

Sharon International School



2023-2024

PARENT and LEARNER HANDBOOK

Primary and Secondary

IMPORTANT

Please make sure to:

- 1. Read all pages.**
- 2. Contact the SIS office if you have any questions.**
- 3. Sign & return the required “Parent-School Partnership Form” to the office.**
- 4. Keep a copy of the Parent & Learner Handbook as a ready reference for the school year.**

The following packet contains important information about the international academic program at Sharon International School (SIS). The information is provided to help our parents understand how to support their learners in their learning. It will also help the parents to understand the SIS program and philosophy. SIS asks for the parents to familiarize themselves with the SIS policies and procedures to cooperate in providing effective education to the learners.

SIS will keep the parents informed as updates are made in the Handbook. The updates will usually be completed through the Parent Workshops and/or through other modes of communication. If parents have any questions, please feel free to contact the SIS office.

The Parent & Learner Handbook is updated in print yearly. While every effort is made to ensure that each new version of the Handbook is complete and accurate, please understand that at times the SIS policies and mandates are updated and/or changed as our school grows.

There may be situations that SIS has not foreseen to include in the Handbook. The SIS administration will decide on the necessary procedures to handle unforeseen situations in clear communication with the parents.

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PART I.

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME

Welcome to Sharon International School (SIS), where we bring together local and international communities through quality education. SIS plans to engage the services of teachers who will implement its purposes, policies, and procedures with a view to providing quality education in Laos. SIS is dedicated to developing learners to be global citizens with integrity and intelligence. We are grateful for every single person involved at SIS, including our teachers, learners, and parents.

MISSION AND VISION

Sharon International School's mission is to equip our learners with character, knowledge, and skills through a holistic educational approach that encourages critical thinking and creativity.

Sharon International School's vision is to be an innovative and exemplary school in Laos that inspires lifelong learners to positively impact the world as leaders. We ask that all teachers support SIS's mission and vision.

HISTORY OF SIS

The vision for Sharon International School (SIS) began in 2000 and 2001, when Director Sharon and her husband visited Laos, looking for opportunities to serve the Lao people. After returning to their home country, their hearts for the children of Laos grew continually. They decided to leave all they had and move their family to Laos, with a vision to serve the Lao people through quality education. Initially, SIS began with Kindergarten in 2005, and has progressively expanded to 9th grade for the English and Lao programs. Director Sharon and her husband are continuing to work and live in Laos, and desire to see SIS make a lasting impact on education in Laos.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

SIS believes that only by attending to the whole child can we effectively impact any single area of his/her personality. We strive to provide a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment to help learners grow physically, socially, emotionally, and academically. SIS believes successful people are more than the knowledge they have, so we focus on developing both academics and character. SIS learners are encouraged to develop and strengthen their dynamic talents and unique gifts.

All the dedicated, caring, and professional staff at SIS strive to make sure that your child has the best educational experience possible. We thank you for entrusting us with the privilege and responsibility to be involved in the development of your child. We believe that proper and engaged parental involvement in your child's learning is key for them to succeed. SIS desires that staff and parents work as a team to give our learners a proper education. Therefore, SIS has provided several ways to work together with the parents. Parents can learn how to support their child's education by attending Parent-Teacher conferences, Parent workshops, meetings, and paying

close attention to other notices and letters from the SIS staff/teachers. Your child's teacher can provide you with a general one-year learning plan at your request. Comprehensive education will strengthen the unique talents and gifts of each learner while equipping them to be transformative leaders. SIS's education includes teaching and modeling so that the learners are able and willing to share their abilities to benefit others as well. We provide a part of a complete education for our learners. It remains the parents' responsibility to complete the child's education at home. The school fully supports our parents in educating the learner, and the parents are encouraged to provide the opportunity and instruction for the learner to practice what they are learning at school at home.

SIS CORE VALUES

Character Education: SIS believes that a quality education teaches learners to possess both intellectual knowledge and superior character traits. We desire to equip learners who will make a positive impact in their world. We desire to teach our learners outstanding character traits throughout their time at SIS, and give them practice to grow in a safe and nurturing environment.

Financially Affordable: At SIS, we believe that a quality education should be available to all children no matter what their position is in society. SIS strives to keep tuition and costs affordable and reasonable according to the Vientiane Capital's standards.

Family-Oriented: Working together with the parents, SIS believes that we can foster each learner's growth and development. This happens when SIS and families are working together for our learners' growth.

Tailored Extra English classes: SIS learners come from all over the world. All learners have different backgrounds, experiences, and abilities. Likewise, SIS recognizes that not all learners may fit into the same English language classes. We offer tailor-fit, supplemental English Language classes in our primary classes through placement tests and other admission reviews by the trained and certified SIS staff.

Standardized Placement: Placement standards are set and evaluated yearly. Placement standards take into consideration any of the following that are applicable: age, curriculum-specific placement tests, teacher's evaluations, assessor's evaluation, and Standardized Assessment results. While teacher's evaluations are an important part of the placement process, all assessment results must meet the SIS and Cambridge International standards.

CURRICULUM

The SIS curriculum is carefully selected by the professionally educated and trained SIS Leadership team to help learners succeed in meeting the academic goals. The SIS curriculum promotes and develops critical thinking skills and a worldview based on high moral character. SIS is a registered Cambridge school, authorized to offer education programmes from Cambridge Assessment International Education, a department of the University of Cambridge. We are proud to be part of the world's largest international community of schools, preparing learners for life with Cambridge International's qualifications that are valued by universities and employers around the world. Our programmes inspire learners to love learning and help them discover new abilities and a wider world. This gives a clear path for educational success and helps learners to be prepared.

PLACEMENT

SIS learners come from all over the world, with different levels of abilities, and from varying school systems. Classes are divided mainly by age requirements. We also work to assign Extra English classes according to their age and English language abilities, which are identified during the placement testing process.

Cambridge Primary is typically for learners aged 6 to 11 years old. It develops skills and understanding in the Primary Years in English as a Second Language, Mathematics, Science, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Cambridge Global Perspectives. However, learners will still switch classes for the Extra English (EE) hour. This is where the classes will be tailor-fit to each learner and more appropriate to their English language skills.

Cambridge Lower Secondary is typically for learners aged 11 to 14 years old. It helps prepare learners for the next step of their education, providing a clear path as they progress. Subjects like English as a Second Language, Mathematics, Science, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Cambridge Global Perspectives allow learners to find plenty of opportunities to develop creativity, expression, and wellbeing in a variety of ways.

Please refer to the table below to understand SIS guidelines on age and placement. For any situation where age and placement do not follow these guides, the SIS Leadership team would need to come to a consensus and have approval by the director.

Age	Lao Grade	US Grade	UK Year Group	School Stage
6-7	໓ 1	Grade 1	Year 2	Primary
7-8	໓ 2	Grade 2	Year 3	
8-9	໓ 3	Grade 3	Year 4	
9-10	໓ 4	Grade 4	Year 5	
10-11	໓ 5	Grade 5	Year 6	
11-12	໔ 1	Grade 6	Year 7	Lower Secondary
12-13	໔ 2	Grade 7	Year 8	
13-14	໔ 3	Grade 8	Year 9	

1) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Primary School is available to qualifying learners from age 6 - 11.

	Cambridge Global Perspectives	Math	Science	English	ICT
Grade 1 (Year 2)	Hodder Global Perspectives 2	Cambridge Primary Maths 2	Cambridge Primary Science 1	Cambridge Primary Path English 2	Click Start International 2
Grade 2 (Year 3)	Hodder Global Perspectives 3	Cambridge Primary Maths 3	Cambridge Primary Science 3	Cambridge Primary Path English 3	Click Start International 3
Grade 3 (Year 4)	Cambridge Global Perspectives 4	Cambridge Primary Maths 4	Cambridge Primary Science 4	Cambridge Primary Path English 4	Click Start International 4
Grade 4 (Year 5)	Cambridge Global Perspectives 5	Cambridge Primary Maths 5	Cambridge Primary Science 5	Cambridge Primary Path English 5	Click Start International 5
Grade 5 (Year 6)	Cambridge Global Perspectives 6	Cambridge Primary Maths 6	Cambridge Primary Science 6	Cambridge Primary Path English 6	Click Start International 6

Extra English (EE) Classes	Reading Future Dream 1, Reading Future Discover II , Reading Future Develop III, Cambridge Grammar and Writing Skills
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Global Perspectives: This programme develops the skills of research, analysis, evaluation, reflection, collaboration and communication. It strengthens the links across English as a second language, mathematics, science and ICT starters.

Cambridge Primary Science: Learners will think scientifically and develop practical skills alongside knowledge and understanding, which is vital for explaining the world around us. Improving learners' awareness of science in the world around them develops their sense that 'science is for me', helping to connect themselves to the subject.

Cambridge Primary Mathematics: Learners develop a holistic understanding of the subject, focussing on principles, patterns, systems, functions and relationships. They will become mathematically competent and fluent in computation, which they can apply to everyday situations.

Cambridge Primary Path English: The English as a Second Language programme empowers even the youngest learners to communicate confidently and effectively. It helps them to develop the skills needed to respond to a range of information, media and texts. The programme promotes active learning, develops thinking skills and encourages intellectual engagement.

Click Start International (ICT): Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is now part of the educational experience worldwide and regarded as a new ‘literacy’ alongside reading, writing and numeracy. Learners will develop key ICT skills in a range of applications including computer programming, word processing, digital graphics, databases, spreadsheets, email, presentations, video/animation, the internet and web authoring. They will also consider wider issues such as eSafety and the adaptation of their work to suit their audience.

Extra English Courses:

- Reading Future Dream, Reading Future Discover, Reading Future Develop: These courses provide learners with informative passages covering various fields related to the future. It covers a wide range of topics, including social studies, science, maths, art, music, literature, language arts, physical education, careers, and more. The courses enhance the learners’ ability to develop essential 21st century skills. Twice per week, learners gather to read stories and learn techniques for understanding information. This course is intended to improve vocabulary and standardized assessment scores.
- Cambridge Grammar and Writing Skills: Learners develop writing skills in real-world contexts. It allows learners to develop critical thinking skills through step-by-step guided writing processes. Twice per week, extensive practice activities from personal (e-mails, journals, letters) to academic (essays, book reports, story telling) writing provide opportunities for 21st-century learners to develop excellent writing skills.

2) LOWER SECONDARY

Lower Secondary is available to qualifying learners from age 11 to age 14, who have earned a Certificate of Completion from SIS Primary School or meet all other criteria. SIS Lower Secondary is equivalent to the Cambridge Lower Secondary Years.

Cambridge Lower Secondary Global Perspectives: Global perspectives classes follow the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme that develops the skills of research, analysis, evaluation, reflection, collaboration and communication. The emphasis of the programme is firmly placed on the development of skills encouraging learners to consider and connect personal, national and global perspectives.

Cambridge Science: The programme gives a thorough introduction to the concepts and offers a wealth of ideas for hands-on activities to make Science come to life. It provides exercises that develop learners' ability to apply their knowledge as well as developing their scientific enquiry skills relating to planning experiments and recording results.

Cambridge Global English: Cambridge Global English provides comprehensive, language-rich support for learners of English as a Second Language worldwide. With international cross-curricular topics, from natural resources and renewable energy to storytelling and music, the series helps learners develop the skills to study across the curriculum in English. Packed with literature and oracy activities, the programme provides opportunities for learners to become confident communicators.

Cambridge Mathematics: Cambridge Mathematics explores five content areas: number, geometry, measure, handling data, and problem solving. The course focuses on principles, patterns, systems, functions and relationships so that learners can apply their mathematical knowledge and develop a holistic understanding of the subject.

Click Start International (ICT): Information and Communications Technology (ICT) helps the learners develop a solid understanding of how and why technology and communication are core to the world we live in. With a new focus on strengthening practical skills, learners apply their theory to real-life scenarios, building core skills they will use in all areas of life.

3) HOMEWORK

Reading: Learners are strongly encouraged to read and use audio books to read at least 20 minutes at home daily; this can be through Raz-Kids, English podcasts, or other avenues. Learners who read and interact with English text consistently are proven to make greater improvements in all subjects and score higher on standardized tests. SIS wants to see all learners succeed in every subject, and having good reading fluency and comprehension will help to reach that goal.

Other Subjects: Primary learners may be given homework once a week per subject, but Lower Secondary learners may have homework more often. We encourage Lower Secondary learners to use daily planners in order to keep their work organized with the teachers' help.

It is important for learners to have time to practise the skills that have been learned away from the classroom. We also encourage learners to get plenty of physical exercise and time away from electronics in order to develop in all areas.

4) OTHER COURSES

English as a Second Language (ESL) Program: this is designed to give remedial assistance to learners who are not yet ready to be placed according to the SIS placement policy. A learner's score on the placement tests including interviews as well as observations with the teacher/test administrator, determines placement into the ESL program.

The goal of the ESL program is to give assistance to thrive and be successful in English. SIS hopes that two years would be the maximum time that a learner would need to be in this class, but their motivation would determine the length of the time needed in the program.

Lao Language: According to the Lao Ministry of Education, and to promote the beneficial integration of learners living in Vientiane into the aspects of local society, Lao Language classes are available during the afternoon to all Lao nationals. We ask that parents do not disturb the Lao learners who are studying. It is important that the learners are able to study for the whole time set for Lao Language. Lao language is also available to learners from other countries within a limited schedule. Please contact the SIS office for more information.

Other Activities, including Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs): These include, but are not limited to art, music, physical education, financial planning and budgeting, and Lao Traditional Arts. These activities will change by the year and depending on the talents and interests of our teachers.

CONTACT US

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

EMAIL: sharoninternational.lao@gmail.com

WEBSITE: www.sislao.com

FACEBOOK: Sharon International School

OFFICE TEL: (+856) 30 5989980 / 30 536 3831 / 30 536 3832

ADDRESS: Saphanthong Neua, Sisattanak District, Vientiane, Lao P.D.R / P.O. BOX 4951

PART II.

ABCs of SIS

A a

ADMISSION

1) Admission Procedure and Requirements

SIS Primary and Lower Secondary welcomes inquiries from parents who have children between the ages of 6-14. The leadership team is delighted to discuss education options here at SIS in order for the parents to choose which school is right for their child.

Parents should note that there is an admission packet that must be completed for each learner at SIS. The procedures for all learners applying to SIS must be followed, including potential placement tests, and the learners cannot begin attending classes if the required forms/documents are not completed or submitted. Please discuss the process with any of our office staff for more information and a list of the required forms. In case of late communication with the office, please note that the parents are fully responsible for the consequences.

2) Early withdrawal from SIS

The parents must complete the “SIS Withdrawal Form” at the office. The school requests a minimum of two (2) weeks’ notice before withdrawing a learner from SIS. It is to ensure that everything is complete before the learner can leave. Also, the school will require enough time to complete the report card and/or a letter to the school that the learner is transferring to if needed.

3) Admission-Related Fees

Please contact the office to find out details about admission-related fees, including tuition, uniforms, and other service fees.

4) Two-Year Placement Policy

Learners who have not met the SIS standards will be required to have an Academic Requirements Report (ARR), and summer tutoring in the failed subject/s in order to advance to the next year level.

Learners who advance with an ARR and continue to not meet the SIS standards may repeat their current level the following year. If the learner continues to not meet the SIS standards the third year, they will not be allowed to return to SIS the following year. If a learner is asked to leave SIS due to this policy, the family may choose to have the learner re-apply for placement at SIS after one year (12 months).

For learners in Year 1 who are being promoted to Year 2, only because of their age (7 years old) but have not met the academic requirements according to the SIS standards, the second year of this 2-year policy will be considered to be in effect even though their physical enrollment may be in first year primary classes. This policy can be confusing to some parents, so they should contact the office if they have any questions.

ASSESSMENTS & LEARNER REPORT CARDS

1) Developmental Observation

Each learner will be observed throughout the year to assess their development in the following areas: physical, emotional, social, cognitive, creative, and linguistic. This information will provide the basis for Parent-Teacher Conferences, which are held 1-2 times yearly. Meetings may be held at other times by appointment if either parent or teacher requests one.

2) Assessments

Placement for next year's level(s) will take the subjective portion of teacher assessments into consideration. Other relevant objective factors such as age, curriculum-specific exam results, reading level, and Scholastic Assessment will also be considered for Placement. While teacher's evaluations are an important part of the overall placement and advancement processes, learners must meet the SIS standards on all evaluations.

Informal Assessments: Unlike formal assessments, informal assessments are what teachers use every day to evaluate the progress and comprehension skills of the learners. These assessments come in many types, such as written work, portfolios, grading, tests, quizzes, and project-based assignments.

Curriculum Semester Exams: Curriculum-specific, semester exams (tests that are specific to the curriculum/books that are used in core courses) for Primary, and Lower Secondary learners are given at the end of each semester according to the schedule determined by SIS.

Review Packets: For review at home, SIS teachers will work with learners to compile their review packets. The review packets, class workbooks, and homework books will be your only resource to prepare your learner for the semester and final exams. Please contact your learner's teacher if you do not see these packets sent home or have any questions.

Primary: Primary school learners will test in the following areas during the first semester and final examinations: Language, Mathematics, Science and Global Perspectives.

Lower Secondary: Lower Secondary learners will be graded throughout the school year, at mid-year, and at the final examinations in the following areas: English, Mathematics, Science, ICT and Global Perspectives.

Lao Language: Lao Language testing will be done in January and at the end of the final semester in May.

3) Grading Scales

Learners will receive a final total percentage on their report cards indicating their ability to achieve certain knowledge or skills, based on the tests and exams for Math, Global Perspectives, ICT and English assessment.

Global Perspectives, Science, ICT, Math and English classes will have a percent score that is accumulated based on:

- Semester Exams (25%)
- Unit Tests and Quizzes (30%)
- Homework & Projects (20%) (minimum of 4 grades/month)
- Attendance (10%)
- Classroom Engagement/Participation (15%) (4 grades/month)

- The final passing grades for all core classes is 70%.

4) Failing Policy

Learners whose final grade is below 70% will be required to complete a minimum of five-hour per subject summer tutorial or summer school. Tutoring will be done during the summer break by an SIS teacher. A recommendation from the tutor will be given upon completion of the required hours. However, if the learner fails to comply with the standard qualifications, a tutorial extension will be given, if deemed necessary. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

5) Test Policy

Missed tests and re-tests must meet certain criteria and will be evaluated by the SIS Leadership team. Testing, scheduling, and other necessary information will be available at the SIS office. Testing fees are non-refundable regardless of scores/outcomes.

SIS sends the review packets throughout the semester for the parents to help their learners to prepare for the tests. SIS will not provide special review for the tests outside of what is discussed during the class and on the review packets. If learners are struggling academically, then SIS encourages parents to find tutoring for their learners to ensure that they are successful in class. Please contact the SIS office if you have any questions.

Placement Tests are required for all new learners for SIS to determine the placement. Learners who leave SIS for more than one year (12 months) and return are required to go through the admissions procedure as new learners.

Families that have NOT paid for their children's tuition each semester (Semester 1 and Semester 2) will not be given the semester exams. The exams will then need to be made up on a schedule set by the school.

The test fees are listed as the following (unless the learner meets the criteria for no fees listed below):

- Placement Tests: \$30 (1 or 2 tests); \$100 (3 or 4 tests)
- Missed Tests: \$30 per subject
- Re-tests: \$30 per subject
- Skip Tests: \$200 per subject
- Reading Fluency Test: \$30 per test

Note: Please refer to the Appendix - Calendar for the specific test dates.

Special cases for Excused Absences only (no fees charged):

- Sickness/illness/accident: if the learner is ill or injured, then the missed test can be provided without a fee. An official note from the physician's office/clinic must be provided to SIS. Receipts of medical bills or medicine will not be considered.
- Family emergencies/accidents may be considered.
- If the learner is under quarantine due to being exposed, suspected or infected with Covid-19 virus, the office must be notified and medical documents must be submitted.

Learners under disciplinary action, such as suspension and academic misconduct, may not be permitted to take the missed test.

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE & TUTORING

Learners who need additional English practice will receive it during the Extra English hours. Please contact the office to set up a meeting with your child's teacher to learn ways to help at home or if tutoring is advised. The teacher and the School could suggest

ways to help the learners to progress according to their knowledge and skills. Some SIS teachers might be interested in tutoring SIS learners outside of the normal school day and hours. The school permits this but has requirements:

- Teachers cannot tutor their own learners that they teach.
- Parents and teachers should set up the time, place, and payment directly instead of through the school.
- Learners are not allowed to be tutored at the school or during school hours.
- If SIS finds out that teachers and/or learners are manipulating or being dishonest with assessments and tests, then the SIS Leadership team has the right to cancel the tutoring sessions between the teacher and learner(s), along with other significant consequences.
- The learner's teacher and the tutor can discuss the needs of the learner, but cannot relay information directly related to tests/quizzes given.

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE

The following classifications will be used regarding absences: **Excused, Unexcused, and School-Authorized.**

Examples of Excused Absences include:

- Personal illness (incl. COVID-19 or contagious diseases)
- Family emergency or death in the family
- Medical/dental appointments
- Prearranged school visits/exams (limit of 3 days)
- Major religious holidays
- Legal/visa matters, court appearances, etc.

Unexcused Absences are absences not authorized by the parent/guardian, or the school.

Unexcused absences include:

- Arriving late on their scheduled class
- Departing early from class without authorization
- An unauthorized departure from campus
- Vacation/weekend extensions
- Suspension from class or school.

School-Authorized absences authorize learners to miss regular class(es) in order to participate in alternative activities. As these are school activities, learners are marked 'present'. The examples include:

- Interscholastic athletic or academic competitions and events
- Approved field trips
- Special services support groups
- Learner recognition and award ceremonies
- Standardized testing.

If a learner is sick in any case, then please call the SIS office to inform them as soon as possible.

If the learner was taken to a clinic/hospital/doctor, then please visit the school office when the child is able to return to school and fill out the SIS Absent Form, along with a doctor's note to be considered an excused absence.

If a medical note is not provided from the doctor/hospital (receipts are not a doctor's note), then the sickness will be counted as an unexcused absence (see "Health").

Primary and Lower Secondary 15-Day Absence Policy

Learners who miss 15 or more days per school year may be required to repeat the year level. For learners who start late in the semester, parents should be aware that there is an increased risk for their learner to struggle or fail the class.

Note: Parents who sign the Academic Release of Responsibility should pay close attention to the expectations listed on the document.

Consequences for Tardiness

Learners who arrive after the start of class will receive a mark of tardy. It is important that they attend class even if learners are late.

Attendance is important to ensure the learners are learning. It also helps to prepare for semester exams. Learners who miss many school days will not progress as effectively as learners who attend regularly.

The administration considers three (3) marks of tardies the same as one class period skipped and will assign consequences accordingly. 3 tardies count as 1 absence. Please make sure that your learner is on time in the morning, and to their classes throughout the day. Learners who are admitted late during the semester are held to the same expectations.

Attendance shall be regularly taken in all classes and monitored by teachers and other staff members so that it can be used as an early warning sign of potential academic difficulty. Parents are advised to monitor attendance, and unexcused absences are reported to parents from the office.

In order to be promoted to the next year level, learners are expected to be present for at least 90 percent of the total number of school days throughout the academic year.

AWARDS

SIS learners are eligible for awards based on academic and behavioral achievements at the end of each semester. The awards and criteria are listed as the following:

Citizenship Award: learners who have three or more character awards per semester and have had no incident reports.

Honor Roll: (1) Learners who have received 90% or higher in all of the 4 core subjects will receive the Honor Roll. (2) no grades below 70% in all core subjects or activity subjects (PE, Arts, Music, and ICT).

Star learner: This is the highest academic award at SIS. To attain this award, learners must meet the following criteria: (1) achieve 90% or higher in all of the 4 core subjects; (b) received a Citizenship Award; and, (3) accumulated no more than three unexcused absences.

B b

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

For primary and secondary learners, if they would like to celebrate their birthday with friends at SIS, then please contact the school office at least one (1) week in advance to discuss the possibility and make a plan. We try not to disrupt the class time but are always willing to have parents drop off food or snacks at the SIS office for their child and their classmates to enjoy during the lunch break (please follow the “Snacks” requirements).

BOOKS

The only book that the learners need to provide is an *English-English dictionary*. Please write your child's first and last name in their dictionary. SIS tuition includes the necessary workbooks and exercise books. All course books are provided and included in the Book fee.

BULLETIN BOARDS

The SIS bulletin board is located outside the office and is updated regularly with the latest information. Please stop by when you are visiting the SIS campus to see the most recent information. Also, in order to increase efficiency and protect the environment, the School will use Facebook, WhatsApp, and other social media platforms to serve the purpose of bulletin boards at times.

C c

CALENDAR

The SIS academic year is divided into two semesters:

Semester 1: September 1st - December 20th, 2023

Semester 2: January 5th - June 12th, 2024

For the calendar of events, or sample daily schedule of your learner’s classes, please see the packet you are given at the beginning of the school year.

CONTACT US

School improvement and development are important in maintaining a conducive learning environment. All involved parties at SIS may suggest helpful tips for school improvement. In addition, let us know if you would like to volunteer for events throughout the year. Please contact the office on these matters.

D d

DRESS CODE

The Lao Ministry of Education and Sports mandates that all learners must attend school dressed in the required school uniforms. SIS has two uniforms – *Formal and Informal*. A schedule will be set at the beginning of the year and parents will be informed during the Parent Orientation.

All learners must wear sports shoes or sandals with a back strap; flip flops/slippers are not permitted.

During the cooler season, girls may wear *black, gray, dark blue/navy, and skin-tone* leggings **only underneath their school uniform**; any other colors are NOT permitted. Long pants/trousers can be purchased at the office for the cooler weather.

“Freestyle” clothes are not allowed at school, unless certain events allow or require them. **During the cooler season, learners are permitted to wear long-sleeve jackets, hoodies, or long-sleeve shirts. Short-sleeve shirts or sleeveless shirts are not permitted to be worn on top of the school uniform. Learners can consider wearing an undershirt if needed.**

We want to encourage a healthy lifestyle to our learners. Since hair dye can be damaging to the learners’ health, distracting hair colors are not permitted. Natural colors are allowed but not encouraged.

Failure to dress appropriately will result in requesting the parents to bring appropriate clothes to school for their learners.

We ask that parents label all of their children’s clothing and personal items (including jackets, shoes, etc.) with a permanent marker. This will help us to make sure that lost items can be returned. Please note that SIS is not responsible for any lost items. We will collect them at the school for a few weeks to months, but then any clothing/items not collected may be sent to a local charity.

The School Leadership may request the learner to remove certain clothing items when deemed necessary or inappropriate.

DISCIPLINE

SIS has an effective system for classroom behavior control. Teachers are consistently reminded to use positive reinforcement. Learners who are kind to others, listen well, and are prepared in classes are praised. We believe in rewarding positive actions and encouraging our learners to do their best in a loving way. For learners who do not follow the rules, teachers may assign written sentences, oral recitation, or silent/written reflection to be completed during recess time. Character education is given and our focus is on helping learners understand their actions the effect they have on others, and how behavior can be improved in positive ways. SIS teachers are never to physically and emotionally assault a learner at SIS.

If and when necessary, SIS will assign an appropriate consequence according to the school policy, which will be decided by the SIS Leadership team. The consequences for learners breaking the SIS rules may range from a lunch detention, 1-day in-school suspension, or even an expulsion from the school. The SIS office will contact the parents to inform them of any incidents that result in a punishment for the learner.

Parents should never take the discipline of another learner into their own hands. A parent's attempt to discipline learners other than their own is not permitted and will be handled strictly. Please speak with an SIS office staff or the principal if there is a problem to be addressed.

If you have any issues or concerns as parents, then please contact the SIS office and/or make an appointment to speak with the appropriate SIS staff member.

DEALING WITH CHEATING

A. BEFORE IT HAPPENS:

1. Teachers will be sure to teach the learners to understand what constitutes cheating, and why cheating is unacceptable. Integrity is one of the characters we teach and value.
2. Each teacher who assigns written work where plagiarism is possible will take the time to explain to the learners what it is, how to avoid it, and the consequences of plagiarizing. Plagiarism is considered cheating, and therefore, will result in consequences.
3. We will help learners to be more aware of the purpose and significance of a test and daily work.

B. IF IT HAPPENS:

If a learner is discovered to have cheated, then the school policy requires a zero (0) point on that score, and a discipline will be given as well. The teacher will send out a Teacher-to-Parent Notice Form to inform the parents of the necessary details.

Cultures around the world have different ideas about what is considered cheating in school. Learners are responsible for learning, understanding, and following SIS guidelines for cheating.

Academic dishonesty is not tolerated at SIS. It is the responsibility of the school community to educate learners on academic honesty and integrity. As partners in education, parents are expected to aid in holding learners accountable to this policy.

Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Turning in work that is not their own.
- Plagiarism (including copying from the internet).
- Collusion (copying the work of others or allowing others to copy your work.)
- Sharing or acquiring test information from another learner, either through a traditional set-up or during remote learning.
- Using crib/cheat sheets for exams (except as allowed by teachers).

More specifically, plagiarism is using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Using another person's words as their own (with or without that person's consent).
- Buying a paper online.
- Copying from written sources without proper citation.
- Copying and pasting from online sources without proper citation.
- Failing to identify quotations in a paper.
- Changing words but copying sentence structure from another source.
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.
- Using pictures, data, graphs, etc. without proper citation.
- Citing sources incorrectly.

If learners have questions about plagiarism, there are a variety of resources they may use to better understand this topic. Learners should talk with their teacher about specific assignments in question. Also, learners should speak with their teachers as they are experts in documentation. Finally, there are many online resources to help learners understand and avoid plagiarism, e.g. Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab). Teachers may use tools to detect possible issues with academic integrity. Learners are encouraged to take full advantage of assessing and evaluating their work before submitting it.

SIS fully supports and adheres to all academic honesty policies of the Cambridge Assessment International Education Curriculum, and will follow all procedures related to reporting violations of these policies.

Learners who violate academic integrity shall, after due process, be subject to failure on quizzes and examinations, detention, suspension, or expulsion as follows:

- **First reported violation** of the academic honesty policy results in a grade of zero (0) on the quiz/examination and two-day detention or similar consequences.
- **Second violation** will result in a zero (0) on the quiz/examination and a one-week suspension or similar consequence.
- **Third violation** of cheating on quiz/examination will result in loss of credit with a final grade of 50% on the transcript and may result in further disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from school.

All of the consequences mentioned above apply the same for both remote learning and traditional set-up.

E e

ELECTRONICS

Primary learners are not allowed to bring their personal tablets/iPads, laptops, and/or cellphones to SIS, unless it has been arranged with a teacher and the office. In this case, learners will be using the device under the guidance of a teacher. Unapproved devices will be confiscated from the learners, and they will be kept in the office. The parent/guardian may reclaim the device at the end of the day. SIS takes no responsibility for any learner's lost or damaged electronic devices.

However, Secondary learners are allowed to bring their laptops to school (screen plus keyboard) when needed but must sign the Technology Agreement Form in advance. Also, learners are allowed to bring their phones *only* on days specified by their class teacher. This will be logged in the office before it is brought to the classroom.

EMERGENCY

In case of an emergency, SIS will follow the instructions listed on the Medical Form, which was completed by the parents upon admission. In urgent situations that require immediate medical attention, SIS will contact the parents immediately whilst transporting the learner to the most appropriate hospital for the situation. In minor cases, SIS will provide general first aid treatments.

After the initial medical attention is provided, the parents are free to transfer the child to a different hospital. Please note that SIS is not responsible for any medical bills or adverse situations that may occur from an accident/illness outside of what is provided by the insurance coverage.

If you do not desire the school to take your child to a specific hospital or provide any general first aid treatments, then please inform the SIS office immediately. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school. Without clear communication, SIS will follow the general protocol for all learners. Please refer to the "Insurance" section for more information.

In order to prevent and also be prepared for emergency situations, SIS plans to train and educate the staff and learners on the below matters.

1. Fire

a. Preventative Measures

- i. Up-to-date fire extinguishers will be kept in accessible locations throughout campus.
- ii. Any installation of electrical work will follow the proper building code.
- iii. SIS staff will receive annual fire safety training from the fire department when circumstances allow.

b. Evacuation Plan

- i. When fire is identified, it is the responsibility of the nearest staff member to alert all other staff in the quickest way possible. This could be completed via phone or over loudspeaker. If the situation presents itself, then in-person alerts may also be preferred. Teachers should evacuate the building that contains the fire or any other buildings that are threatened by the fire.
- ii. The first refuge point is the basketball court.
- iii. If this is determined to be within dangerous proximity to a fire, teachers, and staff will evacuate learners to the Village Office across the street.
- iv. Teachers will be trained in safe evacuation and drills during teacher orientation. Elements considering flames, smoke, and entrapment will be covered.

c. Drills

- i. SIS will conduct fire drills annually. Before the drill, teachers will communicate the information that learners need to know.

2. Earthquake

a. Plan of Action/Evacuation Plan

- i. SIS will adopt the strategy of *drop, cover, hold on*. Explained below:
 1. Drop: Wherever you are, drop down onto your hands and knees. If you're using a wheelchair, make sure your wheels are locked and remain seated until the shaking stops.
 2. Cover: Cover your head and neck with your arms. If a sturdy table or desk is nearby, crawl underneath it for shelter. If no shelter is nearby, crawl next to an interior wall (away from windows). Crawl only if you can reach better cover without going through an area with more debris. Stay on your knees or bent over to protect vital organs.
 3. Hold on: If you are under a table or desk, hold on with one hand and be ready to move with it if it moves. If seated and unable to drop to the floor, bend forward, cover your head with your arms and hold on to your neck with both hands.
- ii. After an initial earthquake, teachers will evacuate learners to the basketball court and await further instruction from the administration.

b. Drills

- i. SIS will conduct drills annually. Before the drill, teachers will communicate the information that learners need to know. This will include training on all aspects of earthquakes and survival training in case a learner is trapped in a damaged building.

3. Persons Intending Physical Harm

a. Preventative Measures

- i. A guard is posted at the front gate for the entire school day.

- ii. Gates are kept locked and monitored by the guard on duty.
- iii. All visitors are identified by the guard and must remain in sight of the guard while on school property or report to the office who will then be responsible for all supervision of guests.
- iv. SIS takes the mental health of its staff and learners seriously and does its best to address any concerns and get people the help they need.

b. Plan of Action

- i. Once a dangerous person is identified, it is the responsibility of the nearest staff member to alert all other staff in the quickest way possible. This could be done via phone or over loudspeaker. If the situation presents itself, in-person alerts may also be preferred.
- ii. SIS will follow the method of *Run, Hide, Fight*:
 1. Run: If it does not put learners in increased danger, teachers are to quickly and quietly evacuate learners away from the dangerous person; the refuge point is the Village Office located across the street.
 2. Hide: If a teacher can not confirm the location of the dangerous person, they will hide their learners in the room they are located in. Efforts include: locking/barricading doors, utilizing desks to act as shields, and turning off lights to decrease visibility.
 3. Fight: If the dangerous person has direct access to learners, teachers will make every effort to disarm or disable the dangerous person. It is important that if there are multiple staff members they coordinate their efforts and work as a team, supporting one another.

c. Drills

- i. Due to the uncommon if not unprecedented nature of physical attacks from persons intending bodily harm within or from outside schools in Laos, SIS does not conduct drills for such situations. SIS believes drills would cause unnecessary anxiety and trauma. SIS believes by training learners in natural disaster drills, learners will have the skills needed to follow instructions quickly and seriously and this can be applied to the situation explained above. Teachers will be prepared in the matter, however.

ENGLISH USAGE

English is the only language that is allowed to be used on the school grounds by learners and teachers between the hours of 7:30 AM to 2:30 PM, Monday to Friday. Being strict with this policy brings great improvement to all SIS learners, advancement of oral English language skills, and promotion of social inclusion.

F f

FIELD TRIPS

The SIS teachers are highly encouraged to organize field trips, with parents' assistance, to visit different educational sites that are relevant to the learners' education. Safety is one of our highest priorities during field trips. The parents' help is greatly needed to make sure that we can provide safe and fun experiences to our learners. Please discuss with the learners' teacher(s) about field trip ideas, and how you may assist. Any trips that are taken by the school will be organized and a letter will be sent home before the date asking for parental permission.

In situations where face-to-face classes are not permitted, SIS may consider having virtual field trips.

FIRE

Please refer to the “Emergency” section.

G g

GRADUATION CERTIFICATION

Graduating learners will receive their certificate on the day of graduation. SIS levels and scores, and years of attendance at SIS will be on the primary certificates.

There is more than one type of certificate that may be issued to a learner. The office will request a meeting during the second semester to plan for a successful completion for each learner. All parents of primary graduates must have the *SIS Graduation Projection Form* completed with a member of the administration team before the end of the school year. Please plan ahead to work towards the certificate that best matches your intentions for your child's secondary schooling. Listed below are the requirements for each certificate (see “Assessments and Learner Report Cards”).

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – SECONDARY: Grade 8 (Year 9)

1) Certificate of Completion *with Honors*

- Passed with 70% or above in all Grade 8 (Year 9) courses.
- Passed with 85% or above at least three of the core Grade 8 (Year 9) courses.
- 12-15 years old (by Sept. 1st) of current school year
- Attended lower secondary (not exclusively at SIS) for a minimum of 3 years (must provide official documents if the learner has transferred from another school).

2) Certificate of Completion

- 12-15 years old
- Attended Lower Secondary (not exclusively SIS) for a minimum of 3 years (must provide official documents if a learner has transferred from another school).
- Passed with a 70% or above on all subject areas on the Cambridge Assessment International Education 9th grade or equivalent level test.

3) Certificate of Participation

- Graduation is mandatory for learners who are 15 years old regardless of test scores.
- 14-15 years old
- Attended Lower Secondary (not exclusively SIS) for a minimum of 3 years (must provide official documents if a learner has transferred from another school).

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – PRIMARY: Grade 5 (Year 6)

1) Certificate of Completion *with Honors*

- Passed with 70% or above in all Grade 5 (Year 6) courses;
- Passed with 85% or above in at least three of the core Grade 5 (Year 6) subjects;
- 10-12 years old;
- Attended Primary school (not exclusively at SIS) for a minimum of 5 years (must provide official documents).

2) Certificate of Completion

- 10-12 years old;
- Attended Primary school (not only SIS) for a minimum of 5 years (need to provide official documents);
- Passed with a 70% or above on all core Year 6 subject areas.

3) Certificate of Participation

- Graduation is mandatory for learners who are 12 years old regardless of test scores.
- 10-12 years old;
- Attended primary school (not only at SIS) a minimum of 5 years (must provide official documents).

H h

HEAALTH

Medical Information

Medical emergency information on the Medical Form and other forms must be completed and submitted within the first month of school (See “Admission”). Please make sure to submit all necessary information for the safety of your child. Please note that parents may be asked to take their child home until all necessary documents have been submitted.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends preventive treatment for worms every 6 months. Prior to the first day of school, parents are strongly encouraged to treat their children and the entire family for worms. Worms are easily transmitted from person to person and can cause many health problems.

SIS is concerned about the health of every learner. Parents/guardians are required to keep their child at home if they exhibit any of the signs listed below (read the next part on “Returning to School”):

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| - Fever | - Vomiting |
| - Diarrhea | - Excessive runny nose |
| - Excessive coughing and/or sneezing | |
| - Conjunctivitis (pink eye) | - Impetigo |
| - Strep throat | - Chicken pox |
| - Lice or scabies | - Dengue fever |

- Malaria

- Other contagious illnesses or diseases

If a child shows any of the above signs during the school hours, parents will be contacted to pick up their child. SIS asks that parents responsibly pick up their learner and provide appropriate medical attention immediately.

Parents are asked to notify the school within 24 hours if a child or family member has developed a known or suspected communicable/contagious disease (e.g. COVID-19, chicken pox, scarlet fever, etc.). Your cooperation is essential in keeping SIS a safe place.

SIS will update measures and plans to keep in line with government and WHO Covid-19 prevention measures. SIS will adhere to strict rules in order to provide a safe learning environment to both staff and learners.

1) Returning to School

SIS asks the parents to keep their learners at home until the below symptoms have been cleared. Please check the following symptoms to see if the child is ready to return to school:

- No fever for 24 hours or more since the onset of the fever.
- Mood, appetite, behavior, and activity are normal again. Antibiotics (if prescribed) have been used for more than 24 hours (48 hours in the case of strep throat).
- Vomiting and diarrhea have stopped for more than 24 hours.
- Frequent coughing and/or excessive nasal discharge have stopped.
- Pain (earache, cramps, headaches, etc.) has stopped.

2) Lice, Tick, or Scabies

If there is any evidence of lice, ticks, or scabies, a learner will be sent home immediately. The learner's head will be checked for lice, ticks, or scabies by a SIS staff before the learner can return to class. Learners who continue to exhibit signs of an infestation will not be allowed to return until it has been cleared.

3) Allergies

Please identify any allergies that your learner may have upon enrolling at SIS, so the SIS staff can take necessary precautions to protect them. SIS asks parents to provide EpiPen/epinephrine injection/other allergy medication if their child could have a life-threatening allergic reaction. While SIS does not provide alternative snacks or lunches, we could work together to avoid a situation of a learner ingesting food that they may be allergic to with the necessary information provided in advance (see "Meals").

4) Insurance

Please refer to the "Insurance" section to find more information.

5) Pandemics/National Emergency

In case of a pandemic or national emergency, SIS will comply with government ordinances and notifications for school closures. If the school must be closed, SIS will use online teaching resources.

HOMework

Teachers will work to get the amount of time for homework to a minimum in order to not discourage the learners.

Homework must be returned to the teacher in a timely fashion, which will be according to each teacher. There are multiple studies showing the counter-productivity to giving too much homework to this age group. We would like to see our learners having play time/family time in the evenings. Physical exercise and other mental stimulations will help the development of your learners. Teachers will give homework once a week per subject to keep parents involved in their child's learning and to show parents what is happening in the classroom. Special projects may require more work at home throughout the year.

Please continue to have your child read at home with books, Raz-Kids or podcasts. Despite not assigning homework, we hope that literacy will still be promoted at home. Please refrain from filling the at-home time with television, social media, or video games as this will also be counter-productive to your child's development.

HOURS

1) Arrival

All learners must be escorted to and from the gate by an adult, preferably the parents/guardian. Teachers will arrive before 7:30 AM. Learners should not be left at school before 7:30 AM by their parents. If you leave your child at SIS between 7:00 AM - 7:30 AM, parents must be aware that SIS is not responsible for their safety. This is to keep all of our learners safe. After learners' drop-off, parents are to leave the school premises, unless there is an important appointment at the office. Please note that the hours may change depending on the circumstances or events.

2) School Doors

Generally, learners are able to enter the front or side door in the morning. The side gate will be closed at 8:00 AM, then all learners can only use the front entrance. The side gate will be closed until 4:30 PM, when learners are finished with the Lao curriculum. The front entrance will open from 7:30-8:30 AM, 2:30-3:30 PM, then from 4:30-5:30 PM. Other than these times, the front gate will be closed and locked. Parents can come during the times the gate is locked but will be escorted to the office by one of the guards. Parents are not allowed to enter the classroom buildings unless for a special meeting/parent event.

Please see below to find more details for the Primary and Lower Secondary arrival hours:

Primary School:

- The English program hours are from 8:00 AM to 2:30 PM. Learners are able to exercise and play around the sports field before the classes begin. Learners arriving after 8:05 AM will be counted as tardy by the classroom teacher. Learners who arrive late must first check in at the office to receive a pink slip, so that the school can account for all learners correctly.
- The Lao Program for Lao Nationals is from 2:40 to 4:40 PM. The Lao Program for international learners will be scheduled upon interest shown for the class.

Lower Secondary:

- The Lower Secondary hours are from 8:00 AM (7:45 AM on Mondays) to 2:30 PM.
- The Lao Program for Lao Nationals is from 2:40pm to 4:40 PM. Parents will be notified if there are any changes to the schedule

3) Departure

All learners are to be picked up at the correct times. Parents who are picking up their child early must notify the SIS office in advance. If a learner needs to leave early for the day, then the parents must sign the learner out at the office. Please note that the learner leaving school early could be counted as an excused or unexcused absence. learners are not permitted to leave the SIS campus without their

parent's/guardian's escort. If someone other than the person named on the *Authorized Pick-Up Form* is picking up the learner, then parents must provide a written, signed note to the SIS office in the morning of the day. Parents can also call the office before the learner is to be picked up.

Parents must pick up their learners before 5:30 PM. There are no exceptions. At 5:30 PM, the SIS staff plan to leave the campus. By signing and agreeing on the terms of this Handbook, parents are agreeing to abide by the rules of SIS. Parents should inform the SIS office the same day of the late pick-up as soon as possible. Parents picking up their children after 5:30 PM will be fined 50,000 Kip per occurrence, or 500,000 Kip per month to discourage late pick-ups.

In the case of half days, parents will be informed by the SIS offices to pick up the learners by a certain time. Please make sure to coordinate in advance by checking the calendar and via communication with the office to pick up the learners on time.

4) Office Hours

Office hours are from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday - Friday. Please call or visit the office for any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

I

INSURANCE

All SIS learners are required to have the school's insurance coverage plan, unless the family is enrolled in their own insurance. Each child will have insurance purchased by SIS which will cover the amount stated in the policy (and no more) in case anything happens here on the school grounds during the regular school hours, including all school activities like field trips. All learners will be required to enroll in the SIS School Insurance Plan. All families are required to complete the SIS Insurance Document as part of the admission process before the learner can join their classmates.

The insurance plan will cover a set amount depending on the type of accident, but there will be no financial reimbursement from SIS. There are numerous hospitals and clinics that are covered in Laos, and Thailand. Please meet with the office staff in order to get a detailed list. If parents choose to take their child to a hospital or a medical institution not listed by the insurance, then all expenses (hospital, ambulance, traveling, etc.) are the family's responsibility, not the responsibility of SIS.

L

LIBRARY

Consistent visits to the school library are arranged weekly so that all learners are able to have one to two on-level English reading books to read at home. New books are added to our library regularly. Additional books that learners take home are in addition to their classroom reading program. Supplemental reading at home helps with vocabulary and reading fluency, and parents are encouraged to help their learners. SIS encourages all learners to read for around 20 minutes per day at home with a parent/guardian.

Books must be returned before other books may be checked out. Teachers and the librarian will monitor all the books that have been borrowed for each learner in their class and notify parents each month if there are books that haven't been returned. In the case of lost

or damaged books, parents are responsible for paying for each book, including any fees necessary to purchase and ship replacement books. The replacement cost must be paid in full before a child's report card can be provided.

LOCKERS

Each Upper Primary and Secondary learner is provided a locker for their backpack, books, and other personal items.

LOST AND FOUND

Please label all of your child's belongings, including their clothes, to make sure lost items may be returned. Please check the SIS office for lost and found items. For general clothing, SIS will keep them for about three weeks. Please note that SIS is not responsible for any lost or damaged items. Learners should learn to be responsible and take care of their personal items, and parents should check to ensure that their learner returns home with all of their items. Each month, SIS may distribute unsupervised or not collected items to a local charity regularly.

M m

MEALS

1) Breakfast at Home

Parents are highly encouraged to provide breakfast to their child at home before sending them to school. Learners who eat breakfast will have more energy to participate and focus better. SIS does not provide breakfast.

2) Lunch

A balanced lunch meal is provided daily. If parents do not wish to enroll in the school lunch, then they must send nutritious meals with their child to eat during the scheduled lunch break. Primary and Lower Secondary learners can enroll in daily lunch. During the COVID-19 restricted times, the school may request the parents to send lunch boxes and eating utensils with their children.

3) “No Substitutions”

Please note that SIS does not make dietary substitutions for individual learners. If a learner requires a specific diet due to allergies, religion, etc., then the learner’s parents must provide their snacks and/or lunch. Please provide a written request to the SIS office if you do not wish for the school to provide certain food/dishes from snacks or lunch, and let the office know why.

4) Prohibited Food

Soft drinks, caffeinated beverages, candy, and gum are not allowed for learners at SIS. Vitamin tablets and/or powders, or other medications are not permitted either. If there are medications for your learner, then please bring them to the office and complete the Medicine Consent Form. Candies, sugar-filled drinks, and junk foods are strongly discouraged at SIS.

MEDIA IN THE CLASSROOM

Our classrooms are equipped with technology that allows teachers to provide the best textbooks and teaching materials. Document cameras, laptops, and projectors are used to bring subjects to life through various teaching methods and visual aids.

Learners and parents who destroy or damage any of the SIS equipment by unruly, negligent, or careless behavior will be charged the full price to repair or replace the equipment in addition to any other necessary fees.

SIS provides electronic reading tablets and laptops for certain classes to use. Learners and guardians will be responsible for any damaged, broken, or lost tablets or laptops, as well as any unauthorized online purchases made unadvised by SIS.

P p

PARENT – TEACHER PARTNERSHIP

We consider the partnership between parents and teachers to be very important. Together, we can help to give your child the best possible start to their education and journey to becoming well-developed adults.

At home:

- Work with your learner read on-level English books at least 20 minutes daily
- Supervise and sign homework assignments and review packets and agenda daily
- Attend SIS parent workshops, Parent-Teacher conferences, and other open house events
- Inform and teach your learner about the SIS rules, and support the school in the enforcement of the rules
- Provide extra assistance or tutoring for the learner's needs if they continue to not meet academic goals.

PARENT VISITS AND VOLUNTEERING

There are a number of opportunities throughout the year for parents to help with projects, events, and field trips. Furthermore, Open House and other events provide opportunities for parents to visit their child's classrooms (see also "Field Trips" and "Birthday Celebrations"). Parents can and are encouraged to volunteer with the teachers or in the office. When any parent is coming to the school, they must always sign in at the office first and receive a visitor name tag.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Learners are not allowed to bring toys, personal play items, or any electronics from home. Such items are a distraction in the classroom, and they may be lost or damaged.

1) Learner Devices: Please refer to "Electronics".

2) Show & Tell: In some classes, "Show & Tell" will provide an opportunity for our learners to bring something appropriate to show to their classmates. The teacher will send a note to inform the parents at least one day in advance. These items should be labeled with the learner's name, and responsibly taken home after the project. Please assist your learner in preparing for the project.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

Weapons, swords, play guns (e.g. BB gun, nerf gun, slingshot, etc.), and all types of toys are not allowed unless requested by the teachers. Items that endorse aggression, unhealthy competition, and hostile feelings are especially not permitted.

Other items that are not allowed:

- Toys
- Medication – only allowed in the office with the proper medication form
- Caffeinated drinks and soft drinks
- Tablets or pills of any kind, including vitamins
- Any type of weapons or toys that represent weapons.

R

RECORDS

1. **School Records:** School records will be kept in the SIS office for reference following the schedule as listed:
 - a. Learner Records, Mid-year and Final report cards are archived for 5 to 7 years.
 - b. Curriculum-specific semester final exams, and standardized assessment exams are archived for 3 years.
2. **Duplicates:** Each learner's report card will be issued upon their completion of all requirements for each class at the end of the year. If parents need a second copy, then it may be issued for \$10 per copy. Please make sure to keep the final report cards safe, and to request any needed documents within the time frame mentioned above. SIS is not responsible for any records beyond the above schedule and holds the right to deny this service if deemed necessary.
3. **Legal Documentation:** SIS offers further assistance in obtaining necessary government verification stamps, which may be required by some international schools to verify school records. This service is offered at \$20 per service. All other fees required for necessary government verification (copy requirements, etc.), if necessary, will be forwarded to the family requesting the documents. Please make sure to request a receipt for these fees.

REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING

In the event that Sharon International School is required to temporarily suspend on-campus education, the school may implement off-campus distance/remote learning to mitigate disruptions to the educational program. Distance learning will entail synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (self-paced) instruction and assignments appropriate to grade level, resources, duration, and other relevant factors. The intent of SIS' distance learning procedures is to maintain personal connections among the school, learners, and parents, that allow uninterrupted pursuit of the school's mission and education.

- **Requirements**

Each learner should have access to a computer/laptop, or opt to borrow from school if needed, and reliable internet connection. Usage of tablets or smartphones are not recommended.

* Grades 1-2 (**Years 2 -3**): A device is appropriate. Web-based content and assignments will be minimal and may be completed according to each family's unique obligations, schedules, and pacing. Coursework will be more heavily composed of teacher-created packets and printable resources.

- * Grades 3-4 (**Years 4 - 5**): Learners will need consistent access to a computer and internet. Learners will be required to participate in live lectures and activities several times per week. Some assignments will be completed and submitted online with imposed deadlines.
- * Grades 5-8 (**Years 6 - 9**): Each learner will need his or her own laptop or computer and family internet connection. Learners will attend live classes online according to a schedule that mirrors their on-campus routine. Learners will also have separate opportunities to connect virtually with their teachers for additional help.

While the goal of distance learning is to maintain uninterrupted educational progress, some disruption is inevitable and unique to each family. Parents are encouraged to trust that teachers are willing to work with each family individually and to make adjustments as needed.

- **Platforms**

Distance learning platforms will vary by year level and class. Platforms utilized may include the following, but are not limited to:

ZOOM	GOOGLE MEET	THINKWAVE
GOOGLE CLASSROOM		RAZ-KIDS

- **Technical Support**

If a learner or parent, is unable to access the online material, they should take the following steps:

1. Ensure the device and internet connection are working properly.
 - **Restart and update the computer.
 - **Restart the home internet connection (reset the modem or router).
 - **If the problem is with the device or connection, contact the internet provider or computer service.
2. Check the learner or parent’s username and password.
3. Contact the office, if the above steps do not help.

- **Roles and Responsibilities of Learners and Parents**

1. **Learners**

- Maintain a regular schedule as much as possible (wakeup time, bedtime, etc.)
- Login to live class sessions on time
- Adhere to teacher expectations concerning participation, assignment completion, due dates, conduct, attire, etc., as well as school-wide behavioral expectations
- Maintain full attention during live class sessions by refraining from non-class use of phones, gaming devices, televisions, and other devices
- Communicate all concerns and questions directly to the teacher
- Complete printed assignments neatly and keep organized in a folder for easy submission
- All rules and regulations upholding academic integrity and honesty are applied the same to distance learning.

2. **Parents and Guardians**

- Ensure learners have reliable internet access and computer
- Help learners establish a normal routine and daily structure, including wake up and bed times, meal and snack times, daily work completion goals, and physical activity
- Regularly check-in with learners and help maintain engagement with distance learning assignments and activities

- Determine a quiet study space conducive to learning, but avoid locations that are isolating or prevent routine screen and activity monitoring
- Maintain communication with teachers and freely initiate communication when any questions or concerns arise
- Encourage independence and allow learners to exercise age-appropriate ownership of the learning process
- Help learners maintain contact with peers through platforms such as phone, Facetime or Google Meet
- Encourage and help facilitate physical activity throughout the day
- Monitor learners’ stress level and emotional well-being and contact the school if learners seem overwhelmed or excessively anxious
- Monitor learners’ time management to help ensure productivity and confidence
- Remain mindful of internet bandwidth to ensure that learners maintain a quality of connectivity conducive to meeting distance learning requirements.

RULES

One of the important guidelines of respectable behavior is to remember to “treat others as you want to be treated”. There are also many other important character values that SIS teaches our learners that are included in the rules. Class rules are set by the teacher and learners within the first week of school. Some examples of what SIS expects from our learners are the following:

- Be prepared for class
- Listen when the teacher is speaking. Follow instructions well.
- Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger
- Keep your hands, feet, and mouth to yourself
- Respect other people, their property, time, and space.

S S

SAFETY

SIS fully supports the ideals of **Article 27 from the DECREE of the PRESIDENT of the LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC On the Promulgation of the Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children**. Child-Friendly Schools.

The State has a policy to create child-friendly schools that are popular with children and attract them to learn. A child-friendly school is a place with a good environment that promotes learning and study by children, where they can receive attention, counseling, and assistance from teachers, with friendly solidarity among learners [and where they are] protected from the use of violence, physical punishment or inappropriate words or acts that affect the dignity of children, [and] from discrimination or bias, and work that exceeds their abilities. SIS has a comprehensive Child Protection and Safeguarding policy which all staff are trained on yearly and given regular updates on. This is available to see on request.

SIS prioritizes providing a safe and healthy educational environment to our learners. All parents and learners should be fully aware of the SIS Safety Policies. We ask that parents take time to educate and train their learners in addition to the training that learners will receive from the SIS staff so that we can raise our learners to be responsible global citizens and prevent any inappropriate situations from happening while at SIS. We hope that our learners will learn the consequences of their actions, and the seriousness of breaking rules.

The consequences for learners breaking these rules pertaining to learners' safety could range from a lunch detention, a 1-day in-school suspension, to even an expulsion from SIS depending on the circumstance. SIS will contact the parents immediately once the consequences for the learners are decided. The SIS Leadership team will come together to investigate and determine the consequence for each situation. We ask the parents in advance to cooperate with SIS. Any class day(s) missed due to the consequences to breaking any of these rules will be counted as the absence/tardy policy states (see "DISCIPLINE").

1) Safety Policies

- a. **"Bathing Suit" Policy:** Learners should be fully aware to not touch other people's private body parts that would be covered by bathing suits. If a learner touches another and talks about it inappropriately, then SIS will take the incident very seriously. SIS will focus on making sure that all involved learners are educated and protected aptly.
- b. **"Bathroom" Policy:** Only 1 person is allowed in a toilet stall at a time. If more than 1 person is found in a stall at the same time, then all people found in the stall will receive consequences for breaking one of the school's Safety Policies. Teachers should let only one learner go to the toilet at a time, especially during lessons.

2) Anti-Bullying Policy

- a. As learners are growing up, SIS understands that there can be some disagreements that could result in physical aggression or assault. However, we will not tolerate any type of bullying at SIS. As learners learn in their classes, SIS promotes anti-bullying efforts through lessons and events throughout the year.
- b. Bullying can be defined as "unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time" (www.stopbullying.gov). It is also "intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group" (www.anti-bullying.alliance.org.uk). All types of bullying have a serious, lasting impact on both learners who are bullied and who bully others.
- c. The type of bullying can be categorized into multiple areas, but SIS will consider the following four areas specifically:
 - i. **Physical bullying:** physical behaviors to hurt a person's body or possessions, which may include pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching, spitting, pushing/tripping, taking or breaking/damaging someone else's item, throwing something at someone, and making rude/demeaning physical gestures.
 - ii. **Verbal bullying:** a verbal or written way to hurt others, which may include teasing, name-calling, inappropriately crude or sexual comments, taunting, threatening/intimidating to cause harm, and spreading false rumors.
 - iii. **Social/relational bullying:** hurting someone's relationship or reputation, which may include excluding someone on purpose from a group, telling other learners not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors, embarrassing/ridiculing someone in public, manipulation, and coercion.
 - iv. **Sexual bullying:** this type of bullying includes any behavior with a sexual element, which may include unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive sexual comments/threats/taunts/innuendos, distribution or exposure to sexual contents (photos, videos, etc.), inappropriate phone calls/text messages/via social media, and sexual assault or abuse.

Note: All situations will be dealt with seriously with in-depth investigation and careful consideration of consequences. The severity of the consequences of breaking the Safety Policies and/or Anti-Bullying Policy will be determined by the SIS Leadership team on a case-by-case basis according to the principles, characters, and ethics taught at SIS. We ask that the parents note that the above guidelines are for general situations, and not for every situation that may occur.

3) Non-Discriminatory Policy

Sharon International School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, creed, religion, nationality or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or disability in administration of its admissions, the administration of its educational, athletic, or other school programs, or its employment practices.

4) Disciplinary Decisions and Actions

- Inability to follow the policies may result in consequences depending on their severity.
- All decisions regarding the level and severity of discipline are at the sole discretion of the school administration. Administration may, at its discretion, consider input from faculty, parents, and learners in the process.
- These decisions are final and a learner does not have any right to appeal such decisions.
- A conference with a parent or guardian is required following any suspension before a learner may return to school.

A. DETENTION

- Detention is assigned for minor violations of rules.
- Skipping a scheduled detention will lead to immediate probation.
- Repeated failure to attend assigned detention may result in suspension or dismissal from school.

B. FORMAL WARNING

- An official warning for behavior is normally accompanied by a loss of privilege and can result in the exclusion from activities, educational outings and overnight trips.

C. SUSPENSION

- Suspension is the separation of a learner from the school community for a period of one or more days.
- Suspension includes:
 - In-school suspension: the learner(s) is removed from class but stays on campus;
 - Out-of-school suspension: the learner(s) stays at home or returns home for a period of time while the learner, family, and administration consider whether and/or how the learner can successfully continue at SIS.

D. DISMISSAL/EXPULSION

- Dismissal/Expulsion is the permanent barring of a learner from SIS.
- Dismissal may occur for reasons stated in this Handbook when a learner continues inappropriate behavior after probation or suspension for the same or similar behavior; when a learner's conduct significantly disrupts the rights of others to an education; or when school officials determine a learner's conduct endangers the learner, other learners, surrounding persons, including school employees, or property of the school.
- Teachers and other school officials may recommend that a learner be dismissed. The school principal and director make the final decision on whether a learner is dismissed.

5) Leaving the SIS campus

Learners are not allowed to leave the school grounds during the designated school hours unless accompanied by a parent/guardian through the SIS office. Parents must show a learner pick-up card to the teacher on duty. Parents must communicate with the office in advance in order for the teachers and the office team to prepare accordingly.

6) SIS Events

During on-campus events, SIS asks for parents' active cooperation in keeping learners safe. SIS teachers and staff will take precautions to ensure the safety of our learners, but parents should also try to keep their eyes on their children to prevent any injuries or accidents. During off-campus events where parents are present, we ask that parents supervise their learners at all times. The SIS

staff will supervise the learners during their participation of events, but parents will be asked to take responsibility for their learners as well.

SCHEDULE

Copies of the annual schedule may be provided during the Parent Orientation. Sample schedules in the appendices are provided as examples only. Please note that your learner's schedule may not follow the sample schedule exactly. For a calendar of events, see the school calendar in the appendices. In the case there are changes to the schedule, the office will contact the parents to inform them.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Costs of normal school supplies are included in the tuition fees in general; however, learners are asked to help provide classroom supplies at the beginning of the year per the homeroom teacher's request. This is to help the homeroom teacher, so we ask for parents' cooperation. If there are incidents that occur with learners disrespecting school property and damages occurring, SIS will notify parents and ask them to help cover the costs of the damages.

SHOW AND TELL

Please refer to the "Personal Belongings – Show and Tell" section for more information.

SNACKS

Learners are recommended to bring nutritious snacks for the morning and afternoon, such as fruits, raw vegetables, mixed nuts, sandwiches, non-sugary cereals, plain crackers, raisins, and other dried fruits. As a consideration to parents who may be selective in their children's diet, learners are encouraged not to share their food/snacks with other learners. In order to enforce this, learners should be taught not to ask for other learners' food. Please refer to "Meals – Prohibited Food" for more information.

SIS P/S will trial a system this year where **on Fridays** we will allow some additional snacks to be brought to school, for example, chips, sweet crackers, and cereals. Nothing on the banned list will be allowed at any time as these foods and drinks affect concentration and do not contribute to healthy eating habits and lifestyles.

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TRANSPORTATION

The SIS school van is fully insured, and driven by a licensed driver and a staff attendant. Transportation can be arranged for an additional cost. However, this service may be limited depending on the circumstances (i.e. COVID-19).

If you choose to have your child use school transportation, then please make sure that they are ready at their pick-up time and location. The van will wait for 3 minutes at each stop before leaving. Please understand that this rule is due to ensuring all learners arrive at the

school on time. If your child is not ready at the designated time and location, then the parents/guardians are responsible for bringing their learner to SIS. Also, please refer back to the “Hours” section for more information.

TUITION AND FEES

Please contact the office for detailed information on tuition and other fees for each semester and year. Parents are required to complete the payments on time in order to receive the services from the school. In the case that the above is not followed, then there may be limited services to the learner.

Note: If a learner leaves SIS, and returns within the year (less than 12 months), then they need to only pay for the Placement Tests and not the registration fee. If the learner has left SIS for more than a year (more than 12 months) and is returning, then they are required to pay the registration fee and the Placement test fees. The SIS office will need to re-do the registration process and re-evaluate the learner’s placement after 12 months.

V **v**

VISITOR CHECK-IN PROCESS

Visitors are **NOT** permitted to walk into any of the school buildings (Kindergarten/Primary/Secondary) without permission at any time (7:30am-5:30pm) unless there is a parent meeting. All visitors, *including* parents and families, must check in at the office first each time they come onto the school premises.

If parents are coming to pick up their child to leave early, then the parents must fill out a form at the office. The office staff or a teacher will bring the learner to the office.

If a visitor is a guest speaker/volunteer, then a check-in sheet must be completed and a visitor pass/lanyard will be provided. An office staff must escort them to the class, or hand them off to a designated teacher. After their time is completed, then the visitor must be escorted back to the office by a SIS staff member.

A staff member/teacher must escort the parents and/or visitors; visitors should not be left without supervision while on campus.

If parents need to give food, clothes, and/or medicine, then they must be given to the office staff. The parents should not walk into the school building.

If parents want to see their child during school hours, then they must wait until recess/lunch time to see their child at the office. Learners should not be pulled out of classes unless they are leaving the school or in case of an emergency.