



# Dhammissara National School – Pride of Nattandiya

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**D**hammissara National School takes pride in its 113-year history, guided by the theme *Pagna Taranan Ratanan* or “Wisdom is a gem for people.” The school is at the forefront of nurturing future contributors to both the nation and the world.

Founded in 1913 with just 15 students under the leadership of Principal Mendis (1913 to 1919), this school was among the twelve initial bilingual schools established in 1920. It later became known as the State Bilingual School, and notably, it was the sole English medium school in the North West Province during that period.

The year 1953 marked a significant turning point in the school's history when it was designated as a Government junior college, and the student population increased to 183.

In 1958, the school achieved the distinction of becoming the first Maha Vidyalaya in the Puttalam district, transitioning to a Government Maha Vidyalaya in 1956 as part of the initiative to establish Sinhala as the official language, under the leadership of Principal Douglas Bogatlanda.

A noteworthy milestone in the school's history occurred in 1960 when two students from the Arts stream earned university entrance. One of these students, Samath Edirisinghe, went on to serve as the college's principal, marking the first instance of a former student being appointed to this position (1998-2001).

During the principality of “Percy Boy” from 1961 to 1968 under his guidance, the school embraced Buddhist traditions and teachings, and it was renamed ‘Dhammissara’ in honour of the esteemed Ven. Tarawila Dhammissara Naya-ka, who served as the chief Sanghanayaka of the North-West Province at the time. This decision signified the college's commitment to Buddhism and its teachings.

The decision to embrace Buddhism and rename the school ‘Dhammissara’ was met with great respect from the local community. As the focal point of several Buddhist temples in the city of Nattandiya, the school's commitment to nurturing wisdom and educating Buddhist children

**■ In 2022, 77 students passed the scholarship examination**  
**■ First Maha Vidyalaya in the Puttalam district**



The Cadet Corps Pix: Nissanka Wijeratne



St. John Ambulance Brigade, the Environment Team, 'Sadasa' Media Unit, Photography Association and Debating Team with the teachers-in-charge



Principal Lt. Col. Neil Siyambalapatiya

in line with Buddhist principles has earned it a special place in the community.

## Chapter

The tenure of Principal S. M. Somaratne is a memorable chapter in the school's history. During his leadership, a significant achievement was made when five students from the science stream were admitted to the Faculty of Medicine for the first time, leaving an indelible mark in the school's history.

With Lt. Col. Neil Siyambalapatiya at the helm since 2021, Dhammissara School has witnessed remarkable growth. The school, which boasts a dedicated teaching staff of 160, now educates nearly 4,000 stu-

dents under his diligent supervision and guidance.

The principal's leadership has been instrumental in transforming the school into a nurturing environment for education and sports development. His effective management of both human and physical resources has been pivotal to this achievement.

The inclusion of both Sinhala and English language media in the teaching and learning process has positively impacted educational outcomes.

Despite facing challenges such as intermittent school closures due to the country's tense situation and economic recession, Dhammissara School students have achieved excellent exam results. Their successful adaptation to new technologies in the teaching and learning process is commendable. In 2022, 77 students passed the scholarship examination, making the school with the highest



The volleyball team which brought honour to the school, with the teachers-in-charge and coach.



Western and Oriental Bands with the Principal and teachers-in-charge



Athletes, netballers and karatekas with the teachers-in-charge

number of successful candidates in the Puttalam district. This is a remarkable educational achievement.

In the previous year, an impressive 97.6 percent of students successfully passed the Ordinary Level examination. This year's results from

the advanced-level examination indicate that almost 160 students have gained admission to universities.

Among them, 18 students secured places in the Faculty of Medicine, 8 students in the Faculty of Engineering, 36 students in the Faculty of Management, and the remaining students were selected for the Arts Department. These achievements are a testament to the school's dedication to academic excellence.

## Remarkable

One of the remarkable educational achievements in 2023 was the school's success in producing the top student in the district in both the biology and mathematics streams.

Dhammissara School is dedicated to nurturing well-rounded individuals who excel not only in academics but also in sports, and it aspires to prepare students who possess intellectual, social, and aesthetic qualities.

This commitment is aimed at contributing a generation of students to the world who are not only academically proficient but also skilled in sports.

The school has also achieved many wins and awards in sports including volleyball.

In 2022, the School's Cadets secured their first-ever victory in the Junior All-Ceylon Championship. In 2023, the school achieved numerous accolades in the Puttalam district, including the overall championship in the junior cadet annual tournament, first place in the All-Ceylon Challenge Cup National Camp physical exercise test, and second place in

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the solid drill test.

Dhammissara National School boasts a vibrant array of extracurricular activities and associations, including the School Debating Team, Invention Unit, School Air Rifle, Astronomy, Mathematics, Science, Buddhist, Literary, Commerce, Arts, Entrepreneurship, and more. These associations are instrumental in providing students with a holistic and enriching learning experience.

The school's commitment to nurturing socially responsible citizens is evident through its impressive track record of excellent results and achievements in various fields.



A section of the primary students



Prefects with the Principal and teachers-in-charge



Aesthetics team with the teachers-in-charge



Cricket team with the Principal, coach and teacher-in-charge