



WOLVERHAMPTON
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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senior expedition 2011

Dear all (students, Mums and Dads),

We are delighted with the level of interest in the Borneo 2011 senior expedition and once again we wish to communicate our gratitude for the feedback that you continue to pass our way – this is much appreciated. Understandably, we have also received one or two queries relating to the security situation in Borneo. The FCO website contains the following statement:

“There are indications that both criminal and terrorist groups are planning violent acts against foreign tourists in eastern Sabah. Of particular concern are resorts located in isolated parts of eastern Sabah including Semporna and the islands of Mabul and Sipadan. This includes transportation routes to and from island resorts. Terrorist groups and criminal gangs have been responsible for acts of piracy and kidnappings of foreign tourists in eastern Sabah in the past. Travellers should exercise extreme caution if travelling in these areas” (<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/asia-oceania/malaysia> accessed 28/01/2010).

Quite naturally this advice concerns us and we feel it is appropriate to state clearly our position in relation to the information coming out of the FCO, which may help you to make a decision with regards to involvement in the senior expedition for 2011. It is salient to note that the FCO is not advising against travel to Borneo at this time. The named destinations for which an increased risk has been suggested (isolated coastal resorts in eastern Sabah) are distant from those that we intend to visit. In the past three years Adventureworks has had eight school groups travel to Borneo without problem and two more groups are booked to go in 2010. Additionally, Mike Rosser (Adventureworks Director) informs me that “Simon Amos our in-country manager has contact and good relations with the Embassy and their view is that provided sensible precautions are taken then there is no problem”. Taken together, this information has encouraged us to adopt a ‘wait and see’ approach (a situation we have encountered before with regard to former WGS expeditions with respect to FCO security advice). In the weeks and months ahead we will monitor the situation closely, listen to feedback from Adventureworks agents resident in Borneo and talk to the school groups who currently intend to be on expedition there during summer 2010.

Whatever happens we will be offering a senior expedition (somewhere) summer 2011 – hopefully Borneo. As a fall back, Adventureworks are able to offer an alternative destination (of equal or greater value) if the FCO change their recommendations and advise against travel to Borneo. We will err on the side of caution when making decisions and at all times we will consult with you. Therefore our advice at

the current time, for those who wish to join us on expedition, is to continue with your application in the knowledge that WGS and Adventureworks are doing everything possible to gather all relevant information and respond appropriately. Borneo remains the destination of choice at the present time but please be reassured that deposits can be refunded in the unlikely event of a new location not being to your liking. We are confident however, that if we have to rethink we will still be able to offer an exciting, memorable and life changing expedition in an alternative exotic location.

I hope this letter helps you, as a family, to make a choice with regards to the 2011 senior expedition. Please feel free to call me via the general office if you wish to discuss these, or any other matters relating to this trip, in more detail.

With all good wishes

Dr Simon Hinchliffe