ATTENDANCE POLICY

South Australian law makes it compulsory for students to attend school between the ages of 6 and 16. Although students are not legally under compulsion to attend school until they are 6 years old, enrolment at an earlier age is taken as a commitment to attend. It is crucial that a habit of regular attendance is developed at an early age, even from the time they are enrolled in a pre-school setting. The likelihood of success in learning is strongly linked to regular attendance and appropriate participation in educational programs.

Benefits of regular attendance include:-
- getting the most out of teaching and learning programs
- developing skills and attitudes that will help in later life e.g. sticking to routines, being organised, being punctual, having self-discipline
- learning social skills necessary to live and work successfully with others
- being safe when people know where you are
- feeling more positive and optimistic because you know what is happening

Some behavioural indicators of students at risk of not succeeding at school and so leaving school early include:-
- absences from school
- unexplained constant illness
- absences from class
- suspension in/out of school
- sick room use
- non-participation and non-cooperation

Therefore it is important for students to be at school each day, arriving on time and staying for the whole day as required by the law.

Constant late arrival is disruptive to classroom routines.

Our day starts at 8:50 a.m. and students are considered to be late after this time.

School Hours

At Gulfview Heights Primary School lessons begin at 8:50 a.m.

Our school day finishes at 3:15 p.m.

A Staff member is on duty from 8:35 a.m. for students to begin arriving at school.
Students must leave the school grounds at 3:15 p.m.
Yard supervision ends at 3:30 p.m.
Of course children should not attend school if…

- they are ill
- they have an infectious disease which requires them to be absent for a specified period of time e.g. chicken pox
- they are injured and incapable of moving safely around the school
- they are accompanying their parents/caregivers on a family holiday which cannot be arranged in school vacations. This should be arranged with the Principal prior to the absence so that an exemption can be organised.
- the principal is provided with any other genuine and acceptable reason preventing the child’s attendance e.g. a celebration of cultural/religious significance, family reunion etc.

For child protection reasons students will not be allowed to leave the school grounds during the school day unless accompanied by an adult.

When an absence occurs…

Please telephone the school office and send a note to the class teacher explaining the reason for your child’s absence. This needs to be recorded in our school records which may at any time be required as legal evidence. If your child is absent for three days without explanation, the school is required to contact you.

Before collecting your child early from school, please call in to the front office and sign the Attendance Register.

Did you realise…

- if your child misses 15 minutes of class time every day, they will miss over 12 hours of the school day for 1 term and over 50 hours for the school year.
- missing 6 days per term adds up to 24 days per year which is approximately half a term of schooling missed.
- missing 6 days per term during each of your child’s primary years of schooling is equivalent to missing almost 1 full year of schooling.
- irregular attendance in the Junior Primary and Primary years often leads to poor attendance at High School.

Monitoring Attendance

At Gulfview Heights Primary School we monitor student attendance to give each student the best possible chance of success. If attendance is an issue we can ask for support from an Attendance Counsellor whose role it is to…

- work with families in a supportive counselling role
- visit students at home and consult with parents/caregivers
- identify reasons for student non-attendance and make appropriate referrals
- monitor student attendance and review progress as necessary

A record of student attendance is included in our Portfolios and is completed at the end of each term.

Accepted by GHPS School Council 1st December 2003