



## Guidance for teachers leading visits to the Forest Hermitage.

The Hermitage is a place of meditation and learning and it is where monks and others live. Please have this in mind when you prepare your class for their visit.

While the Abbot or the monk in charge would want you as a teacher to be aware of what is happening with your class, he would appreciate it if he could lead what takes place.

Below are a few points you may wish to offer to your class as a model for behaviour while at the Forest Hermitage. By following them they should benefit fully from their visit.

### **PLEASE REMEMBER:**

1. Be respectful of the place you are visiting, understand that it is a place of meditation, and it is a place where monks live and work.
2. When entering the shrine room please be quiet and also be very respectful of the Buddha image you will see there.
3. Be respectful to the monks you may see.
4. GIRLS...please do not touch the any of the monks and try not to get too close. This also applies to female teachers.
5. Don't point your feet towards the Buddha image, as it is considered highly disrespectful to do that. Sit with your legs crossed.
6. Please don't be tempted to touch or climb on the things you see, either in the house or the grounds. Certainly do not get too close to the Buddha image or try to touch it.
7. Try to be quiet: raised voices disturb the peace: shouting out causes others to shout. If you want to ask a question, do so sensibly – put up your hand and wait to be asked, just as you would in class.
8. You will probably want to think of questions before you come along on your visit, but why not wait: often the best questions arise through experience.
9. Please don't bring sweets, gum, food or drink with you into the Hermitage.

### **WHEN YOU ARRIVE:**

1. Please be as quiet as possible as some of the monks may be in silent meditation.
2. Enter the building peacefully and quietly REMOVING SHOES BEFORE OR AS YOU ENTER the outer room. You will be shown where to put them by the person meeting you.
3. Children please don't bring any bags with you: you will have no need of them at all.
4. Please leave your coats on the coach, unless it is raining, as we have little space for storing them.
5. The grounds are beautiful, but please remember that this is where the monks live and also where they meditate. Please respect the need for quiet. The grounds are also home to a number of Buddha images – please do not touch or disturb any of them.