

HWA CHONG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

SCHOOL POLICIES 2009 / 2010

These are the policies that guide our everyday operations.

Absenteeism

Students must attend school every day. 100% attendance is required unless the absence is justified by sickness – supported by a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner – or by urgent private affairs explained in a letter from the parent or guardian.

Academic standards

It is the student's responsibility to study hard, complete all work set, read beyond the curriculum, and excel in examinations. Promotion from one year to the next is based on the student's academic results.

Promotion criteria are as follows:

All students must score at least 50% in English. In addition they must achieve:

From Secondary One to Secondary Two:	Mean subject mark of at least 50%
From Secondary Two to Secondary Three:	Mean subject mark of at least 50%
From Secondary Three to Secondary Four:	Mean subject mark of at least 50%
From Secondary Four to Pre-U1 (IBDP):	At least a Grade C in 5 other IGCSE subjects
From Pre-U 1 to Pre-U 2 (IBDP):	At least a Band 4 in 6 subjects

Assembly Programmes

Assemblies are conducted weekly. These are occasions for the Headmaster, Head of School or Form Teachers to discuss issues of topical interest with the students. This is also a valuable opportunity to guide students on what is expected of them at school and in life in terms of academic performance, personal commitment and ethical behaviour. Our assemblies are always secular in nature, though references to the various religious faiths and beliefs of our diverse school community may be made.

Behaviour

The school does not have a long list of rules. We teach students that if their behaviour is both safe and sensible, then it is 'within school rules'. If it is either not safe or not sensible, then it falls 'outside school rules'. This approach is intended to nurture self-discipline amongst students.

Behaviour Assessment

Twice yearly we formally assess the behaviour of all students against 15 clearly defined criteria. These criteria (shown below) are available for all parents, staff and students to see, and we work cooperatively with students and parents in cases where there is an obvious need for intervention and improvement.

These are the descriptors of a model student who is performing to the best of his/her academic ability, behaving safely and sensibly, and showing no signs of emotional distress.

Learning Behaviour
1 Is attentive, completes work set on time, not easily distracted, enjoys school work
2 Works systematically, is well-organised
3 Thinks before speaking in class
4 Works effectively in a group
5 Can work independently, but seeks help when necessary
Conduct Behaviour
1 Behaves respectfully towards staff
2 Shows respect to other students
3 Interrupts lessons appropriately; does not disrupt to seek attention
4 Avoids fights, is physically peaceable
5 Respects property
Emotional Behaviour
1 Is tolerant of others, considerate and sympathetic
2 Is socially integrated, not a loner or isolated
3 Is happy at school, never tearful or depressed
4 Is confident and relaxed, has high self-esteem
5 Is emotionally stable, not easily flustered

Body Piercings

All forms of body piercing are discouraged. Students will not be allowed to wear ear rings or ear studs. They will not be allowed to remain in school should they choose to pierce any part of their body with pins or needles of any kind.

Bullying

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and

safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at our school.

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are:

- physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups).

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. Students must be encouraged to report bullying at HCIS.

HCIS staff are alert to the signs of bullying and will act promptly and firmly against it.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying:

- if bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- a clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Headmaster
- the Headmaster will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- parents will be kept informed

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- being offered an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form teacher or member of staff of their choice
- being reassured by a teacher or counselor
- receiving continuous support
- having their self-esteem and confidence restored.

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the student

The following consequences may follow:

- official warnings to cease offending
- withdrawal of privileges, including participation in school sports
- time out, either within school or at home
- permanent exclusion.

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Change of Address

It is extremely important for the parent or guardian to inform the school immediately of any change in address, email address or telephone number throughout the year. We rely on this information in the event of an emergency.

Consequences

We teach students that all actions have consequences, good or bad. We avoid words such as 'punishment' and 'expulsion', since such language suggests that the school is reacting vindictively to a mistake made by a student.

Good consequences will include the following:

- mentions in assemblies and on the school website;
- the award of certificates of merit and achievement;
- positive written reports from teachers that are sent home to parents;
- early promotion to a higher grade;
- examination results from external bodies that will secure the student's educational future.

Bad consequences will include the following:

- the student being placed 'on report' for a set period. During this time, the student's work and behaviour are monitored on a lesson by lesson basis and daily feedback is sent to parents and Headmaster;
- the student being denied privileges such as free time during break periods, though a student will never be prevented from taking his midday meal;
- 'time out' of lessons when the school either withdraws the student from his regular classes and educates him in relative isolation, or asks the student to remain at home for a set number of days;
- exclusion, when the Headmaster excludes the student permanently from school.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is strictly not allowed at HCIS. All members of the school community have a right to feel safe at all times and in all circumstances. Using violence or threats of violence is never 'safe' or 'sensible' so it is unacceptable to the school. In this context 'corporal punishment' covers all acts of violence including

- slapping
- hitting
- punching
- dragging
- pulling by the hair or ears

- throwing an object at someone

Electronic Gadgets

All handheld games and musical devices such as Gameboy, Nintendo, iPhones and iPods are strictly not allowed on the school campus.

If we find any student in possession of such a gadget, we will confiscate it and ask the parents to come to school to collect it.

Emergencies

The school will always strive to keep parents and guardians fully informed in the event of any emergency that affects their child or ward. However, when a student is admitted to the school, all parents and guardians delegate parental authority to the school. In effect this means that the Headmaster has the permission of the parents to authorize any medical treatment including evacuation to a hospital if he considers this in the best interests of the student. On his part, whenever practical, the Headmaster will always seek the consent of the parents and / or guardians before involving a medical practitioner or authorizing the administration of medical treatment.

Examinations

Examinations continue to play an important part in school life. At HCIS we conduct examinations at the end of every term and begin each new term by handing out results and reports and providing feedback to students and parents on areas for improvement.

Students are given strict instructions on what to bring and what not to bring into examinations. They are also briefed on what behaviour is acceptable and what behaviour is not acceptable during examinations.

The consequence for any student found to be cheating or attempting to cheat in an examination is an automatic mark of 0 for that paper, and an investigation into his/her other papers to see if there is any evidence of cheating there as well.

Field trips

Some of the best and deepest learning takes place outside school when students participate in activities off-site. These could include visits to concerts, galleries and museums in Singapore and extend to overnight camps or longer excursions here at home and overseas.

All such activities inevitably involve a degree of risk. Teachers at HCIS are trained to conduct and publish thorough risk assessments during the planning stage of all such activities. Such risk assessments help us put in place hazard control measures where appropriate and also

help us identify those students for whom the activity poses too great a risk to control.

Sometimes, therefore, planned activities may be cancelled, or certain students may be left out. Such decisions will always be the result of this painstaking risk assessment process.

Hair

All students are expected to keep their hair clean and tidy while at school. For boys, hair must not touch their eyebrows or shirt collars and must not fall over their ears. For girls, longer hair must be tied back at all times. No hair dye of any kind is allowed. This applies to both boys and girls.

Homework

The school believes in the value of homework. Homework helps students acquire disciplined study and work habits from a young age. Students at all levels are set homework regularly by their subject teachers. Students are expected to complete homework tasks on time and to the best of their ability. A student who fails to complete homework satisfactorily and on time is acting irresponsibly. Parents are urged to support the school in ensuring that homework assignments are taken seriously.

Jewellery

Jewellery is not allowed unless it has a cultural and / or religious significance. (eg crucifix for Christians, Kara – wristband - for Sikhs). Even then, permission to wear the item (s) will be granted only upon receipt of a written request from the parents.

Language

The working language of the school is English. All subjects – except for Chinese – are taught in English and English is the only language allowed in all teacher-teacher and teacher-student interactions. The only exception to this is when a Chinese language teacher is talking with a student, or when other teachers are talking with visitors / parents who cannot understand English.

Leaving School Early

Any student who wishes to leave school early should report to the Administration Office. They will be asked to fill out a simple form explaining the need to leave early for the endorsement of the Headmaster. They may also be issued with an exit pass, without which they will not be allowed to leave the campus.

Library

The school has an excellent library that is well-resourced in terms of books, magazines, newspapers, DVDs and computers. It is a bright and beautiful air-conditioned facility. It is open from 0830-1700 every day, Monday to Friday, throughout term time and during school holidays. Students are free to borrow items from the library. However, end of year results will not be issued to any student who has not returned any item to the library or paid its full replacement value.

The school library, in addition, offers leadership opportunities for students in the Library Board as Student Librarians. Outstanding students can hold leadership appointments and serve the school and their fellows in an environment conducive to study and contemplative reading.

Lost and found

Students are not encouraged to bring expensive items or large sums of money to school. The school accepts no liability for any such losses, however they may occur. All items found on campus should be handed in to the Administration Office. It is advisable for all items to be tagged with the student's name for easy identification and return.

Make-Up

Make-up is not allowed.

Messages

Parents and guardians are requested not to try to contact students during school hours other than in a genuine emergency. Students' use of the telephone is severely restricted in school.

Mobile phones

Students are allowed to bring mobile phones to school subject to the following restrictions:

- all mobile phones must be switched off during all lessons and examinations
- mobile phones must never be used to take photographs or make audio or video recordings of any person or activity in school

The consequence for students who misuse their mobile phones will be that they will have the privilege of bringing such devices to school withdrawn.

Parties

We do not allow birthday parties or similar events to take place in school. Please arrange for birthdays to be celebrated outside school. Parents will understand that when students bring

cake and fizzy drinks to school, it is not conducive to academic study. Since virtually every day will be someone's birthday, allowing such parties would cause severe disruption to our academic programmes.

Punctuality

All students are expected to be punctual for all lessons. Those students arriving late at the start of the school day will have to report to the 'Thinking Room' during the first morning recess. Habitual latecomers will be placed 'on report'. (See 'Consequences' above)

Student Council

We are proud of our Student Council. It comprises elected and nominated representatives of the student body. The Council organizes many events throughout the school year and provides leadership opportunities for students at all levels. The Student Council's purpose is to help the school achieve its goal of offering an excellent all-round education to all its students.

Uniform

The school has adopted a relaxed uniform style for the comfort and convenience of all students. However, we are not relaxed about enforcing minimum standards about what is worn and how it is worn.

Boys and girls must not wear any jacket at school other than the casual jacket with HCIS logo.

The items currently on the uniform list include:

BOYS

Casual jacket with HCIS logo

Polo T-shirt

Khaki Bermudas

PE shirt

PE shorts

Tailor-made long pants for Secondary 4 and Pre-University students

White trainers

GIRLS

Casual jacket with HCIS logo

Polo T-shirt

Khaki Bermudas

PE T-shirt

PE shorts

Khaki skirt

White trainers

Please note that boys

- must keep their Polo T-shirts tucked in their shorts or long pants
- must wear visible white ankle socks, not socks that fall below the shoe line
- must wear their trousers around their waists, not around their hips
- must wear a belt with a plain buckle

Visitors and parents

All visitors to the school must first report to the Administration Office where they will be issued with a visitor's pass.

Volunteerism

We are aware that many parents, other family members and members of the public have time and talent to put at the disposal of the school. We welcome such support. However, in the interests of security, it is necessary for all such involvement to be cleared first through the Headmaster.