HOA NGHIEM
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Parent Handbook
School Administration and Contacts

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Term Dates & Public Holidays

Term 1:

27th January- Teachers return to school
28th January- Students begin
8th of February- First day of Tết (pupil free)
24th March- Last day of term

Term 2:

11th April- Commencement of Term 2
25th April- ANZAC Day
10th – 12th May- NAPLAN Testing
13th June- Queen’s Birthday
24th June- Last day of term

Term 3:

11th July- Commencement of Term 3
16th September- Last day of term

Term 4

3rd October- Commencement of Term 4
1st November- Melbourne Cup Day
20th December- Last day of term
## Contents

- Introduction .................................................................................................................. 6
- Founder’s Welcome ........................................................................................................ 6
- Principal’s Welcome ...................................................................................................... 6
- School Philosophy and Values .................................................................................... 7
- School Vision ................................................................................................................ 7
- School Curriculum ....................................................................................................... 7
- School Name and Teaching Approach ........................................................................ 8
- School Learning Environment ..................................................................................... 9
- School Structure and Class Size .................................................................................. 10
- Starting School: Foundation Students ........................................................................ 10
- Academics .................................................................................................................... 11
  - Awareness Program .................................................................................................... 11
  - Homework .................................................................................................................. 12
  - Point of Need Teaching ............................................................................................. 12
  - Specialist Program .................................................................................................... 14
- Attendance .................................................................................................................... 15
  - Absences ..................................................................................................................... 15
  - Early Departure ......................................................................................................... 15
  - Hours and Bell Times ................................................................................................. 15
  - Lateness ....................................................................................................................... 16
- Student Activities ......................................................................................................... 17
  - Camp ........................................................................................................................... 17
  - Incursions and Excursions ......................................................................................... 17
  - Homework Club ......................................................................................................... 17
  - Foundation-2 Pyjama Party ....................................................................................... 18
  - Student Leadership .................................................................................................... 18
- Community Expectations ............................................................................................. 19
  - Internet Use Policy and Agreement ......................................................................... 19
Lost Property .................................................................................................................................................. 29
Money Collection ........................................................................................................................................ 30
Parent Carpark ........................................................................................................................................ 30
Photographic Permission .............................................................................................................................. 30
Private Property ........................................................................................................................................ 31
School Board ........................................................................................................................................... 31
Snacks and Water ..................................................................................................................................... 32
Uniform ....................................................................................................................................................... 32
Visitor Badges .......................................................................................................................................... 33
Introduction

Founder’s Welcome

Dear Families,

I have the great joy of welcoming you to our school community. Our founding vision of our school was to create the right environment for students to grow and realise the best in themselves. Children not only display great talent and ambition, but capacity for great kindness.

With the dedication and hard work of countless people, we have assembled a school mission and program which balances rigorous academics to develop a strong mind with spiritual and personal development to encourage students to realise their full potential as an individual and a future member of society.

Not least, I thank you, our first families for your enthusiasm and wholehearted support of our educational mission.

Yours Sincerely,

Senior Venerable Thich Thien Tam

(Founder)

Principal’s Welcome

Dear Families,

It is my absolute pleasure to be able to welcome you to Hoa Nghiem Primary School in this, our first year of operation. It has been a long journey to reach this point, however I believe that this journey has allowed us to develop a truly unique, exciting school that will offer your child a challenging, rewarding education that supports them to grow into ethical, responsible and caring individuals.

I would like to take the time to express my appreciation for each and every one of you, as it is our ‘founding families’ that have made the opening of this school possible. Your faith in Hoa Nghiem Primary School is truly humbling, and we will work hard to prove that your trust in us is well-founded.

Please take the time to read this booklet very carefully, as it contains detailed information about the day-to-day operation of the school and our key policies. If there is something that you would like to know more about, or that you feel is missing from the handbook, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely Yours,

Jacqui Bosman

(Principal)
School Philosophy and Values

“If you understand, and you show that you understand, you can love, and the situation will change.”

Thich Nhat Hanh

We believe in developing both academic excellence and social consciousness through a challenging, innovative curriculum that is enriched by Buddhist traditions and teachings. Students at Hoa Nghiem Primary School develop their intellect through critical thinking and awareness, informed by compassion and universal responsibility.

Hoa Nghiem Primary School is built on a strong foundation of Buddhist values that underpin everything we do, from teaching through to our relationships with students, the community and staff. This is reflected in our school motto: *Strong Mind, Good Heart, Global Responsibility*. These values encourage us to look both outwards and inwards when learning, interacting and reflecting.

School Vision

There are three key components to our school vision:

- To become one of Australia’s most rigorous and innovative independent schools, known for achieving academic excellence, developing critical thinkers and demonstrating a strong community spirit.
- To foster a deep, ongoing love of learning that will build a strong foundation for their future in high school and beyond.
- Inspiring the next generation to become the pillars of their community, with a commitment to both their own growth and supporting others to achieve.

These components shape the structure of our school curriculum, and serve as a guide for all leadership and teaching staff at Hoa Nghiem Primary School.

School Curriculum

The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* establishes consistent goals for Australian schooling throughout the next ten years. These are:

1) Promoting equity and excellence

2) Developing successful learners, confident and creative individuals, active and informed citizens.

To achieve these goals and our own high standards, Hoa Nghiem Primary School has established a comprehensive and rigorous curriculum.

Teaching and learning programs include the following learning areas:
- English (Literacy): reading, writing, spelling, grammar, speaking and listening
- Mathematics (Numeracy) – number, measurement, statistics and data
- Science, History, Civics and Citizenship - integrated studies
- Information Technology – including multi-media creation and cyber-safety
- Health and Physical Education
- The Arts
- Languages (Vietnamese)

At Hoa Nghiem Primary School, we implement our curriculum through an inquiry approach to learning in which students develop key understandings through exploration and hands-on experiences. This gives students ownership of their learning within a supportive environment and helps to develop confidence, independence, creativity and critical thinking skills.

Throughout the curriculum, individual differences are taken into account and students are encouraged to attempt new experiences. This allows them to broaden their skills and knowledge within our safe and supportive environment. Staff design learning experiences that are both enjoyable and meaningful, while children are expected to take responsibility for, and be actively involved in, their own learning.

School Name and Teaching Approach

The name ‘Hoa Nghiem’ is a reference to the Lotus Sutra, one of the most important and influential sutras in Mahayana Buddhism. At the heart of the Lotus Sutra is the notion that Buddha nature is inherent in all life, emphasising compassion and interconnectedness.

The origin of our name, and the motto that we have chosen (Strong Mind, Good Heart, Global Responsibility) are reflected in our approach to teaching. The following diagram illustrates the process by which learning occurs at Hoa Nghiem Primary School.
School Learning Environment

Hoa Nghiem Primary School is committed to providing excellent standards of teaching and learning. We have formed the following beliefs that guide our approach to building the classroom environment.

Learning:
- Every student succeeds with the right time and support;
- All teachers can teach to a high standard, given the right tools and resources;
- Students learn more when they feel a sense of ownership over, and connection to, their classroom experiences;
- Reinforcement at home is essential to building skills.

Instruction
- High expectations must be tempered with compassion and understanding;
- Differentiating the curriculum to cater for student differences is central to success;
- Teaching practices should be structured but flexible;
- Learning experiences are best when they are both engaging and meaningful;
- Students should be involved in both independent and collaborative learning opportunities;
- Learning intentions and criteria for success must be made explicit in every lesson.

Assessment
- Monitoring, observing and assessing supports teaching and learning;
- Data informs next steps when meeting needs and setting goals for each student;
- Moderation is important to ensure consistency and cross-grade understanding;
- All teachers must be made aware of school improvement targets and commit to meeting them;

Reporting
- Assessment data is the basis for reporting;
- Where concerns exist about a student’s progress, these must be reported to parents as soon as possible;

Collaboration
- A strong partnership between home and school is essential to successful learning;
Classroom teachers work collaboratively with specialists to create valuable, cross-curricular connections that enhance learning and understanding.

School Structure and Class Size

Like all schools, Hoa Nghiem Primary School's class organisation depends upon the number and ages of students who are enrolled. However, we are also committed to remaining a small school and ensuring that your child receives substantial individual and small-group attention. Therefore, you need not worry about overcrowded classrooms.

Hoa Nghiem Primary School operates 'composite classes': single classes that are made up of two or more year levels. Far from being a challenge, this structure provides younger students with role models and achievement goals while giving older students a position of classroom leadership and responsibility. Additionally, in any class there are a wide range of learning needs and abilities. Our commitment to point of need teaching ensures that children are neither left behind with work that is too challenging or bored by work that is too easy.

Class structure is determined in Term 4, once the school has established the number of enrolments. This information is then communicated to the parent body, with class lists and teachers published during our ‘Meet the Teacher’ session at the end of Term 4.

Starting School: Foundation Students

While beginning school is an exciting time for your child, it can also be a challenging experience for them. There are many small things that you can do at home to help make your child’s first few days at school easier. Use the holidays as a time to play "going to school", in order to ease their transition into the classroom environment and, where possible, teach them to do one or more of the following:

- Go to the toilet independently, flush the toilet and maintain basic hygiene (e.g. washing hands). Be sure that your boy understands how to use a urinal.
- Encourage your child to practice taking off his/her own outer garments and turn them right way out. Learning to cope with buttons, zips etc. independently.
- Read his/her own name on his/her clothing.
- Pack a “school lunch” and eat it without assistance (for some children even that plastic wrap can be an insurmountable challenge!)
- Teach your child how to open and close his/her school bag, lunch box and drinking flask.
- Have a go at packing and zipping up their school bag.
- Know, and be able to clearly say, his/her full name and address.
- Relay a simple message correctly.
- Understand and carry out one or two step instructions.
- Sit quietly for a short time.
- Have some experience of playground equipment, such as climbing frames.
- Speak quietly indoors.
- Pack away toys after use.
- Remove shoes and socks and put them back on the correct feet. It is also ideal if they are able to tie their shoelaces.
- Wipe up spilled water, glue etc.

Parents are asked to leave their children in the care of the teacher as soon as practical. It is perfectly normal for Foundation students to be upset on their first day of school, as it is obviously a huge change for them! Sometimes, however, lingering outside the classroom or within your child’s line of sight can make this transition even more difficult for them. Generally speaking, this feeling of distress will abate over the week as they gradually become used to attending school.

Academics

Awareness Program

At Hoa Nghiem Primary School, we strongly believe in the importance of balancing traditional scholastic pursuits with the development of the whole child. Our Awareness Program is based around Buddhist values and teachings, with a different theme each term. These are:

**Term 1:** Who am I? How do I create personal wellbeing?

**Term 2:** Who are we as a group? How can we create social harmony?

**Term 3:** Who are we as a human race? How can we live in a balanced manner and share our planet with other sentient beings?

**Term 4:** How do impermanence and karma play a role in our lives?

The Awareness Program involves discussion and investigation linked to these themes, and is designed to build students’ confidence and resilience as well as enhancing their interpersonal development, teamwork and speaking and listening skills. The Awareness Program is supported by daily meditation, including an extended period of whole-school meditation on Monday mornings (in the Buddha Hall). For the remainder of the week, meditation or mindfulness activities occur for approximately two minutes before commencing the main focus of the Awareness Program.
Homework

Homework is designed to be purposeful, out-of-class learning that builds upon and revises what children are learning in class. It may be designed for the whole class, or differentiated in some areas (such as Mathematics, where students often work in specific focus groups). The form that homework takes is very much dependent upon the skills or concepts being revisited, and therefore will vary in form throughout the year in order to be effective.

Reading forms a key part of homework throughout students’ schooling. The ability to read in a confident, expressive and fluent manner does not just impact on students’ literacy skills, but supports them in other areas of the curriculum. It is therefore essential that your child is able to both read silently and practice reading aloud to (or with) an older family member, regardless of their age, on a regular basis.

To support students’ reading, children in Foundation to Level 2 are provided with take-home readers matched to their current reading levels. Take-home readers are intended to be slightly easier for children to read than the books that they are reading at school: this is because at home they should be focusing on reading with fluency and expression as well as for pleasure. In Levels 3-6, students’ main focus is on developing strong comprehension skills, reading for a defined purpose (for example, in order to research a topic or idea of interest) and identifying their areas of personal interest. At this point, they are supported to choose their own texts to read at home.

Homework is assigned on a fortnightly basis, and it is expected that a small amount will be completed every night. Week 1 revises specific tasks or skills that have been taught in class, while Week 2 focuses on applying those skills in an ‘open-ended’ manner. This ensures a balance between revision and critical-thinking activities. The amount and type of homework is dependent upon the year level of your child, as we believe that it is also important that your child have time to pursue other activities.

Homework tasks are explained to the class before being sent home. If your child does not understand a task, please encourage them to ask their teacher for further clarification. This helps them to build their independence and sense of personal responsibility. If they are still uncertain, please feel free to contact your child’s teacher directly and ask further questions.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances (e.g. illness or a family holiday), all homework is to be returned on time. If this is not possible, a note should be provided requesting an extension. Where work is submitted in an incomplete or ‘messy’ manner, students will attend a working playtime (half of recess and/or lunch) to finish or revise their work.

Point of Need Teaching

At Hoa Nghiem Primary School, we view every child as an individual and engage in very little ‘whole class’ teaching. More often than not, your child will be involved in small-group, paired or one-to-one work within the classroom.
Point of Need teaching is an approach that recognises the individual learner and allows all students to learn at their own pace and remain engaged with the learning content. For example, while students may be introduced to multiplication as a whole class, they will also have the opportunity for small-group support on a specific aspect of it.

We use a range of rigorous, yet purposeful assessment to establish a student’s individual ‘Point of Need’ and group them with others in a similar learning focus. Students are made aware that groupings are changeable, meaning that they may work with many different peers throughout the course of a year. As they are aware that assessment has a purpose beyond providing them with a mark, students become more willing to set and work towards goals in order to prove that they have mastered a concept.
Specialist Program

Language:

At Hoa Nghiem Primary School, our language other than English is Vietnamese. Students receive one hour of study per week from Foundation through to Year 6. Vietnamese lessons develop basic aspects of speaking, reading and writing through a topic-based focus.

Physical Education:

Hoa Nghiem Primary School has a vibrant and comprehensive Physical Education program that caters for years Foundation-6 and all ability groups. Each class receives sixty minutes of dedicated P.E. time per week. In the latter half of the year, a swimming program operates in order to help children develop basic swimming skills (or improve upon those they already have).

In the Foundation-2 area, students take part in PMP (Perceptual Motor Program) at the beginning of the year. This helps develop basic fitness and balance skills as well as core strength, which has positive impacts upon students’ posture, strength and overall fitness. In the 3-6 area, students become involved in more formalised learning of sports skills, both individual (e.g. athletics) and team-based (e.g. soccer).

Art:

All students have access to a full range of visual arts materials and learning. Our program supports the development of art appreciation and artistic language, art history and study and actively teaches skills that include painting, drawing, craft and digital arts. In 2016, our Visual Art program is integrated with the classroom curriculum, with frequent links made to other areas of study. Students receive a minimum of one hour of Visual Arts per week.
Attendance

Absences

It is important that your child attends school on a daily basis to ensure that they do not miss out on essential learning. While every effort is made to support students to ‘catch up’ on what they have missed, this is not always possible when students have missed a substantial amount of material.

However, if your child is sick, home is the best place for them to be. This ensures the health of other children in the class, not to mention their teacher! When your child has been absent from school, you are required by law to supply the school with a written explanation on the next day the child attends. If you know in advance that your child will be absent, we would appreciate this information in writing or a telephone call to the school.

Parents will be contacted if continued absences are recorded, or after three consecutive days without notification to the school.

Early Departure

On occasions where it is necessary for students to leave school prior to normal dismissal time, children must be collected by a parent, guardian or authorised adult. The time of departure, pupil’s name and adult’s signature must first be recorded in the sign out book located at the office. You will receive a yellow collection card that you will need to give to your child’s teacher before collecting your child. This is a legal requirement.

No child will be allowed to leave the school during the day unless this procedure is followed.

Hours and Bell Times

Formal teaching hours are from 9:00am to 3:30pm in the afternoon during weekdays. As teachers are setting up their classrooms prior to 9:00am, students are to remain outside unless it is raining and a wet day timetable has been called.

Our day is broken into the following periods of time:

8:55am: First line-up bell
9:00am: Class starts
9:00am-11:00am: 1st session
11:00am-11:30am: Recess
11:30am-1:30pm: 2nd session
1:30pm-1:40pm: Lunch eating time (supervised, in class)
1:40pm-2:30pm: Lunch break
2:30-3:30pm: 3rd session
3:30pm: Dismissal

Lateness

While we understand that lateness often occurs due to circumstances beyond your control, it is vital that your child arrives at school on time as regularly as possible. The first part of the morning sets the scene for the day, and missing that time of interaction and sharing can make for confusion. Should your child arrive late, please report to the office to sign your child in using our sign-in book to record the date, time and reason for lateness.

Parents will be contacted by either the classroom teacher or principal should a child frequently arrive late without adequate reason. We may be able to offer some form of help or support to families who are struggling to make it to school on time due to personal reasons.
Student Activities

Camp

Due to the small size of the school in the 2016 school year, we will not be offering a camp experience to our students in the middle and senior years. Our camp program will begin in 2017.

Incursions and Excursions

Teachers often organise incursions and excursions that enhance or contribute to the delivery of school programs in particular learning areas. You will be notified of any upcoming incursions and excursions in writing, usually with a minimum of two weeks’ notice.

In order to ensure the safety of all students on excursions, there is a strict ratio of adults to children that needs to be adhered to. Excursions cannot be run without meeting this ratio, and we will often ask parents to volunteer as helpers. Additionally, we must have permission for your child’s attendance and to obtain emergency medical attention for your child should an accident occur. Children who do not return signed and dated permission forms will not be permitted to attend the excursion, and will remain at school under the supervision of a different classroom teacher. Additional work will not be provided for these students unless we have been advised in advance that you do not consent to your child attending the incursion or excursion.

Homework Club

Hoa Nghiem Primary School offers a Homework Club for its students. Its purpose is to provide a quiet, structured space in which students can focus on completing homework tasks or engaging in further learning. Homework Club does not offer a teaching program, and cannot be used to complete work that is designed to be done in class. The Club is overseen by the School's teaching staff and supported by suitably qualified and experienced volunteers, all of whom are required by law to hold a Working With Children Check. If your child already undertakes tutoring, and you would like their tutor to work with them during Homework Club, please let us know.

Homework Club meets in the 3/4 classroom (Ms Bosman’s room) and runs from 3:45pm to 5:30 pm. It is the expectation of the school that students are picked up by closing time, at the very latest. If you are running late, it is essential that you contact the school to advise that this is the case. After 5:30pm, arrangements are in place with Hoa Nghiem Temple to provide further care for your child until you are able to arrive.

In the event that staff members are unable to supervise the Club, parents will need to make arrangements to collect their children by the end of the school day at 3:45pm and will need to
make other arrangements for their child’s care and supervision. Homework Club does not run on holidays or during pupil free days.

Foundation-2 Pyjama Party

The Foundation-2 Pyjama Party is an annual activity, held in Term 4, which supports our school Transition Program by allowing our younger students to have a fun evening out with their peers. Pyjama Party is held after school hours and involves a kid-friendly dinner, activities, games and closes with a movie. Students are asked to attend in their favourite set of pyjamas, which means that they’ll be all tired out and ready for bed by the end of the evening!

In 2016, we will extend the party invitation to our older students, as they will not be attending camp this year.

Student Leadership

At Hoa Nghiem Primary School, we believe in the importance of offering students leadership opportunities. These experiences allow students to build their confidence, take ownership of their school environment and develop skills in planning and negotiation. In the coming years, the following opportunities will be made available at Hoa Nghiem Primary School:

- Junior School Council (JSC): one student in each year level from 2-5;
- School Captain: two students in Year 6.
- Buddies (all students in Levels 5 and 6, partnered with new students in Foundation).

In the case of JSC and School Captain positions, please be aware that teachers do not participate in making these decisions. Students aiming for a position on the JSC or as School Captain will be required to prepare a speech that outlines their goals, aims and qualities/experience that makes them a good choice for the position. The decision is then up to the other students in the class, who elect their representative.

In 2016, leadership opportunities will be provided within the classroom rather than school-wide.
Community Expectations

Internet Use Policy and Agreement

Digital technology has significant educational benefits for students when used properly, whether for research, communication or design. With children growing up in a technology rich and reliant environment, we must ensure that our students become confident, responsible and efficient users of these resources.

It is our policy to support students in developing their capacity to use the digital technology in a responsible manner, under the direct supervision of a teacher. Therefore, when students are issued with their Internet Use Agreement at the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians are asked to read and discuss this agreement with their children. This agreement covers such topics as the safe handling of equipment and appropriate use of the Internet. This agreement must be signed by both you and your child before they are permitted to use the school’s technological resources. Students who do not abide by the agreement may find themselves subject to a ban on the use of ICT tools for an agreed length of time.

Student Behaviour

Hoa Nghiem Primary School is committed to providing a healthy, safe and inclusive learning environment for all children. Encouraging students to build appropriate relationships with others and develop vital social skills is a top priority at Hoa Nghiem Primary School. We guide students to:

- Respect themselves, others and their environment and demonstrate pride in their school.
- Recognise the worth and dignity of all people.
- Accept responsibility for their actions.
- Resolve conflict in a positive, non-violent manner.

Each classroom will also develop, at the commencement of the school year, a class learning agreement that outlines any expectations that may be specific to the particular grade level or class.

Where conflicts or negative behaviours arise at Hoa Nghiem Primary School, staff do not take a punitive approach to resolve the issue. Instead, we focus on understanding why this particular behaviour has arisen and supporting the student(s) involved to recognise the result of their actions, reflect and make amends.
In the case of more complicated problems, staff follow a restorative justice approach to resolving conflict. This involves a mediated discussion between all students involved. All parties are accorded respect and speaking time, harm is acknowledged and a path forward identified. While there may be rare circumstances in which there are more ‘traditional’ consequences (loss of play time, removal from activities) these are generally avoided and only occur when the consequence is linked to a particular action. We aim to help the parties involved come together and negotiate a solution that will repair trust and heal any pain that has been caused.

While staff will contact parents to inform them of any serious issues, we generally try to build students’ independence and conflict management skills. When staff need to make contact, please be advised that we are not permitted to name other children involved in an incident for reasons of confidentiality.

**Rights and Responsibilities For All**

We believe that all members of the Hoa Nghiem Primary School community have rights and responsibilities in terms of the learning environment and interactions that they have with each other. The following table provides a basic overview of what can be expected from staff, students and families. Abiding by these guidelines will help ensure harmonious relationships are built throughout the school year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Students:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Learn in a purposeful and supportive environment.</td>
<td>➢ Ensure their behaviour does not disrupt others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Work and play in a safe, secure, friendly and clean environment.</td>
<td>➢ Keep the school environment safe, secure and tidy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Be treated with respect, kindness and honesty.</td>
<td>➢ Ensure that they are punctual, polite, prepared and display a positive attitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Have their spiritual, religious or secular views respected.</td>
<td>➢ Be respectful, kind and honest to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Demonstrate respect for the religious and cultural significance of the facility</td>
<td>➢ Ensure that the school environment is kept clean, safe, secure and tidy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Staff:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Teach in a safe, secure, friendly and clean environment.</td>
<td>➢ Treat others with respect, kindness and honesty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Be treated with respect, kindness and honesty.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach in a purposeful and non-disruptive environment.</td>
<td>Provide a meaningful and inclusive curriculum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expect cooperation and support from parents.</td>
<td>Communicate with parents in a clear, respectful manner and provide them with classroom participation opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abide by the protocols of restorative justice when resolving complex conflicts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Parents:**

- Be informed of curriculum material, behaviour management procedures and decisions affecting their child’s health and welfare.
- Be informed of their child’s progress.
- Be heard in an appropriate forum on matters relating to their child’s education.

**Parents:**

- Ensure that their child attends school on a regular, punctual basis.
- Ensure that their child has the required materials to participate in the education program.
- Support the school in providing a meaningful and inclusive education for their child.
- Communicate with staff in a respectful manner.
Parent Involvement

School Volunteers

There are many ways to volunteer at Hoa Nghiem Primary School, further information about these opportunities will be made available throughout the year.

In addition, the majority of incursions and excursions will require parent or family helpers in order to run. Requests for parent helpers will be made at the bottom of your child’s permission slip, so please make sure to check for these opportunities and return forms as soon as possible to be selected.

Special Activities

Throughout the year, many opportunities will arise for parents and families to visit the school. These may include open days, expos of student work, performances, celebrations or unique learning activities. In general, we aim to advise you of these opportunities at the beginning of each term to enable working parents or family members to take leave if necessary.

Health and Safety

Evacuations and Drills

The school has evacuation procedures that are designed to provide for the kinds of emergencies that we hope will never arise. All staff are familiar with these procedures and are expected to display a map of the evacuation route at a central point in their classrooms. Regular drills for fire and lockdown procedures occur throughout the year to ensure that children are familiar enough with the instructions to be calm and confident if any issues do arise.

Grounds and Security

The safety of your child is very important to us. Please read the following information very carefully:
Children are not to be on school grounds **prior to 8:45am and after 3:45 pm** as teachers are involved in classroom preparation, curriculum planning or evaluation and cannot supervise them. Classrooms are ‘out of bounds’ before and after school hours, however children under the supervision of their parents are more than welcome to remain in the yard and grounds.

During the school day, children are not permitted to be in the school building when a teacher is not present. This includes before and after school, or during recess and lunch breaks. Children are expected to ask permission from the teacher on yard duty if they need to reenter the building for any reason.

If you see anything untoward occurring on the property (for example, a stranger lurking in the area), please follow the following procedure:

1) Where teachers or other staff are available, alert them immediately
2) If occurring before or after hours, please contact ‘000’ (in an emergency) or Springvale Police Station (03 8558 8600) where the report is a non-urgent matter.

**Health Information**

At the time of enrolment, parents need to provide the school with accurate information regarding their child’s health history and any existing medical conditions or health care needs. The school needs to be informed immediately should a child’s medical condition or health care needs change. **Please note: all children must be immunised before commencing school.**

**Medication**

If your child needs to take medication on an ongoing or temporary basis, parents **must** sign an Administration of Medication form detailing how medicine is to be administered during school hours. Medication is only administered by personnel who are trained in First Aid. Medication will not be provided to students when an Administration of Medication form has not been completed and signed. These forms are issued at the school office.

Where students are taking medication on a long-term basis, this must be provided in a properly labelled container that states the child’s name, the name of the medication and the dosage. Only minimal quantities only should be sent to school unless there is a need for larger amounts to be sent.

**Accidents and Injuries**

Minor injuries or illnesses during the day are normally attended to at school. Staff are trained in First Aid, including attending to bruises, cuts, bee stings and mild sprains. In the majority of circumstances, we simply assist the child to become more comfortable and return to lessons. Parents are only contacted if their child is determined to be ill or has experienced an injury to the head or eye area.

In extreme emergencies, a child may be taken to hospital by ambulance. Therefore, it is extremely important that parents ensure that emergency contact numbers are kept up to date.
Infectious Diseases

The law states the following with regards to exclusion from school due to an infectious disease:

- **Chicken Pox**: exclude until all blisters have dried.
- **Conjunctivitis**: exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased.
- **Cold sores**: young children unable or unlikely to comply with hygiene (e.g. Foundation to Level 2) excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered where possible afterwards.
- **Influenza (flu) and flu-like illnesses**: exclude until well.
- **Measles**: exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash
- **Mumps**: exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)
- **Whooping Cough**: exclude for 21 days after onset of cough or until they have completed 5 days on antibiotics.
- **Head lice**: exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced
- **German Measles**: exclude until fully recovered or at least 4 days from the onset of the rash

This is to be taken as a general overview, and does not include all infectious diseases that are outlined in the Department of Health’s School Exclusion Table. If your child is diagnosed with a particular infection that is not on this list, please contact the school office for further advice. In all circumstances where a child is ill, it is better to ensure that they remain home than risk sending them to school. This helps keep both other children and school staff healthy as well!

School Hat Policy

Our school has a ‘no hat, no play’ policy in place from September to the end of April (that is, during times of the year with increased UV). This means that children will not be permitted to participate in P.E. unless they are wearing a hat. During lunch and recess breaks, children without hats will be directed to covered areas where they may sit and play.

Smoking and Alcohol Consumption

Smoking is banned in all school buildings and grounds. This applies to all staff, parents and visitors on a twenty-four hour basis. We appreciate the difficulty this places upon people who smoke, but ask for your cooperation in maximising our community health and wellbeing.

Similarly, the provision and consumption of alcohol is strictly prohibited on school buildings, grounds and at school functions.
Yard Duty

Teaching staff are on duty in the different playing areas during recess and lunch breaks in order to attend to playground problems. All staff on duty wear a high visibility vest to allow children to see them easily, and carry a First Aid kit that is stocked with band-aids and light dressings. For more serious injuries, children will be sent to the Sick Bay for further treatment and assistance. Yard duty volunteers are advised not to engage in First Aid, but to alert the teacher in charge that there is a need for assistance.

Teachers on yard duty also monitor disputes and conflicts between students. If a teacher on duty is unaware of an incident, it is the responsibility of the child to seek out the teacher and make a report. Where an incident occurs close to bell time, the report should be made to the classroom teacher as soon as possible as delayed reports are often difficult to follow up satisfactorily.

When a class teacher is on yard duty before or after school, their duty of care is to supervise children who are still in the yard. While you are more than welcome to say a quick hello, please do not engage teachers in discussion at this time, as it is essential that they continue to monitor the yard.

Break Times

Canteen

Hoa Nghiem Primary School operates a canteen that is managed by our Canteen Manager and operates with volunteer assistance. Parents who can spare one morning a week, fortnight or a month are invited to offer their services, which will provide an opportunity to meet other members of the school community.

School Canteen provides snacks at recess and lunchtime on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays for the first fifteen minutes of each break. The canteen provides a healthy, vegetarian lunch for our students on Wednesdays and Fridays. Students can order their lunch by writing their name, grade and lunch order on a paper bag and putting the money inside. The bag should be sealed to ensure that money does not slip out. Please enclose the exact amount of money as change cannot be given. These orders are collected from your child’s classroom at 9.15am and returned in time for lunch.

Lunch
Students eat their lunch in the classroom between 1:30 and 1:40pm. If they have not finished lunch within this time, students are expected to finish eating while they are out in the playground. While every effort is made to ensure that children eat an adequate amount of lunch, it is possible to miss a student who is avoiding eating. If you notice that your child is persistently coming home with a large portion of their lunch uneaten, please get in touch with the classroom teacher who can actively monitor the situation.

In the interest of our environment, and in order to keep the school and temple grounds in a clean state, we ask that parents minimise the amount of packaging that their child brings to school with their lunch. Children are to place all rubbish (e.g. plastic, foil and wrappers) in the bin before being allowed out to play.

Due to the vegetarian nature of the Buddhist temple environment, we encourage parents or guardians to provide their children with vegetarian meals and snacks throughout the week. However, small amounts of meat (for example, in a sandwich) are permissible.

Please avoid coming to the school at lunch or other break times (unless you are volunteering), as it is important for your child’s independence and socialisation that they build friendships with their peers.

**Inclement Weather**

In severe inclement weather (e.g. heavy rain or extreme heat) an announcement will be made and teachers will supervise children in the classrooms.

**Communication**

**News and Notices**

Please keep a close eye on the Hoa Nghiem Primary School website, which is updated regularly with news and special events. As the school expands, we will introduce a regular newsletter in print or electronic form.

Notices are colour-coded for convenience: yellow for notices that need to be actioned (for example, permission slips) and white for notices that contain information or reminders. Your child is responsible for ensuring that notices are given to you. If you don’t receive a notice, please advise your child’s classroom teacher as soon as possible (or obtain a copy from the office).
Parent-Teacher Contact

Parent visits are welcomed by teachers at Hoa Nghiem Primary School. There is no need to make an appointment if you would like to drop in for five minutes: please just wait for the teacher at the end of the day and ask whether they are available. If you expect your visit to take longer, or wish to discuss a particular issue, please make an appointment through the office. Your child’s teacher will contact you within 24 hours to set a meeting time.

When issues arise they are best solved by collaboration between parent and teacher. The first step in resolving matters involving your child is, therefore, to meet with their teacher. If a meeting leaves any issues unresolved, parents should then make an appointment with a member of the school Executive Team (Assistant Principal or Principal).

Some staff may choose to provide you with access to their personal email or mobile phone number if it is deemed appropriate. While we consider this perfectly acceptable, please keep such contact to a minimum and only for genuinely urgent matters.

In addition, many teachers will have some form of presence on social media (such as Facebook). We ask that you do not ‘add’ teachers on social media, as such sites are a part of staff members’ personal lives and are thus separate from their working relationships.

Reporting

Parents will receive two formal HNPS reports each year (Terms 2 and 4). Teachers will also informally report to parents when appropriate. A separate report is also issued for those students sitting NAPLAN. This report is generated and issued nationally and will be provided to you as soon as it becomes available.

Parent-teacher interviews will also be held during Term 1 and Term 3. As a key part of these interviews is the presentation of portfolios of work, students are expected to attend these meetings as well and take some leadership of the discussion.
General Information

Bicycles/Scooters

While Hoa Nghiem Primary School encourages a healthy an active approach to life, we believe that it is important for students arriving at school by bike to be accompanied by parents or family members.

There are bike racks available for students who arrive by bicycle, and parents are strongly advised to provide their child/children with a chain or locking device to secure their bike. Where students bring bikes, scooters, skateboards etc. to school, Hoa Nghiem Primary School and Hoa Nghiem Temple do not accept responsibility for their loss or theft. Bicycles and other modes of transport that are parked on school property are left there at the owner's risk.

Bicycles and scooters are not to be ridden within school grounds.

Custody and Legal Directives

If only one parent has custody of the children from a former relationship, he or she must inform the Principal of any access provisions for the other parent. Similarly, the Principal must be advised in writing of any binding legal directives that need to be applied so that, in our operations, we can ensure compliance. Unless documentation is provided, the school cannot comply with court orders.

In most cases, parent-teacher interviews can be conducted with both parents independently. Reports are generally also issued to each parent, separately. Exceptions exist where court orders advise us not to enter into communication with one or the other parent.

Dogs on School Premises

Dogs (other than service animals) are prohibited from the school site. This includes dogs on leashes. Please do not bring your dog to the school whilst dropping off or collecting your child, your children to school or collecting them, unless you are able to leave them off-site.

Where teachers have specifically asked for a dog to be brought to school as part of a lesson, this requirement will be waived.
Donations and Fundraising

Hoa Nghiem Temple has established the Hoa Nghiem School Building Fund, which allows parents to donate money to the school and is tax deductible.

Some extra fundraising is undertaken by the school to assist with funding various events. This fundraising must be authorised by the School Board and parents notified in a timely and appropriate manner.

Reasons for Fundraising (participation voluntary)

1. **Fundraising for charity:** Schools often collect funds for charitable organisations or in response to critical world events (e.g. earthquakes, famine relief etc). At Hoa Nghiem Primary School, we consider this a vital part of developing students’ sense of global responsibility. We are also aware, however, that fundraising can place an increased burden on families. For this reason, we seek to limit charitable fundraisers to a maximum of five per year.

2. **Fundraising for school requirements:** From time to time permission will be sought to raise funds to assist with the financial requirements of whole school needs and initiatives. Need will be determined based on projected requirements, current school budget and our Strategic Plan.

Library

Hoa Nghiem Primary School supports a well-stocked library of fiction, non-fiction and reference texts. The library is open during lunch times for students to read, borrow books or engage in quiet study. It is staffed by a volunteer librarian who will be responsible for lending and general supervision, with support from the yard duty teacher.

Lost Property

Articles of clothing etc., left around the school are placed in a lost property box located inside the school office area. Items that remain unclaimed for a significant length of time may then be used as ‘accident clothes’ or offered as second hand goods.

It is not recommended that students bring items such as toys, games or trading cards to school. These items are easily lost and can become a source of conflict between children, particularly where trading is involved. If your child wishes to bring a toy to school, please ensure that it labelled with your child’s name and that the toy is one that-if lost- will not be difficult to replace.
Money Collection

If money is required to be brought in for activities (e.g. book club), we request that it be placed in an envelope with your child’s name, the teacher’s name and the purpose written clearly on the front. Your child should then hand it in to their teacher, who will pass it on to the office or business manager as required. Alternatively, any payments can be made directly at the office.

Parent Carpark

Limited parking has been provided within the grounds of Hoa Nghiem Temple, in the parking spaces that are closest to the school and pagoda. This has been designated for parent parking and for pick-up and set-down areas. These areas operate most effectively when parents do not park for extended periods.

Parents picking up children after school are requested to take particular caution. Please stress with your child the importance of not running in the carpark.

Photographic Permission

Teachers often take photos/videos of their students to enhance a particular activity or provide a historical record. These sorts of images and videos are used only within the classroom or school environment, and as such form a part of learning and assessing.

As part of your enrolment form, there is a section that requests your permission to publish photos or videos of your child. The use of these photos and videos is generally for either advertising the school, or as an accompaniment to posts on the school website. Names of children are never published. You will be asked for publication consent on a yearly basis, and can withdraw your consent at any time simply by contacting the office.

Parents are not permitted to take photos of students (other than their own children) during school events, expos and so on. While we understand that this is difficult, the reason for this rule is based in our confidentiality requirements and duty of care, as some children may not have permission to be photographed. Also, images that are uploaded to social media are easily able to be shared and passed on in ways which other parents may not approve of. We respectfully ask parents to only take photos of their own children while at school events or performances.

Similarly, if you wish to take photos of school staff (such as teachers), please make sure that you have their permission before doing so.
Private Property

Parents should be aware that private property brought to school by students is not insured, nor is the school responsible in cases of loss or theft. All valuable items should be kept at home. In addition, parents can assist in the security of their children’s equipment and clothing by ensuring that all items are clearly identified with the child’s name.

Electronic devices such as mobile phones or games are to be left at the office on your child’s arrival at school. The phone can be collected at the end of the day. If children are found to have electronic devices that have not been turned in, these will be confiscated and taken to the office for collection at the end of the day.

School Board

The School Board is a legally formed body and the major governing body of the school. In partnership with the principal, the Board’s fundamental purpose is enabling parents and community members to engage in activities that are in the best interests of students and that will enhance the education provided by the school.

Both parents and community members bring their own particular experiences and skills to School Board, while staff members bring their experience as educators.

School Board responsibilities include:

- Contributing to, and signing off on, the school’s strategic plan;
- Endorsing and reviewing the annual budget;
- Assisting with some aspects of policy development;
- Reviewing school performance;
- Creating interest in the school within and across the community;
- Approving some fees, charges and contributions;
- Approving some extra-cost, optional components of programs;

The School Board does not:

- Manage or exercise influence over the day to day running of the school;
- Discuss individual issues relating to teachers, staff or parents;
- Represent specific interest groups, or permit special interests to dominate the Council’s agenda;
- Intervene in students’ education instruction;
• Performance manage the principal or any other staff member.

**Snacks and Water**

All students are encouraged to drink water regularly during the day. Therefore, we request that children have their own water bottle to keep on their desks.

Snack breaks may be provided during the day, at which time children are permitted to eat a healthy (small) snack such as fruit, vegetable sticks or biscuits. Students will not be permitted to consume candy or chips during classroom snack time.

**Uniform**

At Hoa Nghiem Primary School, the wearing of the school uniform is compulsory. Our uniform reflects pride in the school and emphasises the equality of all students. The uniform is as follows:

**Summer:**

Boys: Navy blue knee-length shorts with yellow polo t-shirt and school bomber jacket. Broad-brimmed school hat to be worn outdoors September to April. Plain navy socks with black non-slip sole shoes or runners (PE days only).

Girls: Cotton checked dress with school bomber jacket and broad-brimmed school hat. Girls' skirts should be knee-length at minimum, in order to ensure comfortable play. Plain navy socks with black non-slip sole shoes or runners (PE days only).

**Winter:**

Boys: Navy blue trousers, with yellow long-sleeved polo shirt. Plain navy socks with black non-slip sole shoes or runners (PE days only).

Girls: Tunic with long-sleeved polo shirt. Girls' skirts should be knee-length at minimum, in order to ensure comfortable play. Plain navy socks with black non-slip sole shoes or runners (PE days only).

While we do expect students to wear uniforms, we also respect individuals' right to express themselves in a free manner. Jewelry is permitted so long as it is kept to a minimum and is not likely to cause discomfort when engaged in physical activities (for example, heavy necklaces or ‘drop’ earrings are not recommended).

Shoes should be worn throughout the majority of the day, except in places where this is inappropriate (for example, attending the Buddha Hall).

A P.E. uniform will also be available, with both boys and girls wearing knee-length shorts. This will be accompanied by a t-shirt (or long-sleeved shirt in winter) in the school colours.
Visitor Badges

For security reasons, all parents and visitors must report to the School Office upon entering the school to obtain and wear a visitor badge.