



Attendance Policy

- **Rational for optimal attendance**

Regular attendance is foundational to Quality Learning.

- The education cultivated at Ghilgai School is based on rhythmic, steady progressions through core learning experiences. Regular attendance is a necessity.
- The child's social development is placed at risk by irregular school attendance.

- **Student Attendance expectations**

- Ghilgai fosters in the parent community an understanding of the need for regular school attendance.
- The School expects that parents/guardians will enable students to achieve high attendance rates. Goal 90%
- A punctual arrival is also expected.

- **Communicating our attendance expectations to parents**

- Attending School – a letter to parents in Ghilgai School introductory pack.
- Newsletter comments/articles
- Parent/Teacher conversations

Regulatory Context

A registered school must –

- a. monitor the daily attendance of each student enrolled at the school; and
- b. identify any absences of a student from school including classes; and
- c. follow up any unexplained absences of a student from the school or classes; and
- d. notify any parent or guardian regarding a student's unsatisfactory school or class attendance; and
- e. record information regarding a student's unsatisfactory attendance at school or classes on the student's file.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Class Teacher marks the roll, morning/afternoon.
- The Class Teacher follows up on absences.

At the end of each term

- The Education Coordinator (EC) notes student absence throughout the School, follows up reasons with the Class Teacher.
- The Education Coordinator informs the College Executive re Students of concern.
- The Education Coordinator or the College Executive follow this up.
 - note/conversation with parents.

Attendance rates per semester in perspective

0 – 6 This is within normal range.

A child with this attendance rate is able to take full advantage of the teaching and learning opportunities available to them.

7 – 10 This attendance rate is below average

A child with this attendance rate could miss over 1 year of schooling between Prep and Year 10.

11 – 20 This is poor attendance rate

The child with this attendance rate could miss on up to 2 years schooling between prep and Year 10.

20+ This is very poor attendance rate

A child with this attendance rate could miss over 2.5 years of schooling between Prep and Year 10.



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE...

Learning is a complex process that in Ghilgai is supported by a rhythmic, cyclic approach and by the consciousness of the teacher. Regular attendance is vital to all-round growth.

When we reflect on our attendance records, we notice that some children's learning journeys have been irregular, and we want to voice our concerns. These concerns are not merely ideological – we observe the effects of frequent absence in cognitive social and skills development. A child can become a 'ghost presence' – 'an outsider', not really quite there... The loss of potential is painful to observe.

Sometimes serious illness is an unavoidable cause, and in such cases teachers and parents make a concerted effort to help a child catch up... And through feeling such support, the child usually makes up a lot of lost ground.

Everyday life for some families is filled with challenges and difficulties, and on some occasion it is tempting and easier to 'just stay home' for the day. This pattern has a subtle effect on the child who may languish, because he or she lacks parental support.

However, we have seen again and again how when a parent 'comes through' the child blossoms, because he/she senses the family's resilience, motivation, and will power.

Sometimes, a child is tired, or there is a niggling 'off-colour' feeling, and maybe then it is a case of keeping him/her home for the day – but the cause of the tiredness needs to be addressed. In such circumstances, we would ask that he or she attend Main Lesson if possible (9.00-11.00am) to ensure continuity.

Taking holidays in term-time seriously disrupts the learning process. And not only the child's own process – when they return and require extra attention, they often need extra time that should really be given to others, or to the class as a whole. There is a difference when a class experiences the challenge of slowing to gather up someone returning from illness, compared with having to slow down for someone else returning from a 'good time'. The former is community-building, the latter, community eroding.

Please support the commitment of Ghilgai to your Child's education – which is so much more than learning 'facts'; it's also learning about developing faculties, habits, attitudes and responsibility. These take time. Organised, ordered, rhythmic, healthy time.

From Ruth, for Ghilgai Teachers