

Leading UK school group to establish Phuket campus as international school demand grows beyond Bangkok

Recognised as Independent Secondary School of the Year 2026, NLCS will bring its academic model to Cherng Talay through a new day and boarding school for families across Thailand and the region



(Top row, from left to right) Mr Varis Chirayus, Deputy Managing Director of VLC Group and NLCS Phuket; Mr Ali Aliev, Director of Business Development of NLCS International

(Bottom row, from left to right) Mr Naruj Chirayus, Managing Director of VLC Group and NLCS Phuket; Mr Daniel Lewis, Managing Director of NLCS International;

PHUKET, THAILAND, 14 MAY 2026 — NLCS International has signed an agreement with VLC Group, the owners of multiple premium hotels and resorts in Phuket and Khao Lak, to develop NLCS Phuket, bringing the educational model of one of the United Kingdom's highest-ranked independent schools to Thailand's fast-growing international education market.

North London Collegiate School Phuket

Founded in 1850 by educational pioneer Frances Mary Buss, North London Collegiate School is one of the United Kingdom's most respected and most successful independent schools. In The Sunday Times Parent Power Guide 2026, NLCS was named Independent Secondary School of the Year, Independent International Baccalaureate School of the Year and Independent Secondary School of the Year in London. In the accompanying league tables, NLCS was ranked the number one girls' school in the UK, gaining second place for all schools in London and third place for all schools nationally.

Serving students from Early Years to Year 13, NLCS Phuket will be developed as a premium co-ed day and boarding school in Cherng Talay, one of Phuket's fastest-growing residential districts. The school is planned for Thai, expatriate and internationally mobile families seeking a rigorous British education in Phuket, with boarding provision for students from across Thailand and the wider region.

The agreement was formalised at Courtyard by Marriott Phuket, Patong Beach Resort, with Mr Daniel Lewis, Managing Director of NLCS International, and Mr Naruj Chirayus, Managing Director of VLC Group and NLCS Phuket, signing on behalf of the two organisations.



Members of the Chirayus family, the Phuket-based owners of VLC Group and developers of NLCS Phuket. From left to right: Mr Naruj Chirayus, Mr Varis Chirayus, Mr Somnuk Chirayus, Ms Nantana Wongsatayanont, Mr Somboon Chirayus, Chairman of VLC Group, Mr Chanon Wongsatayanont and Ms Napittra Chirayus

“For many families, Phuket already offers an exceptional quality of life, but there has been a clear gap in the market for a highly academic school with a direct connection to one of the UK's leading educational

institutions,” said Mr Naruj Chirayus, Managing Director of VLC Group. “As a Phuket-based family business, we see education as a natural part of the island’s next stage of growth. Our aim is to help make Phuket a more complete place to live, learn and build community.



(Left): Mr Naruj Chirayus, Managing Director of VLC Group and NLCS Phuket; (Right) Mr Daniel Lewis, Managing Director of NLCS International

NLCS International works with partners around the world to develop schools that reflect the founding school’s educational philosophy: academic ambition, pastoral care that is tailored to the individual, and a vibrant co-curricular life. Its family of schools includes NLCS Jeju, NLCS Dubai, NLCS (Singapore), NLCS Kobe and NLCS Hong Kong (opening 2027).

“NLCS Phuket represents an important new chapter for our international family of schools,” said Mr Daniel Lewis, Managing Director of NLCS International. “Our aim is to deliver an education that develops scholarship, in a joyful and exciting environment, that celebrates every individual for who they are, and that is rooted in a genuine love of learning. This is not simply a well-known name above the door. The strength of NLCS lies in the authentic connection between our schools, the quality and depth of our academic support, and our shared belief that happy, confident students are best placed to achieve exceptional outcomes.”

North London Collegiate School Phuket



North London Collegiate School Phuket will open in Q3 2028

Boarding will be a central part of the NLCS Phuket offer, giving families access to an NLCS education without having to send their children abroad. It also strengthens Phuket's appeal as a regional education base, allowing students to remain closer to family, home markets and Asia's major travel hubs.

The school is expected to open with capacity for around 1,000 students, with scope to grow to approximately 1,500 over time. Planned facilities include boarding provision, dedicated junior and senior school spaces, science and technology facilities, a 50-metre swimming pool, sports hall, covered tennis courts and football pitches.

The announcement comes as Thailand's international education sector continues to expand beyond Bangkok. Kasikorn Research Centre expects Thailand's international school business to grow by 9.7% in 2025, while international student numbers are projected to increase by 8.3%. The research also notes that international schools are likely to expand further beyond the capital, with Phuket named among the key provincial markets.

For Phuket, the arrival of a leading day and boarding school adds another layer to the island's family infrastructure. International schools help attract long-stay residents, skilled professionals, entrepreneurs and investors, while supporting demand across housing, hospitality, retail, transport, local services and employment.

Mr Chirayus continued: "Top schools create communities around them. We have seen this in places such as Dubai and Jeju, where education has played an important role in shaping internationally minded residential destinations. With NLCS Phuket, we want to support the development of Phuket as an educational centre of excellence for the region."



Exceptional academic standards and a well-rounded education will be the cornerstones of NLCS Phuket.

NLCS Phuket will maintain close links with the wider NLCS family of schools, with support from NLCS International in school design, curriculum development, recruitment, teacher training, academic planning and quality assurance.



NLCS Phuket campus renderings: Drop-off area (left) and senior school (right)

Further details on admissions, opening timelines and campus development will be announced in due course. For any enquiries, please direct your email to: enquiries@nlcs-phuket.com

For more information, please visit <http://www.nlcs-phuket.com>

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For more images, click [HERE](#)

About NLCS International

NLCS International is a family of international schools focused on delivering a high quality education grounded in academic rigour, innovation and global citizenship. Through an emphasis on personalised learning, student wellbeing and excellent teaching, NLCS International schools support students in developing the skills and understanding needed for an increasingly complex world.

At the heart of all NLCS schools is a shared educational vision and a clear commitment to nurturing a lasting love of learning. Each school is guided by a set of values based on common beliefs, which together underpin the distinctive philosophy of North London Collegiate School.

NLCS International works closely with its schools to support a consistent educational approach that reflects the aims and values of NLCS, through ongoing guidance, monitoring and quality assurance. In partnership with local communities, NLCS International fosters learning environments where academic ambition is balanced with strong pastoral care, and where every child is known, supported and valued as an individual, alongside meaningful professional development opportunities for staff.

About VLC Group



VLC Group is a Phuket-based company led by the Chirayus family, who is the owner of Merlin Phuket Hotels and Resorts. The group's hospitality portfolio includes Phuket Marriott Resort and Spa, Merlin Beach; Courtyard by Marriott Phuket, Patong Beach Resort; Le Meridien Khao Lak Resort & Spa; Khaolak Merlin Resort; and Phuket Merlin Hotel. Through its partnership with NLCS International, VLC Group is leading the development of NLCS Phuket as part of its long-term commitment to Phuket's growth as a destination for families, education and community development.

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