A free mid-day meal is provided for all staff at Assumption College each teaching day. The food is quite authentic Thai cuisine. Alternatively, teachers can purchase their own food from numerous restaurants or street food vendors within walking distance of the school.

11. In Case of Illness

Out of fairness to students and colleagues, all staff are encouraged to avoid unnecessary absence. If teachers are absent from school due to illness they are required to contact the Head of EP between 6.45am and 7.30am so that other staff can be arranged to cover their classes.

If teachers need medical attention during the school day, there is a sick-bay at the school. There are also numerous modern and efficient private hospitals very close to the school where doctors are able to speak English and provide service equal to that given in western hospitals.

12. Salary Matters

The English Program teachers' salary is considerably higher than Thai teachers working in the school. While the Thai teachers accept this fact, avoiding discussion about salaries with Thai colleagues is advised.

Assumption College values quality teachers and therefore offers a very competitive salary package in comparison to other Thai schools. Details of the package for teachers on a full twelve month contract are:

- ☐ Basic Salary is 83,000 baht/month (*Taxed*)
- ☐ Local Medical Insurance is provided (*including repatriation*)
- ☐ Approximately 10 weeks paid holiday/year (*including long weekends*)
- ☐ Two paid 'personal days'
- ☐ Contract completion bonus (*proportional to evaluation*)
- ☐ Yearly increment of 3,000 baht in second year, then 2,000 baht (*subject to evaluation*)

Current and former English Program staff have said they are able to live a *much easier lifestyle* in Bangkok than on a teacher's salary in their own country. This is because of the lower tax rate and because of the lower cost of living compared to western countries.

If they choose, English Program teachers are able to live an affluent lifestyle and still save money each month. The salary certainly allows for teachers to be able to comfortably afford travel within Thailand and elsewhere in South-East Asia.

New teachers are assisted to open a bank account with Bangkok Bank which has an ATM located at the entrance to the primary school.

13. School Terms and Holidays

The Thai school year is divided in to two terms. Foreign teachers are provided with approximately 10 weeks paid holiday each year.

More specific dates (which may change slightly) for the **2019** school year are:

- ☐ **Induction Day for New EP teachers:** Saturday, 23rd March
- ☐ **Preparation Day for New & Continuing EP teachers:** Sunday, 24th March
- ☐ **Summer School:** 25th March – 26th April (*Thai New Year Holiday 13th April to 21st April*)
- ☐ **Term 1:** *Approx. Mid may – end of September*
- ☐ **Term 2:** *Approx. 3rd week in October – End of February (Approximately 10 days holiday for Xmas/New Year break)*

During Summer School, foreign teachers are required to teach students for three hours only during the morning. Afternoons are used for lesson preparation for the forthcoming year and other orientation type matters.

14. Visas

All foreigners who work in Thailand must have a Non-Immigrant 'B' Visa.

In past years, new teachers were required to have this visa issued in their country of residence *before* entering Thailand. However, new teachers are now required by the school to have entered Thailand on a **60 Day Tourist Visa**. Then our school's Thai administration staff will have this **converted to a Non-Immigrant 'B' Visa** shortly after new teachers commence working at the school. The cost of the 60 Day Tourist Visa and Non-Immigrant 'B' Visa are paid for by the new teacher.

Thai Visa rules do change regularly and are not 'enforced' uniformly, *however* all teachers are supported with Visa matters.

15. Thai Work Permit

Thai Work Permits are organised for new teachers by the school's administration staff after they commence teaching. The application process generally takes between two and three months.

It is imperative that teachers bring **ORIGINAL** academic qualification **certificates** *and* academic **transcripts** with them to Thailand in order to be issued with a Thai Work Permit. Please note that if teachers completed a Bachelor Degree that is *unrelated* to Education (For example – B. Business or B. Arts) and then completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Education (or PGCE) then they will be required to bring their original Bachelor Degree *and* Post Graduate Diploma in Education certificate.

If the tertiary institution has changed its name since the time of graduation, teachers will require an official letter from the institution acknowledging the change of name.

The cost of a Thai Work Permit is quite expensive but the *majority* of expenses are paid by the school. Exceptions are a health checks (from a Thai hospital or clinic) and passport photos of various sizes. These are not very expensive.

It is necessary to have a re-entry permit, to come back in to Thailand after travel. There are 2 kinds that you can choose from. A 'single' or a 'multiple' which are to be paid for by the teacher at 1,000B and 3,800B respectively.

16. Accommodation

Assumption College can arrange temporary accommodation for new teachers employed from abroad at a local apartment block for the first month of their contract. This accommodation is optional for new teachers. If teachers use this accommodation they will forfeit 10,000 baht from their first month's salary and will be required to pay for their own utilities (water, electricity and telephone calls). This should be no more than 2,000 baht (depending mainly on how often the air-conditioning is used).

After settling into life in Bangkok new teachers generally find their own accommodation in a privately rented apartment in the local area. To give an indication of rental prices, a pleasant studio style apartment near the school with all necessary facilities (including TV, hot water, refrigerator and air conditioning) can be rented from approximately 10,000 baht/month. Larger apartments with more 'luxurious' facilities (including swimming pool and gym in the complex) can be found at approximately 15-20,000 baht/month which compares well to prices in capital cities of other countries.

The standard rental contract agreement in Thailand usually involves paying two month's deposit PLUS one month rental in advance (Total – three months) when moving into an apartment. New teachers should have this money prepared before their arrival in Thailand.

As a guide, this year's teachers pay between 10,000 – 25,000 baht/month in rent.

17. Visitors during Teaching Hours

Teachers are permitted to have visiting family and friends visit the school campus to observe lessons and school life during schools hours. In this event the Head of EP should be advised at least one day prior to the visit.

Visitors to the school must be dressed very smartly in order to respect Thai culture and Assumption College expectations, and to ensure that foreign teachers maintain a professional image with Thai colleagues, parents and most importantly our students.

18. Thai Background and Culture

Thai parents teach their children from a very young age to hold their teachers, parents, the Monarchy and their God (in most cases Buddha) in high regard. Through their teaching and actions around the school the English Program teachers should endeavour at all times to encourage and uphold these values.

Every morning at 8am the Thai National Anthem is played around the school. The English Program teachers will be assembled with their Homeroom class at this time. The anthem is followed by a Catholic prayer. At the conclusion of each day all EP classes say a prayer in English.

Each Friday afternoon at 3.40pm 'The Royal Anthem' is played around the school. If English Program teachers are teaching at this time they are responsible for ensuring that their students show appropriate respect.

New teachers are encouraged to read material about Thai culture prior to beginning teaching at Assumption College. Thai teachers and continuing foreign teachers are happy to explain aspects of Thai culture to new staff.

19. Local Knowledge

The Assumption College Primary Section is located in the heart of the Silom/Sathorn business and tourist district of Bangkok. The benefits of this include the availability of almost all services that you may require. The disadvantage is the world famous Bangkok traffic!



Continuing staff are happy to help new staff in any way with advice, where to go, when to go, trips, bank accounts, traffic conditions etc.

Generally Thai Supermarkets and Department Stores offer a similar range of products to those available in Western Countries.

21. Finally...

Thank you again for your interest in teaching at our English Program. If you would like any further information you may also look at our website:

<http://www.acp.ac.th/ep/home.htm>

or contact the Head of EP, Mr. Martin Cooper, via email (mcooperassumption@yahoo.com)



English Program