

Teaching The Dharma



PUPIL INFORMATION SHEET

After walking for days, the Buddha found his five old friends sitting under the trees in the Deer Park at Sarnath. He was eager to tell them what he had discovered about the way to happiness.

When they saw him coming, they were not impressed. He had given up their life of training and hardship. However, as he came nearer they saw there was something about him which made them invite him to sit down with them. Maybe he did have something interesting to say, after all.

He told them about the cause of unhappiness and the way to kindness and happiness. In particular, he explained two things: the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path leading to Enlightenment.

As they listened, they slowly began to understand. Thinking about their own experience in life, they agreed that

everyone sometimes has suffering or unhappiness in their life. They agreed it was not possible for things to stay the same all the time. If everything changes, wanting something to last for ever is bound to cause unhappiness. They agreed that the Buddha's teaching of *karma* was true: people's actions always have results. This meant they would definitely be able to become kinder, wiser and happier, if they followed the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path.



Talking and meditating together, they began to see how it would be possible to be perfectly contented, free from wanting.

Gradually they understood more and more deeply about interconnectedness. One by one, they all understood. Now there were six Enlightened people in the world.

They set off to share with others what they had discovered about the way leading to the end of suffering.

The Four Noble Truths

1. Everyone experiences unhappiness in life.
2. Our unhappiness is caused by wanting things which can't make us happy.
3. Good news! It's possible to stop all this wanting.
4. It just takes training. The way to do it is to follow the Noble Eightfold Path leading to freedom from unhappiness.

The Noble Eightfold Path

1. Right vision/understanding
2. Right intention/emotion
3. Right speech
4. Right action
5. Right livelihood
6. Right effort
7. Right mindfulness
8. Right meditation/concentration

