



SHARON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Children are our future



Parent Handbook 2016-2017

Sharon International School

www.sislao.com

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The following packet contains important information about the international academic program at Sharon International School (SIS). This information is provided to help you know how to support your child in his/her learning. It will also help you to better understand the SIS program and philosophy.

You should please:

- 1. Read all the pages.**
- 2. Contact a school administrator if you have any questions.**
- 3. Sign & return the required “Parent-School Partnership” form to our office.**
- 4. Keep the handbook as a ready reference throughout the school year.**

We will attempt to keep you informed as updates to relevant information are made. This will usually be done through our parent workshops and/or through notices sent home with your child. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact a school administrator.

This information is updated in print yearly. While every effort is made to make sure that each new version of our handbook is complete and accurate, please understand that at times our policies & mandates are updated or changed as our school improves and develops and that there may be situations which we have not foreseen to include.

Contents

PART 1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
1. SHARON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL	5
2. CURRICULUM	6
3. KINDER SCHOOL.....	9
4. PRIMARY SCHOOL	10
a. CORE CURRICULUM	10
b. EXTRACURRICULAR.....	12
c. LAO LANGUAGE	13
5. MIDDLE SCHOOL	14
a. CORE CURRICULUM	14
b. EXTRACURRICULAR.....	15
6. SCHOOL ON THE WEB.....	16
7. CONTACT	16
 PART II. ABC's of SIS.....	 17
ACADEMIC YEAR.....	18
ASSESSMENTS & STUDENT REPORT CARDS	18
ATTENDANCE	20
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS (KINDER SCHOOL)	21
BOOKS.....	21
BUS/VAN.....	22
CELEBRATIONS, EVENTS & CLASS PARTIES.....	22
CLASSROOM MEDIA	23
CLOTHING	23
COMMUNICATION.....	24

CURRICULUM	24
DISCIPLINE.....	25
EMERGENCY	26
ENGLISH USAGE.....	26
FEEDBACK	27
FIELD TRIPS.....	27
GRADUATE CERTIFICATION	28
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS - PRIMARY	28
HEALTH	30
HOMEWORK.....	32
HOURS	33
LAO LANGUAGE.....	35
LIBRARY	35
PARENT INVOLVEMENT	35
PLACEMENT.....	37
RECORDS.....	38
RULES.....	39
STUDENT SAFETY POLICY	40
SCHEDULE	40
SNACKS & LUNCH	40
TEST PREPARATIONS	42
TREASURES & POSSESSIONS	42
 Appendix 1 - Kinder Calendar 2016 - 2017.....	 44
Appendix 2 - Primary & Middle Calendar 2016 – 2017	45

PART 1. INTRODUCTION

1. SHARON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Welcome

to Sharon International School (or SIS as students and staff say) where we aim to bring together local and international communities of children who are being made confident of their ultimate purpose. It is our aim that SIS students will become upwardly focused local and global citizens- the moral leaders, inspirational visionaries, and exemplary peace-makers of their homes and communities.

We strive to lead students to become sacrificial servants, as well as people of strong character and humble courage who will positively impact their world for a greater good and a lasting future.

Our purpose

is to provide, in a secure, nurturing and stimulating environment, an international standard of quality education based on the value of character because we believe successful people are more than what they know. Whenever possible, the educational environment should inspire students to develop and strengthen their dynamic talents and unique gifts. We serve the physical, emotional, and intellectual needs of children and their families. We meet these goals through fully integrated educational curriculums, on-going communication with parents, and at times, other services.

Working together

, we can foster each child's growth and development. All of the dedicated, caring staff at SIS strives to make certain that your child has the very best experience possible during their time with us. We thank you for entrusting us with that privilege and responsibility. We maintain that proper and engaged parental involvement is the means by which *every* child may be provided a *complete* education and preparation for a productive, healthy, and sustainable life. Children are our future.

2. CURRICULUM

We are committed at Sharon International School to transferring relevant knowledge about the world in an engaging and fun way. The purpose of curriculum alignment is to match what is written (curriculum) with what is taught (instruction) to what is tested (assessment). SIS is licensed to use the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) objectives and the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) standardized tests established by the Texas Education Agency, USA, in grades Pre-K through 8.

Our curriculum and books are carefully selected under the oversight of our Curriculum Coordinator to help students succeed in meeting the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for each placement level. Besides this, every attempt is made to choose books which promote critical thinking skills and the development of a worldview which is based on high moral character.

Philosophy

A Complete Education - A Parent-School Partnership

We believe that a proper education includes, but is not limited to, academia. A complete education will help the child discover the ultimate purpose for his/her life and, wherever possible, strengthening the unique talents and gifts of the student. We hope to provide the necessary skills for living a sustainable lifestyle for the student's own good, as well as teaching & modeling so that the student is able and may be willing to share his/her abilities to benefit others.

Sharon International School provides an integral part of a complete education for its students. It remains the parents' responsibility to see that the child's upbringing and education is complete. The school supports the parent in educating the student while the parent is encouraged to provide the opportunity and instruction for the student to practice what he/she is learning for life.

Positive Atmosphere

School should be a positive, encouraging, and safe place for students. Teaching staff is trained to promote our content values of truth, goodness, creativity, excellence, and character education.

Tailored Placement

SIS students come from all over the world. Students arrive at SIS with their own unique set of backgrounds, experiences, and abilities. Two kids, having grown up on different diets and having different genetic predispositions even though the same age, may not all fit into the same sized shirt. Likewise, we recognize that children have been educated in different ways and have their own unique gifts. Even though they might be the same age, they may not all fit into the same class levels. Therefore, at SIS, we offer what we call a "tailor-fit" academic program to our Primary School students.

For example, a student may be advanced in mathematics but be a new English learner. This creates a problem in the traditional classroom because the child's math skills are at or above level for his age but his English skills are at a beginner's level.

In Primary school, classes are divided into subject/skill areas and are leveled. Students are placed into leveled classes according to individual skill sets. This allows a student who tests at one level for math to be in a different leveled class for English language class. We call this a "tailor-fit" program.

By leveling students according to abilities in each skill-set (instead of a one-size-fits-all approach), each student may progress more rapidly both in the subjects in which he/she excels as well as in those areas in which he/she encounters greater difficulty. Leveled subject areas include writing & grammar, math, language comprehension, and reading fluency.

Our unique primary placement program is not meant to be used as a traditional “grade” placement system. Rather, we have made every effort to employ a system which challenges students according to their individual talents and abilities while showing respect for all children. All students, regardless of placement level, are given a homeroom which corresponds to their age. Children ages 6-9 have a homeroom downstairs while children ages 9-12 have a homeroom on the second level.

Standardized Placement

Placement standards are set and evaluated yearly. Standards are to be applied fairly and consistently for all applicants. For students who are enrolled at SIS, placement for the following year will take into consideration any of the following which are applicable: age, curriculum-specific placement tests, teacher’s evaluation, assessor’s evaluation, and Texas Assessment of Knowledge & Skills (TAKS) test results. While teacher’s evaluations are a very important part of the placement process, all recommendations must meet standards and are overseen by our Curriculum Coordinator.

3. KINDER SCHOOL

Kindergarten is open to students age 3 (by September 1st) through age 6 (on or after September 1st). Young learners are introduced to subjects about the world around them through thematic learning. Stories, literature, activities, songs, games, and worksheets which help meet the learning goals are used.

Sunshine and **Starlight** (Trademarks: SIS) students experience hands-on learning through engaging rhythm & rhyme and outdoor & manipulative activities. Sunshine and Starlight classes follow one thematic learning system, for the purpose of leveled repetition. The themes serve as the basis for learning new vocabulary, exploring topics related to the child and his/her world, and focusing on character & skills development.

Discoverers (Trademark: SIS) students prepare to leave Kindergarten and enter Primary School. Discoverers also employs a thematic learning system, but the themes vary from those used in Sunshine and Starlight. Discoverers is the equivalent to an American kindergarten class or an international primary preparation class. Students at this level are taught the basics of early reading & writing as well as beginning mathematics skills as necessary for entrance into Primary School.

4. PRIMARY SCHOOL






Primary School is open to qualifying students age 6 (by September 1st) through age 12 (on September 1st). Primary classes are divided into subject/skill areas and are leveled. Students are further placed into these leveled classes according to individual skill sets. We call this a 'tailor-fit' program which was uniquely designed under the supervision of our Curriculum Coordinator to meet the specific needs of the SIS student body.

a. CORE CURRICULUM

World of Wonders (WOW)

World of Wonders (Trademark: SIS) classes serve as your primary student's homeroom. WOW courses introduce children to topics such as history & geography, cultures, and science through lively read-alouds and engaging discussions. Students are given a chance to excel at independent reading. For students who are just beginning, we use our "Teach Your Student to Read" program which has proved highly effective. All students also receive correct oral English practice through Oral Language Exercises.

Following our placement guidelines, each primary student will attend one of the following WOW courses with the corresponding study emphases:

-  Explorers – Explore the World +general science & health
-  Globetrotters – World Cultures +general science & health
-  Trailblazers – World History 1 +Elementary Chemistry & Elementary Biology
-  Navigators – World History 2 +Elementary Physics (with science fair)
-  Adventurers – ASEAN Studies +Building Blocks of Science 5

Read below for information about books used in the WOW courses. For more information, please make an appointment to speak with the Curriculum Coordinator.

WOW courses include:	
SCIENCE	Explorers and Globetrotters use leveled <u>I-Science</u> books from Singapore in addition to a <u>Health, Safety, & Manners</u> program. Higher level classes use <u>Real Science for Kids</u> . You may refer to www.gravitaspublications.com for more information.
HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, & SOCIAL STUDIES	All of our primary WOW classes are literature-based. This means that your child is exposed to a wide range of books for learning about the world. Conversation is the main method used in the classroom to interpret the literature students are reading. You may make an appointment with the Curriculum Coordinator for a listing of course books.
SPELLING	Sequential Spelling is used to teach students to spell according to patterns in the English language. You may refer to www.avko.org or www.spelling.org for more information.

Math

In primary school, we use Primary Mathematics Standards Edition exclusively for our math classes. This program, originally developed by the Singapore Ministry of Education, has been modified to include both customary and metric weights and measures, which means the student may easily transfer to a math course in any country in the world. The original Singapore mathematics curriculum is highly recognized as extremely successful. It employs a concrete to pictorial to abstract approach which helps students to better understand concepts than with an abstract approach alone. You may refer to www.singaporemath.com for more information.

Language

Scribblers and Scribes use a phonics-based reading and writing program. In Wordsmiths, Composers, and Authors classes, Easy Grammar is used as the course text. We have found this to be a highly effective program for both native English speakers and English learners. You may find more information at www.easygrammar.com Language classes give a time for instruction and practice in writing, grammar, and phonics.

You may request an appointment with the Curriculum Director for more information about any course.

b. EXTRACURRICULAR

Writing Workshop	Qualifying advanced students attend Writing Workshop twice per week to improve their written skills and to expose them to creative and expository writing methods and techniques. Writing Workshop prepares graduating candidates in creative writing and essay preparation.
English Language Learners (ELL)	Our English Language Learners classes provide an added opportunity for students for whom English is not their first language to get further instruction in the English language whether in reading, conversation or vocabulary.
Reading Comprehension	This course serves as a bridge between the ELL and Writing Workshop courses. Twice per week students gather to read stories and learn techniques for understanding information from selections read. This new course is intended to improve vocabulary and standardized assessment scores.
Activities	Activities which may be offered include but are not limited to international sports, arts and crafts, music, piano, violin, Lao traditional arts, taekwondo, and computer. We also offer a variety of additional creative and physical event activities each year.

c. LAO LANGUAGE

In order to both satisfy Lao Ministry of Education mandates and to promote the integration of children living in Vientiane into the aspects of local society which are of benefit, elective afternoon courses will also be offered separately in Lao language to all students.

Lao Language for Lao

Available to all Lao nationals. Please see the Lao Curriculum Coordinator for more information.

Lao Language for Foreigners

Available to students of other nations, this class usually begins after the regular school year is off to a solid start and ends shortly after Pii Mai to give students time to prepare for the end of the regular school year.

Please see the Lao Language for Foreigners Coordinator for more information.

For more information about the SIS curriculum schedule, please contact your child's teacher(s) or the Curriculum Coordinator.

5. MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle School is open to qualifying students age 10 through age 14 (by September 1st). Unlike primary school, only math is leveled. For all other subjects, students are placed into courses by grade – 6th or 7th. This is similar to a traditional international placement system.

a. CORE CURRICULUM

Science

In 2016-17, students will study Middle School Chemistry and Middle School Biology. Middle School classes use Real Science for Kids. This program focuses on content for about half of the class time and hands-on laboratory activities and experiments for the other half. You may refer to www.gravitaspublications.com for more information.

Social Studies & Literature

Your child is exposed to a wide range of books for learning about the world. In 2016-17, students will study a program which focuses on Eastern Hemisphere (excluding Southeast Asia which is emphasized in the last year of primary school). You may make an appointment with the Curriculum Coordinator for a listing of course books.

Composition

In Middle School, language composition is made up of 2 main parts – Writing & Grammar. Students are given instruction in writing various types of compositions. Creativity is encouraged. Grammar skills which were emphasized in primary school continue to be reviewed through exercises in Easy Grammar (www.easygrammar.com). We have found this to be a highly effective program for both native English speakers and English learners.

Math

Teaching Textbooks (www.teachingtextbooks.com) is a computer-based math curriculum. Leveled courses allow students to study math according to their skills and at their own paces. A teacher is available on site to answer any questions students may have and to help keep track of progress.

You may request an appointment with the Curriculum Director for more information about any course.

b. EXTRACURRICULAR

Activities

Activities which may be offered include but are not limited to art, music, piano, violin, Lao traditional arts, taekwondo, computer, and photography.

We also offer a variety of additional creative and physical event activities each year. Please see the school calendar for more information.

6. SCHOOL ON THE WEB

We are running homepage and Facebook. You can access anywhere or any device for smart phone, tablet, personal computer.

 WEB SITE : www.sislao.com

- School Information & Events
- Available for Download: Newsletter, School Documents

 FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/SharonInternationalSchool2004

- School photos & video clips

7. CONTACT

At SIS we are always happy to answer any questions you may have about our community and learning environment.

OFFICE EMAIL: sharon_international@yahoo.com

OFFICE TEL: +856 (0)30 515 0937 & (0)21 353 275

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ADDRESS: Sharon International School

P.O. BOX 4951 Saphanthong Neua, Sisatthanak District, Vientiane, Lao P.D.R.

PART II. ABC's of SIS

A a

ACADEMIC YEAR

The school year is divided into two semesters/terms:

Term 1: August 11^h to December 23rd

Term 2: January 9th to May 30th



ASSESSMENTS & STUDENT REPORT CARDS

1) Developmental Observation

Each student will be observed throughout the year to assess his/her development in these areas: physical, emotional, social, cognitive, creative and linguistic. This information will provide the basis for parent-teacher conferences which are also held 1-2 times yearly. Conferences may be held at other times by appointment if either parent or teacher requests one.

2) Progress Assessments

Twice yearly an assessment of knowledge and skills will be completed. Please note that teacher's progress reports are primarily the teacher's subjective assessment of your child's progress. Placement for next year's level(s) will take the subjective portion of teacher assessment reports into consideration. However, other relevant objective factors such as age, curriculum-specific exam results, reading level, and Texas Assessment of Knowledge & Skills (TAKS) test results will also be considered. Course curriculum or SIS-specific book tests are used mainly to determine which SIS course level a student will be placed in during the next school year. TAKS tests are used mainly to determine which grade a child is eligible to enter in American and most traditional international schools.

While teacher's evaluations are a very important part of the overall placement & advancement process, all recommendations must meet standards and are overseen by our Curriculum Coordinator. (See PLACEMENT.)

In Kinder School, individual student's progress will be assessed in regards toward readiness for primary school. Areas of assessment will include: 1. reading skills 2. personal, behavioral, organizational, & social skills 3. language skills 4. math skills 5. listening and processing skills.

3) Grading Scales

Students will receive a score from 1 to 4 indicating their ability to achieve certain knowledge or skills as based upon the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

Level 1 = *Experiencing great difficulty and not meeting expectations*

Level 2 = *Making progress towards expectations but still not meeting expectations*

Level 3 = *Improving, learning, and growing, and is currently meeting expectations*

Level 4 = *Exceeding expectations*

4) Curriculum-specific Examinations

Curriculum-specific semester exams (tests which are specific to the curriculum/books that are used in core courses) for pre-primary, primary, and middle school students are given at the end of each semester according to the schedule determined by the school.



Pre-primary and primary students will be tested in the following areas during first semester & final examinations: language, math, & reading fluency (SIS might add science in the future).

Middle School students will be graded throughout the school year, at mid-year, and at final examinations in the following areas: writing, math, and reading.

Lao language testing for foreigners and English conversational skills will be tested in the final semester only. Other courses may or may not be included in the final semester examinations.

5) TAKS Assessments

TAKS stands for Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills and are based on the TEKS which stands for Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. The TEKS are the standards our curriculum is based on. The TEKS determine what outcomes are expected from the curriculum in each leveled course. SIS offers TAKS tests once a year under license from the Texas Education Authority in the United States. These tests are called “standardized tests”. This means that they are intended to show a student’s knowledge and skills in a certain standard (in this case, American grade) level.

TAKS tests will be given in the second semester. The dates will be announced. The TAKS results will be shown on the student report cards and graduate certificates as a standardized indicator of each students’ knowledge & skills in the areas of writing/editing & revising, reading comprehension, & math. Middle School students may be given additional TAKS tests.

6) Re-tests/SKIP Tests

Requests for re-tests and skip tests must meet certain criteria and require the approval of the Curriculum Coordinator. The fee for curriculum-specific re-tests is 500,000 KIP per subject. The fee for TAKS tests, which are outside of our normal testing allowance, is 1,000,000 KIP per one TAKS subject test; 1,840,000 for two subjects; or 2,400,000 KIP for the 3-subject TAKS set. Testing fees are non-refundable regardless of scores/outcomes.

(See PREPARING TO TEST, GRADUATION, and RECORDS.)

ATTENDANCE

Students who attend school regularly and do not miss classes are more likely to be successful in learning. Students who miss school may miss important lessons. They may not progress as quickly as students who are in regular attendance and they may not pass exams.

Please inform the school of any planned absences (ex: when you travel). **Children missing more than 15 days per school year may be required to repeat the grade.** In addition, three tardies counts as one absence. In the case of absences due to illness, please call the office on the day your child can not come to school, and please bring a written excuse or doctor's note on the day your child returns. A form is included in the appendix of this handbook for your convenience.

B b

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS (KINDER SCHOOL)



We celebrate birthdays by singing to the students and providing a “birthday gift” on the first Friday of each month (generally). Parents are invited to bring a birthday cake to school to be shared with classmates. If you do not wish your child to participate in this activity, please notify the school.

BOOKS

The only book you need to provide for your child is a good English-English dictionary. Please write your child’s first and last name in his/her dictionary to avoid loss. Otherwise, the school will provide students with the necessary workbooks and exercise books.

For specific information about the publishing companies we use, turn to the curriculum pages at the beginning of the handbook. Choose the section which corresponds with the department (Kinder School, Primary School, or Middle School) in which your child is learning.

Textbooks are for in-school use only. We are unable to provide guardians with copies of our textbooks for home use. For a list of company websites which sell some of the texts we use, please contact the office **before March 30th**. You may use the website references to make your own arrangements to purchase additional copies of the books you require and have them shipped to your address. We regret that we are unable to assist with individual book list/reference requests after March 30th due to the busy season of making preparations for the end of the school year.

For test preparation & review at home, we strongly recommend collecting your child’s worksheets & quizzes which are sent home for your reference. These will be your only resource in preparing for semester & final exams. (See also PREPARING TO TEST.)

BUS/VAN

Due to the increasing traffic congestion in Vientiane, students riding the bus cannot be guaranteed an on-time arrival. Private transportation arrangements to and from school are, therefore, recommended. In some cases, transportation may be arranged with the school for an additional cost. This method is not recommended, however, as we cannot guarantee your child's arrival time. Our school vans are fully insured and driven by a licensed driver and bus attendant.



Please be sure that your child is ready at their pick up time. The van will wait for 2 minutes at each stop before leaving. If your child is not ready at that time, guardians will be responsible for sending the student to school. This helps to ensure that all of our bus riders arrive to school in a timelier manner.

C c

CELEBRATIONS, EVENTS & CLASS PARTIES

A number of school-sponsored events are included in the calendar throughout the school year. Only kindergarten classes celebrate birthdays once a month.

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday in primary school or wish to request your child's teacher sponsor a celebration which is not on the calendar, you may propose this to your child's teacher(s). Please understand that it is at the teacher's discretion, however, to decide whether or not the proposed event is of benefit to the class as a whole and whether or not there is time available to host such an event during the school day without disrupting the academic schedule. All events/celebrations which are not pre-approved (such as those on the calendar) must be submitted for approval by the SIS governing body a minimum of 1 week in advance for consideration. The more you, as a parent, are willing to volunteer your time and resources to make the proposed event successful, the more likely the teachers and governing body will be to consider your request. (See also BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS and PARENT INVOLVEMENT.)

CLASSROOM MEDIA

Most of the classrooms are equipped with technology which allows us to provide your child with the very best texts and teaching materials possible. Document cameras, laptops and projectors are used to bring a World of Wonders to your child's classroom through visual texts on subjects like world history, world cultures, health, safety & manners, biology, and more. Web links bring these subjects to life and open a window to the world.

Parents should understand that, when you enroll your child(ren), you and your children share the responsibility for making sure others continue to be allowed access to these classroom features. **Parents of students who destroy or damage equipment by unruly, negligent, or careless behavior will be charged the full price to repair or replace equipment in addition to any fees and shipping costs.**

The school provides electronic reading tablets for certain classes to use. Students and guardians will be held responsible for any damaged, broken, or lost tablets as well as any unauthorized on-line purchases made that the school is reliable for. Parents wishing their student to take home tablets for independent reading use must leave a 400,000 KIP deposit with the school. This amount can be returned at the end of the school year for tablets which are in good condition.

CLOTHING

The Lao Ministry of Education mandates that children should come to school each day dressed in the required school uniform. Freestyle/street clothes may not be worn to school. Failure to dress appropriately may result in parents being required to bring the appropriate clothes to school for the child to wear.

Please understand that children play hard and can be expected to get dirty while at school. All kindergarten children need an extra set of clothing in case it is required. Underwear, socks, pants and shirt should be left at school in case of an accident. Please place this set of clothing in a plastic bag with the child's name on the outside for easy storage.

Label all clothing, jackets, etc. with a permanent magic marker. This will help make sure that lost items may be returned.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between home and school is very important for your child's educational beginning. Your child's teachers will provide you with your child's general 1-year learning plan **at your request**. Please let the office know which subject(s) your child is studying and for which you wish to see the learning plan.

Please bear with us as we continue to make changes to our parent communication system this school year. We are considering new ways to best inform you of on-going changes and updated information. Your suggestions to the office are welcome. Please write them down if possible.

We welcome notes from you, especially those that let us know about special activities or accomplishments – this gives us information to talk about with your child at school.

CURRICULUM

(See the pages regarding curriculum at the front of this handbook.)

D d

DISCIPLINE

Kindergarten and Primary School follow the Stop Light system.

We have found this to be a very effective system of classroom behavior control. At the beginning of the day all students start on green. Children who are observed being kind to others, listening immediately, and being prepared are praised. Students who do not follow the rules are given two warnings, and then they lose 10 minutes' recess time that day.



If the behavior persists, they are then moved to red and lose 10 more minutes. They can lose a total of 30 minutes of their recess.

After two red days in a week a note is often sent home to the parents. Each day the students begin again on green. At no time do SIS teachers physically strike a child at school. We believe in rewarding the positive and encouraging children to do their best in a loving way.

Sometimes, however, more discipline is needed. The school will give the discipline that is appropriate, and you may be informed if further steps are, in fact, taken.

Do not attempt to take the discipline of another student into your own hands. This can cause much confusion and disturbance. Parent's attempts to discipline students other than their own without authority will not be tolerated.

If you have further issues of concern, please contact an administrator or make an appointment to speak with your child's teacher.

E e

EMERGENCY

In case of an emergency we will follow the instructions from the Health and Medical Record form which you should have received upon registration. In major cases, we will make every possible effort to reach you prior to seeking treatment. In minor cases, we will provide typical first aid. If you do not desire us to do so, please inform us in writing.

ENGLISH USAGE

English is the medium for conveying educational instruction at SIS. Therefore, English is the only language which may be used on school grounds by students and teachers between the hours of 7:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Monday–Friday. This includes all areas of student activity, including the playground. The reasons we do this are to promote social inclusion & the advancement of oral language skills and to allow for better classroom control.

Classroom teachers who are speakers of others languages are assessed yearly to ensure that they also are increasing their language skills and are meeting our standards for classroom instruction and/or assistance in English.

Lao or English language may be spoken after 2:30 p.m. allowing foreign students the chance to practice their Lao language skills with their peers at school and on the playground in the afternoon.

F f

FEEDBACK

School improvement and development is one of our highest values. Helpful suggestions and tips are very appreciated. If you see something that could be done better or could be improved, please discuss this with a member of the management team or fill out a suggestion form which may be requested from the office. If you are willing to offer to volunteer services, we will gladly consider your ideas. We are happy, oh so happy, when others have suggestions to improve the school!

FIELD TRIPS

We value our classroom without walls – which is the world outside! Our teachers have been encouraged to organize field trips with parent assistance to visit sites around Vientiane which are relevant in their students' learning. Safety is our highest priority during our outings. Your help is needed to make sure there is a proper ratio of adult to child supervision to ensure student safety. Talk with your child's teacher about your field trip ideas and how you may be of assistance in your child's classroom without walls learning!

G g

GRADUATE CERTIFICATION



Generally, students 10-12 years old (by September 1st) who have attended 5-6 years of primary school may be considered candidates for graduate certificates. There is more than one type of certificate which may be issued to students. We recommend planning ahead to work toward earning the certificate that is in the best matches your intentions for your child's secondary schooling. Please see the appendix titled "Primary Graduation Requirements" for the criteria related to each certificate.

Independent of the student's current placement level, parents who wish for their child's academic account to be completed at SIS may request the final TAKS assessment round and report. We suggest waiting to request these tests and reports until the child has had sufficient time to make as much progress as possible at SIS. (See ASSESSMENTS for more information.)

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS - PRIMARY

1) Certificate of Completion with Honors

- 🌐 Passed with 70% or higher Adventurers, Authors & a 5th grade equivalent math course
- 🌐 Passed with 70% or above all subject areas on the TAKS 5th grade or equivalent test
- 🌐 Passed with 80% or higher at least one of the core subjects

2) Certificate of Completion

- 🌐 Native English speakers 9 years old on Sept. 1st who entered Globetrotters at 6 years of age and passed Adventurers, Authors, and a 5th grade equivalent math class and meet other criteria for Certificate of Completion
- 🌐 10-12 years old on Sept. 1st of current school year (Oct. 15th for those who entered 2013 or before)
- 🌐 Attended primary school a minimum of 5 years
- 🌐 Passed with a 70% or above all subject areas on the TAKS 5th grade or equivalent test

3) Certificate of Participation

- 🌐 Graduation is mandatory for students who were 12 years old on Sept. 1st regardless of test scores.
- 🌐 10-11 years old on Sept. 1st of current school year choosing this option must have parent release signature for TAKS scores which do not meet pass requirements. Parents must inform the school near the beginning of the 2nd term if they want this option.
- 🌐 Attended primary school a minimum of 5 years

All graduate certificates will be printed with each student's customized completion outcomes, TAKS test scores and levels, and years of attendance at SIS.

H h











HEALTH

1) All immunizations must be current.

Medical and emergency information forms must be on file before a child may enter school.

The World Health Organization recommends preventive treatment for worms every 6 months. Prior to the first day of school, parents are strongly encouraged to treat the student and entire family for worms. Worms are easily transmitted from person-to-person and can cause anemia (low iron in the blood) leading to many health problems. However, if we all work together, we can decrease the incidence of this infection in our school. More information about worm prevention will be presented during Parent Orientation.

We are concerned about the health of every child at SIS. To maintain the health of all children, guardians are required to **keep your child at home** if there are any signs of:

-  Fever
-  Vomiting
-  Diarrhea
-  Excessively runny nose
-  Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
-  Impetigo
-  Strep throat
-  Chicken pox
-  Lice or scabies
-  Dengue fever, malaria or other contagious illness or disease

If a child exhibits any of the above or other concerning symptoms at school, parents will be contacted to pick up their child. When called, you (or an alternate person) are expected to pick up your child within the hour. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Furthermore, parents and staff are reminded to notify the school within 24 hours if a child or family member has developed a known or suspected communicable (contagious) disease (for example, chicken pox or scarlet fever). Parents will be informed if a communicable disease is reported. This rule protects not only the health of your child, but his/her classmates. ***Your cooperation in this matter is very much appreciated!***

2) Returning to school

After a child has been ill, it is important to adhere to the following guidelines when determining whether or not a child is ready to return to school:

- 🕒 mood, appetite, behavior and activity are again normal
- 🕒 ***no fever for 24 hours or more since onset of fever***
- 🕒 antibiotics (if prescribed) have been used for a full 24 hours (48 hours in the case of strep throat)
- 🕒 vomiting and diarrhea have been cleared for 24 hours
- 🕒 frequent coughing and/or excessive nasal discharge has stopped
- 🕒 pain (earache, cramps, headaches, etc.) has stopped

3) Lice or Scabies

If there is evidence of lice or scabies, a child must be sent home immediately from school. The child's head will be checked for nits by SIS staff before returning to school. Students who continue to exhibit signs of an infestation will not be allowed to enter school until the infestation has been controlled.

A general confidential notice will be sent to other parents informing them that a case of lice/scabies has been found in the class. Necessary steps will be taken to disinfect the classroom.

4) Allergies

Please identify any allergies your child may have when enrolling him/her, so that the school staff can take the necessary precautions. While we do not provide alternative snacks or lunches, we can avoid giving your child an item he/she may be allergic to if we have this information in advance. (See also SNACKS & LUNCHES.)

HOMework

1) Math

Primary students will have regular math homework. It is very important for your child's academic success. Please make arrangements for your child to have time to complete these practice exercises.

2) Reading

Read 20 minutes daily at home. The more a child reads, the more likely he/she is to succeed in school. This guideline is true for native speakers and is even more important for English language learners. **Children who read daily are proven to make higher score on standardized tests than those who don't.** Please take the time to read English books with your child daily. **Failure to have your child read 20 minutes daily will have a major negative impact on your child's graduation hopes.** Weekly visits to the library are arranged for the purpose of providing on-level English reading materials to each student.

3) Other subjects

Important homework may also be assigned in Language, Writing Workshop, *Discoverers*, and Middle School classes. It is especially important to develop good homework and study habits in kindergarten to ensure a smooth transition to primary school.

HOURS

a. Arrival

All children must be escorted to and from the gate by an adult. No guardians will be on the school grounds before 7 AM. Students absolutely must not be dropped off at school before 7 AM. Parents should be informed that teachers will not arrive until 7:30 AM. We cannot be held responsible before 7:30 AM. **If you leave your child at school between 7 AM – 7:30 AM, you agree that you do so at your own risk and responsibility in the case of an adverse event.**

1) Kindergarten School

- 🌐 English program hours are from **8.15 AM to 2:45 PM**. International students not participating in the optional Lao program must be picked up before 3:30 PM.
- 🌐 Lao program hours are from 3:30 to 4:30 PM. (Open to all nationalities-optional.)
- 🌐 Half-day Sunshine & Starlight students eating lunch should be picked up from 12:00 to 12:20 PM each weekday. Students who are not eating lunch must be picked up promptly at 11:45 AM.

2) Primary School

- 🌐 English program hours are from **7:45 AM to 2:30 PM**. Morning physical fitness class begins promptly at 7:45 AM. Primary students **arriving after 8:10 A.M. will be counted as late** by the classroom teacher. (See ATTENDANCE.)
- 🌐 Lao language program hours for Lao nationals are from **2:40 - 4:40 PM**.
- 🌐 Lao hours for internationals will be announced upon enrollment in the class.



3) Middle School

- 🌐 Middle School hours are from 7:45 AM to 2:30 PM.
- 🌐 Optional after-school program hours will be announced.

b. Departure

Children are to be picked up at the agreed times. Parents taking children early must alert the staff that the child is leaving early & sign the child out. In some cases, early departure will be counted as a tardy. It is best to notify the office if the parent will be late, so that a child does not feel abandoned.

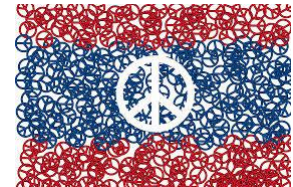
Children will not be permitted to leave without your permission. **If someone other than the persons on the “Authorized Pick-up Form” is to pick up a child, a written, signed note should be given to the Director’s office upon arrival the morning of the day in which pick-up will be affected.**

You absolutely must pick up your child before 5.30 PM. At 5.30, the SIS staff will be going home to spend time with their families and do their personal work. **Your child will be left with the guard.** Your signature showing you read this releases the school from all responsibility of damages or injuries your child sustains while playing by his/herself or otherwise after 5.30 PM. In addition, parents picking up after 5:30 PM will be fined 50,000 KIP per occurrence.

L l

LAO LANGUAGE

See the pages regarding Curriculum at the front of this handbook.
(See also HOURS-*Primary School*.)



LIBRARY

Students may enjoy a weekly trip with his/her class to our library. New titles are being added regularly. All primary students' reading levels have been evaluated. Children will be encouraged to choose 1-2 books a week from the library which are on their reading level to promote vocabulary and fluency development. (This is in addition to their classroom independent reading program.)

Books should be returned each library day before another may be checked out. In the case of lost or damaged books, parents are responsible to pay the fees necessary to purchase and ship replacements. (See also HOMEWORK.)

P p

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

1) Parent-School Partnership

When parents are involved in the learning & training process, children are most likely to succeed. **Please commit to supporting your child(ren) throughout their learning**

process by taking responsibility for certain actions that are essential for their success. These include (but are not limited to):

- 👤 Having your child read on-level English books 20 minutes daily.
- 👤 Supervising your child's homework assignments.
- 👤 Attending SIS parent workshops, parent-teacher conferences, and open house events.
- 👤 Informing your child of school rules that affect him/her and supporting the school in the enforcement of those rules.
- 👤 SIS provides English Language Learners (ELL) courses which meet 2 hours per week required for students who are not meeting academic outcomes. Parent should provide the extra assistance or tutoring of the student's needs beyond this if he/she continues not to meet academic goals.

2) Parent Event

Each year SIS holds parent orientation, parent workshops, parent-teacher conferences, and open house events. Please show your support for your child by attending all of these meetings and events. Important information will be given during these meeting times which affects your child's education. Topics may include testing requirements, specific test preparation methods, how to support your child in his/her science project(s), and how to meet your family's goals for your child's graduation. Stay informed through your participation.

3) Parent Visits and Volunteerism

Parent visits by appointment during school hours are welcomed and encouraged provided these visits do not become a disruption to the class. Should you require to speak with your child's teacher(s), please contact the office to arrange a visit during a time when the instructor is not in class.



There are a number of opportunities during the year for parents to help with projects and field trips. Furthermore, Open House and other events provide opportunity for parents to visit their child's classroom. (See also FIELD TRIPS and CELEBRATIONS.)

P LACEMENT

1) Kindergarten School

Placement is based primarily upon age by September 1st:

Sunshine Class: 3-4 years old





Starlight Class: 4-5 years old

Discoverers: 5-6 years old

For more about entrance requirements for Sunshine, please see the policy posting in the office.

2) Primary School

Children 6-7 years of age and older by September 1st are placed according to demonstrated performance and ability in the following subject areas in English:

-  Reading
-  Conversation
-  Grammar/Writing
-  Math

Students generally must be 10-12 years of age by September 1st to be considered for placement in the final year of primary school.

3) Middle School

Students aged 10-14 by September 1st who have earned a Certificate of Completion for Primary School and meet other criteria may be considered for placement in Middle School.

4) Two-Year Placement Policy

Students who have repeated a course and continue not to progress in the second year, may not be allowed to take the course a third year. In this case, the family may meet with the director and/or curriculum coordinator to make a plan of action.

Generally, students who consistently do not meet academic expectations will be dismissed temporarily to allow the student time to improve his/her language skills, to choose to focus on learning curriculums in his/her native language, or to attempt a new course of action which may better meet the student's needs.

The family may choose to have the student reapply for placement with advancement after one year. For kindergarten students who were promoted to primary school solely on the basis of age (7 years old), the second year of this policy will be considered to be in effect even though their physical enrollment may be in first year primary classes.



(For more information, see the sections in the curriculum guide at the beginning of this handbook.)

R r

RECORDS

1) Records-Maintenance Schedule

School records will be held in our office for reference for a limited time following the schedule as follows:

-  Curriculum-specific semester & final exams, TAKS exams & mid-year report cards
- 1 year
-  Final report cards - 10 years

2) Duplicates

One copy of your child's report card will be issued upon completion of each semester. This service is included in your tuition fees. If you need a duplicate copy, this also may be issued free of charge **one time**. After that, the fee for duplicate records is \$10 per item. Please be sure to maintain secure family records and to request any needed documents within the time frame mentioned above. We will not be held responsible for records-keeping beyond this schedule.

3) Legal Documentation

We also offer assistance in obtaining the necessary governmental verification stamps which are required by some international schools to verify school records. This service is offered at the following fee for service rates:






SIS service fee - \$20

All other fees as incurred through government offices, copy requirements, etc. will be forwarded to the family requesting the documents. You may ask for receipts of these fees.

RULES

The most important guideline of right behavior is to always remember to **"Do to others as you would have them do to you."**

Our general school rules are:

-  Be prepared for class.
-  Listen when the teacher is talking. Follow instructions quickly.
-  Raise your hand to talk. Don't shout out.
-  Keep your hands, your feet, and your mouth to YOURSELF.
-  Do not distract others.

Students practice these rules every day and are taught their meanings. We expect all students to do their best and follow the rules so that we may have a safe and happy school!

S s

STUDENT SAFETY POLICY

Parents and students should be aware of our specific safety policy for Primary & Middle School that only 1 person is allowed in a toilet stall at a time. This policy is meant to keep our school a safe environment for all children. If more than 1 person is found to be in a stall at the same time, all people in the stall will receive consequences. **The consequence for students breaking this rule is an automatic 2-day suspension** to begin the day the offense occurs. This means that parents must immediately come to collect their child and that the child will not be allowed to return to school until the suspension period is completed. **Exceptions will not be made even in the case of missing test days.** These 2 days will be counted under the absence/tardy policy. (See also DISCIPLINE.)

SCHEDULE

For a calendar of events, see the corresponding school calendar. For a sample daily schedule of your child's school day, please ask your child's teacher to provide you with a copy. Copies may also be provided during Parent Orientation. Please note that sample schedules are provided as an example only. Your child's schedule may not follow the sample schedule exactly. (See also HOURS.)

SNACKS & LUNCH

1) Breakfast at Home

It is important that you **feed your child breakfast at home before coming to school.** SIS does not provide breakfast. There is not a time in our schedule to serve breakfast.

2) Lunch

A balanced noon meal is provided daily. If you do not wish to pay for the school lunch, you may send a lunch with your child to be eaten during the scheduled lunch break.



3) No Substitutions

If you require a specific diet for your child, you may provide his/her snacks & lunch. We will make deletions to the items your child is served with your **written** request. **We do not make dietary substitutions.**

4) Kinder School

Snacks and a balanced noon meal are provided daily.

5) Primary School

The school provides a balanced noon meal for students each day.



Students are recommended to bring a milk box for the morning break and a small nutritious snack such as fruit or whole wheat crackers to be eaten at 2:30 PM daily. As a consideration to parents who may wish to be selective in their children's diets, **students may not share their snack** with other children. In order to enforce this, children should be taught not to ask for other students' food as well.

6) Prohibited Items

Dark sodas or other caffeinated beverages such as **Pepsi and Coke**, **gum not allowed** for students. Vitamin C tablets & powders or other pills are not permitted due to the possibility of overdose. Candy, sweet drinks, junk foods are not recommended.

T t

TEST PREPARATIONS

For review at home, we recommend collecting your child's worksheets & quizzes which are sent home for your reference throughout the year. These will be your only resources in preparing for semester & final exams.



Plenty of sleep (8-10 hours per night for children), proper nutrition, and an on-time arrival will increase the chances of successful testing outcomes. (See also ASSESSMENTS & REPORT CARDS.)

TREASURES & POSSESSIONS

Parents are asked not to allow children to bring toys and personal play items from home because of the possibility of loss or damage. Such items may also distract from the classroom learning process.

1) Student Devices

Students are not allowed to bring their personal tablets, computers, i-pads, or phones to school on any day except at the end of the second term. Devices taken from students will be put into the office and the parent/guardian may reclaim the device. SIS takes no liability for any student's lost electronic device.

2) Show & Tell

In some classes, "Show & Tell" will provide an opportunity for your child to bring something to share. Your child's teacher will send a note home to inform you at least one day in advance. These items should be labeled with your child's name and taken home after being shown.

3) Prohibited items

Play guns, weapons, and other toys that encourage aggressive play are never welcome at SIS. Items that promote/cause aggression, unhealthy competition, and hostile feelings are *not* permitted.

SIS 2016 - 2017 Calendar *(Primary/Middle)*

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August 2018

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CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE

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