



**GOOD HOPE COUNTRY  
DAY SCHOOL**

**LOWER SCHOOL  
HANDBOOK  
2019-2020**

## MISSION STATEMENT

Good Hope Country Day School cultivates reflective, creative and compassionate students who are critical thinkers, prepared to excel in college and empowered to better their island and the world.

## CORE VALUES

**Respect:** to show proper acceptance, courtesy and regard for others.

**Scholarship:** to work with interest in all classes; to take pride in all practical, written, and oral work; to collaborate and cooperate with teachers and peers;

**Integrity:** to do the right thing in a reliable way even if no one is watching you; we admire a person with integrity because it means the person has a moral compass.

**Citizenship:** to embody five aspects of citizenship - honesty, compassion, respect, responsibility and courage.

## CLIMATE FOR LEARNING

### General Expectations

We strive to create a climate in which all members of our community feel safe, supported, and able to do their best. We believe that children respond positively to firm, consistent, and fair discipline. Our faculty is committed to helping each individual develop his or her own sense of courtesy, honesty, tolerance, and respect for others. Each grade level has established certain rules and guidelines that we feel are appropriate. These rules are reviewed with parents on Registration Day and reinforced throughout the year. Please be aware of these rules and help your child to follow them.

### Building Sense of Community

Teachers incorporate practices designed to make the classroom stimulating, challenging, safe, and joyful. Practices such as Morning Meeting foster a sense of community. Students are involved in shaping the rules of the classroom, and teachers engage children in discussions that help them understand logical consequences when they forget or choose not to follow classroom rules.

The teacher creates a positive space where students' voices are heard and where they play an active role in their education. The teacher serves as a facilitator, and through listening to the students and helping them work together, the values of cooperation, independence, responsibility, and accountability are developed.

On Friday mornings students through eighth grade gather to share learning and celebrate important events.

## THE SCHEDULE

### **Arrival and Departure**

The school day begins at 7:50am and ends at 3:00pm. **Students should arrive at school no later than 7:45am so that they have time to unpack and get organized for the school day.** Students can be dropped off at 7:30am with supervision on the playground. If for some reason a child is expected to arrive especially early, arrangements must be made for that occasion. No Lower School child is permitted to remain unsupervised on campus.

***Arriving on time in the morning is very important. Teachers carefully integrate literacy, math, and important social and emotional lessons within the morning meeting. Even being late five minutes can make it difficult for a child to get off to a good start. In addition, late arrivals interrupt the flow of routine for the class community. Arriving on time is respectful of the class community. Should an unavoidable delay occur, and the student arrives after 7:50 am, he/she must go to the office for a late pass before going to his or her classroom***

### **Pick Up and Drop Off of Students**

The loop in front of the administration building is for quick drop off and pick up of students. Beginning in third grade, students are encouraged to walk to class independently. The lower lot is available for parking. In order to ensure our children's safety, please observe all "One Way" signs and do not block either of the two major crosswalks. The safety of our children is at stake.

### **Bus Transportation**

Bus transportation is provided on major island roads between the school and both ends of the island. Although the buses transport Good Hope Country Day School students, the service is funded by the Federal Government and administered by the V.I. Department of Education. For this reason, we are not always able to influence decisions regarding pick-up schedules or locations of bus stops. The service is free but occasionally erratic. If you have any complaints about bus service, please call the school and let us know. We also urge you to make your feelings known directly to the Abramson Bus Company (772-0359). We have found that the most satisfactory results are obtained when both parents and school express their concern.

## ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

### Health and Wellbeing

When a child feels sick, he/she is taken to the school nurse, (phone extension 2109), who makes an assessment and treats the child. Depending on her assessment, she will call the parents, send a note, or discuss with the teachers. Minor injuries at school are treated with ice, antibiotic ointment and Band-Aids. Parents are notified immediately of any serious injuries. If the school feels the situation is serious, we will transport the student to the hospital or an ambulance will be called.

A child should not attend school if he/she exhibits one or more of the following symptoms or infections:

- Fever – fever is defined as having a temperature of 100 degrees F or higher. **Students must be fever free without the aid of fever reducers, such as tylenol or ibuprofen, for a full 24 hours before returning to school.**
- Diarrhea – watery/runny stools.
- Vomiting – in the last 24-hour period.
- Rash – an unexplained rash with fever or behavioral change. Child can return to school if a physician has determined the illness is not communicable and fever is gone.
- Bacterial infections requiring antibiotics. If your child is placed on antibiotics for any kind of infection please consult the school nurse for return to school recommendations or obtain a doctor's note.

### Head Lice Policy

Head lice is a common annoyance for the school aged child and their families. While lice is a nuisance for all involved it is important to remember that it does not spread disease or cause medical harm and is not associated in any way with poor hygiene. GHCDs follows the recommendations provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Association of School Nurses for the management of lice in schools. In accordance with these recommendations GHCDs will not exclude any healthy child from school because of head lice or nits. We will work in collaboration with families to identify cases of lice, to break the cycle of infestation, and to return students to the learning environment quickly. Evidence based practice has proven that routine screenings in schools for nits and lice are not an effective means of reducing the incidence of lice. *The school asks parents to regularly screen their children at home for lice.* If you are unsure of how to conduct a

screening the school nurse is available to provide guidance. Students will be screened individually when symptomatic during the school hours. Students will be returned to class with instructions to refrain from close head to head contact and communication with the teacher if lice are found during the assessment. Parents will be notified at the end of the school day if live lice were found. Parents are asked to promptly treat their children in accordance with their physician's recommendations. A student may be excluded from class if subsequent requests for treatment have not been adhered to. When necessary, the parents of an affected child's classmates will be notified via email that there was an occurrence of head lice in such a way as to protect the child's right to confidentiality.

While it is uncommon for head lice to spread via contact with personal items, children should be taught not to share items that touch the head, such as combs, hats, headbands, or scarves. However, helmets should always be worn when bicycling and playing sports, even if it must be borrowed. The risk of head injury far outweighs any risk from a head lice infestation.

### **Excused Absences**

Excused absences and early dismissals include only those caused by illness or a family emergency. Parents must call the nurse, Ms. Cooper ext. 2109, in the morning to let the school know that their child will be absent.

It is the responsibility of the student or parent to see that homework and/or tests that have been missed due to absence are completed or made up.

### **Unexcused Absences**

Over the years there has been an increase in the number of student absences due to events other than illness. Vacations, good airfares, and sporting events tempt parents to take their children out of school at times other than scheduled school holidays. Although we recognize that there are indeed family emergencies that require parents to take their children out of school from time to time, **we wish to emphasize the difficulty it creates for both student and teacher.** The Good Hope Country Day School curriculum is challenging and highly interactive. This means that much of the learning takes place through active participation in class – activities that rely on individual and group decision-making and problem solving. There simply isn't any way for an absent child to "make-up" that sort of work.

Therefore we ask for your understanding and cooperation in making every effort to avoid taking your child out of school. Time away from school during scheduled

vacations is best for all involved. When off island trips are unavoidable, please make sure to notify your child's teacher as far in advance as possible.

**Seventeen absences, excused or unexcused, will require review by the administration and teachers to determine if the student should be promoted and a parent conference will be required.** If there is a lack of cooperation and commitment to the importance of good attendance, re-enrollment may not be offered.

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURE/POLICIES**

### **Lunch and Snack:**

Each child must bring his/her lunch and snack to school. We strongly discourage "lunch deliveries"; however, if you must do so in an emergency, please bring the food to the office, **not to the classroom**. Our teachers may be available to microwave lunches for children if they are not otherwise actively engaged with students. A thermos that will keep food warm might prove a good investment. We recommend nutritional foods such as fruit, vegetables, and sandwiches. Additionally, it is necessary to send drinks with your child, as no drinks (except water) are available on campus. Please do not send soda, candy, or gum to school.

A Snack Bar is available immediately after school to students where fruit snacks, pretzels, juices, ice pops, or nuts may be purchased. Most items are between \$1 and \$2 dollars. Therefore, it is unnecessary for young children to have a large amount of cash on their person. Sodas on sale to high school students are not available to younger students.

### **Lost and Found:**

All articles found on school grounds should be taken to the Lost and Found bin behind the administration building. Items such as jewelry and glasses should be turned in to the office. Parents and students are encouraged to check the bin if they are missing clothes or other items. When the Lost and Found bin begins to overflow, the items are washed and donated to such organizations as the Boy Scouts or Animal Shelter to be used in their flea markets.

### **Delivery of items to school:**

Parents should deliver forgotten items such as musical instruments or PE uniforms to the office, and Ms. Nieves will call the classroom to let the teacher know that the item has been delivered. **We ask that parents not make deliveries directly to the classroom as this may be distracting.**

### **Emergency Drills:**

Fire drills are held regularly and are usually unannounced. Evacuation directions for each room are posted and should be reviewed by the teacher and students at the beginning of the year. These drills are to be taken seriously. Students are expected to follow procedures quietly and quickly.

Earthquake and tsunami drills are held from time to time. Teachers are directed to review procedures with students at the beginning of the year.

### **Visitor Policy:**

**All visitors and parents are requested to report directly to the front office as soon as they arrive on campus.** We ask that visitors go to classrooms only when they are expected by the teacher so as not to disrupt the school day.

### **Field Trips:**

In general, each grade level schedules one or two field trips throughout the school year. Field trips supplement and enrich the curriculum and require extensive planning. Letters describing a class field trip will include a permission slip to be signed by a parent and returned to school. Transportation is provided by taxi vans or buses. Teachers usually ask for volunteer parent chaperones in advance of the trip; chaperones should take this responsibility seriously.

### **Celebrations and Parties:**

We are pleased to support you in recognizing your child's birthday and are eager to help you to make it a special day. Parents must contact teachers well in advance of a birthday celebration to determine a time and treat that works well for the teacher. *Experience has proven that something small to be shared with the class (cupcakes delivered in the morning and served for dessert at lunch) works well.* Alternatives to treats are also encouraged.

### **Messages and Telephone Use:**

We ask that parent-to-student messages be made only on a "dire emergency" basis. We are a large and scattered campus and delivery of such messages may entail a 10-minute search. This obviously presents difficulties for our office personnel.

Students may make phone calls only with the permission of their teachers, which will be given in case of "emergencies only." Students are expected to make all transportation arrangements, sleepover agreements, etc. before coming to school.

Phone calls to members of the faculty will usually be in the form of a message on a teacher's voice mail. Please be aware that, due to extremely busy schedules, many teachers are unable to check their voicemail until after school hours. **(Therefore, leaving messages about changes in afternoon transportation arrangements is unwise.)**

### **Phones:**

On a day-to-day practical level, we know that students need to use their phones to communicate with their parents about athletic practices and after school schedules which can change for many reasons. On the other hand, some uses of technology (texting, tabbing between screens) have the potential to interfere with learning, degrade the school environment, as well as infringe on the rights of or pose a risk to the safety of other community members. The school and parents must work together to help students understand their responsibility in using technology appropriately.

Students may use their phones to call parents before 7:50 am, and before after-school study from 3:00 pm to 3:15 pm and after 4:00 pm. If a student needs to contact his or her parent during the course of the school day, s/he must ask permission of the classroom teacher. **All phones must remain in backpacks during the school day from 7:50 am to 3:00 pm.**

We ask that parents not try to contact their children via phone at other times in the day as this creates a disruption to the learning environment. If there is an emergency, please call the front office.

Teachers and the administration have broad discretion to define what constitutes an interruption or degradation of the learning environment and may confiscate electronic devices or issue other consequences.

## **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

### **After Care**

To ensure the continued success of the program and the safety of our children, we ask that you adhere to the procedures outlined below.

Students will be directed to the After School Supervision at 3:15 pm whenever:

- o they are on campus after school and not involved in an activity; if at the end of an activity no one is here to pick them up
- o they miss the bus and are waiting to be picked up
- o a parent is on campus in a conference or meeting which the student is not
- o they are waiting for an older sibling

The charge for this service is \$5.00 per hour. Parents must check their children out from After School Care in person to ensure the safety of children as well as to avoid billing discrepancies. After School Care ends at 5:30 pm each afternoon, at which point the ASC staff will accompany students to the office, where an administrator will remain on duty until the last child goes home. After 5:30 pm, parents will be charged \$1.00 per minute. Please make every effort to be on time.

**Behavioral Expectations for After School Care**

Over the years more and more students choose to stay after school to participate in after school activities, attend study hall, or just play with their friends. In order to maintain a climate in which all members of our community feel safe, we expect the same standard of behavior in our after school program as is expected in the course of the school day. In order to stay on campus after 3:00 pm., students must follow expectations outlined below:

- Check in with the after school supervisors.
- Remain in the slab area; wandering around the campus is not allowed.
- Respectfully follow the directives of the after school supervisors.
- Follow all behavioral expectations outlined in the CLIMATE FOR LEARNING section of the handbook.

Parents must check their children out in person with the after school supervisor. They may not yell across the campus for their children to come down to the parking lot, nor may they call or text their child on their cell phone in lieu of checking out with the after school supervisor in person.

Participation in the After School Program is contingent upon adhering to these expectations.

**Grades 1-3:**

Children who remain after school report to the playground from 3:15-4:30 pm for unstructured play. At 4:30 pm they will be escorted to the Pre-school area until they are picked up. Parents are encouraged to pack an extra snack and juice for their child.

Third Grade teachers offer after school math and literacy support for selected students on specific days from 3:15-4:00pm.

#### **Grade 4 Teacher Supervised Study Hall:**

Children have unstructured play on the playground from 3:00-3:15 pm, after which they report to a designated classroom for 45 minutes of quiet, supervised study. Students should come prepared with homework and a free reading book in case they finish their homework. At 4:00 pm students return to the slab to play.

#### **After School Activities**

Good Hope Country Day School's ability to offer a wide range of After School activities is dependent upon the involvement of parents and the St. Croix community. There are two nine week sessions of After School Activities. The first begins at the end of September and ends around Thanksgiving. The second session begins at the end of January, and usually ends in April. We are pleased that so many students choose to take advantage of these opportunities.

Open to first through sixth graders, typical offerings include sports activities, cooking, crafts, and drama. Most activities are scheduled to begin at 3:15pm and end at 4:00pm. A fee of \$75.00 is required for most activities. A registration letter, listing all the clubs and activities available, is sent home at the beginning of each semester.

Students not picked up by parents at the end of an after activity must go to After School Care Supervision. They may not wait unsupervised in front of the Administration building or at other places on campus. Continued participation in after school activities is contingent upon students adhering to this expectation.

#### **Library**

Because all Good Hope Country Day students share the Library, we limit elementary use after school to research only. Homework should be completed in the supervised study hall. Students who need to use the materials located in the Library must get a pass in advance, from their teacher.

### **The Dolphins' Swimming Association**

Students who choose to participate in the Dolphins' after school swimming program must stay within the swimming compound once they have reported for swimming.

### **Sports**

Good Hope Country Day School has a very active sports program, which includes competition at the Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Elementary levels. Emphasis is placed on good sportsmanship, and we expect our spectators to be positive and supportive of our players, coaches and referees – no matter what the circumstances. Students in first through fourth grades who wish to go to a game must be accompanied by a parent or adult.

## **ACADEMICS**

### **Curriculum**

The Lower School features an integrated curriculum that promotes learning as an active and cooperative process. The curriculum includes Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Health, Spanish, Art, Music, Physical Education, Swimming, Computer, Music, and Library.

### **Language Arts**

Lower School is a time of remarkable change in a child's academic, emotional and social life. The language arts curriculum addresses the four strands of language development: listening, speaking, reading, and writing – in a variety of ways.

#### *Phonics and Spelling*

Kinder to third graders learn to decode and spell through Foundations, a multisensory phonics, spelling and handwriting program that makes learning to read fun while laying the groundwork for life-long literacy. Students learn how to recognize, manipulate and decode simple and complex sounds, then words, and how words fit into sentences. Students learn spelling rules and concepts that are the basis of the English language. They learn why words are spelled the way they are, instead of memorizing lists of words. (Students will still memorize those trick words that don't follow the rules.)

#### *Reading and Writing*

The Language Arts Curriculum is a balanced and integrated approach to the teaching of reading and writing. Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Program, developed by Irene Fountas and Su Pinnell at Lesley University, and Units of Study In Writing and Reading

developed by Lucy Calkins at Columbia Teachers College, provide the foundation for the writing and reading instruction at the primary and intermediate levels.

The essential aspects of the program are that

- Learners need explicit instruction in writing and reading.
- Learners need to be immersed in a listening and storytelling culture where their voices are valued and heard.
- Learners need teachers to read aloud.
- Learners need to write for real audiences.
- Learners need to write the kinds of texts that they see in the world.
- Learners need long stretches of time to read, and must have the opportunity to read high interest, accessible books of their choosing.
- Learners need opportunities to talk and write in response to texts.
- Learners need assessment-based instruction, including feedback that is tailored specifically to them.
- Learners need explicit instruction in word study and grammar.

In the Units of Study curriculum, each grade level includes three to four, six week units of writing with some combination of the following: narrative, opinion/persuasive/argument, and informational. Instruction builds on itself from one year to the next. Teaching follows the gradual release of responsibility model of teaching. Students can first learn from a demonstration, accompanied by explicit teaching, then from guided practice in which the amount of scaffolding they receive lessens over time.

Making use of Fountas and Pinnell benchmark assessments and levelled readers, teachers can assess where each child is on the reading continuum and provide that reader with texts at the appropriately challenging level to ensure the child's progress.

## **Math**

The Bridges K to 5 Math curriculum is a rigorous program that focuses on developing students' deep understanding of mathematical concepts, proficiency with key skills, and ability to solve complex and novel problems. Seeing, touching, and sketching ideas creates pictures in the mind's eye, helping learners construct, understand, and apply mathematical ideas. Bridges incorporates increasingly complex visual models, including the Number Line and the Array models, in a coherent framework across the curriculum. Bridges blends direct instruction, structured investigation, and open exploration. It taps into the intelligence and strengths of all students by presenting material that is as linguistically, visually, and kinesthetically rich as it is mathematically powerful.

## **Science**

From Kindergarten to Fourth Grade, teachers make use of Next Generation Science Standards and the National Science Teachers' Association resources to create units of study in earth, life, physical science, and engineering. Classroom teachers collaborate with Lower School technology instructor, Mr. Chapman. These units build on each other from year to year to develop students' ability to ask questions and define problems; make observations; conduct investigations; collect, analyze and interpret data; develop models to build understanding; construct arguments supported by evidence, and communicate their findings.

## **Social Studies**

In first through third grades, social studies concepts are integrated into Readers/ Writers workshop as well as in morning meeting, where the skills of being a positive community member and a good citizen are explicitly taught. Fourth grade Social Studies is divided into two major units of study: The United States and VI History.

## **Computer**

Lower school technology is a collaboration between the classroom teacher and the technology teacher that reinforces academic content covered in the classroom. Academic topics include: Seasons, The Food Pyramid, Sight Words, Parts of a Story, Life Cycles, Dinosaurs, Classifying Animals, Basic Operations, and Cardinal Directions. Additionally, students identify the parts of a computer, practice keyboarding, and are introduced to various software applications: Safari, Firefox, Pages, Keynote, ArtRage, iPhoto, and Adobe Photoshop. Students are also exposed to basic programming concepts using self-directed tutorials on Code.org. Technology standards covered in class: Creativity and Innovation, Research and Information Fluency, Computational Thinking, Technology Operations and Concepts, and Digital Citizenship.

## **Spanish**

The first and second grade programs focus on building a foundation in listening and oral communication through songs, cultural activities and games. Children are introduced to greetings, colors, days of the week, animals, opposites, weather expressions, modes of transportation and areas around their school environment. In third grade students begin to work on reading and writing skills. Fourth grade Spanish delves into the phonetic structure of the language and explores American and Spanish culture.

## **Art**

Throughout the year children develop an appreciation for diverse art forms, work to respect individual and group needs and use their creativity as a hands-on approach to problem solving. They choose from many different activities that are introduced

sequentially and developmentally. Each student keeps a portfolio of his or her work. Specific pieces are chosen from the portfolio for the annual Spring Art Show.

### **Music**

In first through third grades students are introduced to the basic elements of music - listening, singing, rhythm, and movement – through traditional folk songs, popular and classical music. Students learn basic note reading, music vocabulary, and the identification of instruments by sight and sound. They also begin to sing or play as an ensemble for concert performance. Second graders are introduced to the xylophone, learning note and pitch direction with steps, leaps and repeats. Third graders are introduced to the soprano recorder, learning to read, finger and play notes in the treble clef.

Fourth graders have chorus with an introduction to musical theater and opera. In the second half of the year, students are introduced to band instruments in preparation for that exciting time when each child chooses which instrument he or she will play in fifth grade. There are so many benefits to learning to play an instrument, that we feel all students should be exposed to instrumental instruction in the fifth grade. Many studies show that playing an instrument helps a child develop abstract reasoning skills necessary to learn math and science.

### **Physical Education and Swimming**

In Lower School Physical Education we focus on physical development through play. Fundamental movements such as hopping, skipping, jumping, leaping and galloping are reviewed and reinforced with games. We also incorporate sports skills such as batting, ball bouncing, kicking, catching and throwing, as well as teaching rules for several sports and modified game play. Life skills such as rule following and managing personal space are part of each lesson, and are encouraged consistently. Additionally, students in grades one to three have one swim class per week. In fourth grade swimming is taught in two units, one in the first grading period of the school year, and one in the last. Swim classes focus on pool safety and basic swimming skills, and are taught by qualified instructors.

### **Fourth Grade Social and Emotional Education**

Fourth graders are beginning to figure out who they are and how to get along with each other. As one fourth grader so aptly put it, “Sometimes your feelings just get all stacked up.” Small groups are an effective way to help learn and practice the social-emotional skills needed to successfully navigate friendships. Fourth graders will meet in gender specific groups every other week with Ms. Marohn to work on friendship skills and

effective communication. The fun and interactive format provides a small group setting in which students can gain self-awareness while also learning from one another.

### **Homework**

Homework is an integral part of the of the Good Hope Country Day School program at all levels. Beginning with short, parent-shared activities and increasing appropriately in amount, difficulty, and independence needed, home assignments supplement and enrich the academic program.

**Grades 1 and 2:** Homework is assigned to encourage a child's initiative and responsibility. It is meant to reinforce newly acquired skills and concepts, as well as to extend thinking and exploration at the child's own pace. While homework at this level does not require a great deal of time, it does require parent interaction: questions, responses, suggestions and support. Parents are encouraged to ask for and look at their child's home school folder daily. Unless otherwise directed, the child completes the homework in his or her own hand, as the parent oversees and facilitates. It is important that the parent and child develop strategies together for approaching homework tasks. This sets the foundation and readiness for future studies.

**Grades 3 and 4:** In grades three and four, it is important that students do their own homework, with support and reminders from parents. Children need to have a set area where important materials are available (clock, pencil, marker, paper, scissors, glue, dictionary) and homework can be done without distraction. Weekend homework could involve a long-range project or an individual student's desire to work ahead.

### **Library**

First to fourth graders have one period per week set aside for their use of the Library. With permission of their homeroom teacher, they may also check books in and out at lunch, recess or before and after school. In general, two books may be borrowed at a time and kept for two weeks. Children in first and second grades are permitted to take out only one book at a time until we feel they have developed a sense of responsibility for the care and return of the books. In case of a lost or overdue book, the Librarian should be contacted; there is a charge for a lost book based on the replacement cost.

### **Summer Reading**

First through fourth graders are required to read age appropriate summer reading books, which serve as springboards for discussion creative projects in the first weeks of school. Practice over the summer helps prevent loss of skills.

## **Standardized Testing**

Standardized tests are administered each spring to third through eighth graders. The results help us in general terms compare how we are doing with the rest of the nation. Teachers analyze results to identify areas of strength and weakness in our academic program and thus inform our instruction.

There are distinct limitations of standardized testing, which do not measure many learning behaviors and aptitudes that contribute to an individual's success in school and beyond – mindset, persistence, collaboration, creative thinking, artistic ability, and leadership, to name a few.

We use standardized testing as one tool to inform instruction and develop curriculum. If we feel that an individual student's test results in conjunction with his or her performance at school are of concern, we will request a conference.

## **Academic Requirements and Promotion**

### **Promotion**

In order to be promoted student must:

- demonstrate overall proficiency for standards in each core class: language arts, math, science, social studies, and foreign language
- demonstrate to the satisfaction of the teachers that she/he has the maturity, self-discipline and work habits to be successful in meeting the expectations of the next grade level.

### **Retention and Grade Acceleration**

A student who has not demonstrated overall proficiency in a class will be required to develop a plan with the teacher to remediate the area(s) of weakness. The plan will be reviewed with the student's parents and monitored regularly.

In general, a child should be the appropriate age for a particular grade by the first of September. A first grader should be six, a second grader should be seven, and so on. Children should be developmentally ready for the requirements of a particular grade.

If at the halfway point of the school year, a teacher feels that a child would benefit from either being retained or accelerated, s/he will discuss with a child support team including a counselor, parent, and administrator.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Language Learning Support**

The Language Learning Center at Good Hope Country Day School is pleased to have an Orton-Gillingham Accredited Training Fellow on the faculty to offer individualized Orton-Gillingham based tutorial support. This means instruction is multisensory, diagnostic and prescriptive, direct, explicit, structured, and sequential. The approach is cognitive and based on research about brain function and the most effective teaching and learning principles and practices.

Learners are taught the structure of language following a sequence designed to move from the most fundamental concepts to the more complex. Attention is given to the phonemic, syllabic, morphemic, and grammatical structures of the language. Cursive handwriting is developed and used for instruction as it is believed to provide the more kinesthetic reinforcement that printing, and allows those individuals who have developed confused formations an opportunity to begin again. Vocabulary is developed with attention to Latin roots and affixes and Greek combining forms. Strategies for active passage comprehension are developed through metacognition.

Individuals appropriate for the program are those diagnosed with a language-based learning disability such as dyslexia, or as determined by an assessment conducted by our educational diagnostician. A psycho-educational evaluation may be requested and required to be shared if there is question about whether our language learning program is appropriate for a student. Cognitive abilities of those diagnosed with language-based learning disabilities must yield average potential. Our program is not designed to meet the needs of students who have learning difficulties that are the result of primary emotional or behavioral problems, below average cognitive ability, Pervasive Developmental or Autism Spectrum Disorders.

### **Referral Process**

A teacher or parent can request a referral. Ms. Canning will work collaboratively with the parent and teacher to determine whether the referral is appropriate. Approximately three to five hours are required for assessment and synthesis of information, depending upon the time of year. Once the assessment is completed, a meeting will be held with parent, teacher, and administrator to share the findings and develop a plan which might include Ms. Canning working one-to-one with the child or working with the teacher to develop effective strategies within the classroom. While a skills assessment does not guarantee a place in the learning center, it is a quick and easy way to determine strengths and weaknesses that may need to be addressed more explicitly.

The assessment information is compiled and our version of a 504 plan is created. Recommendations, suggested accommodations, and steps for interventions are

outlined if necessary. It is confidential and shared with parents, the student, and other faculty working with the student. Written progress reports from the Language Learning Center will be included in the first and final report cards.

### **Counseling Services**

Children deal with a wide range of issues as they journey through childhood and prepare for adolescence; they are searching for a place within their peer group, and they want to be successful. In many cases the classroom teacher can help students deal with individual issues, but sometimes more help is needed. If a teacher feels that a student needs extra support, she will contact the parent to discuss the particular concern and perhaps suggest that the student meet with the counselor, Ms. Sasha Marohn. If the parent agrees, Ms. Marohn will initiate contact with the parent before meeting with the student.

It is important that students do not see “visiting” Ms. Marohn as a punishment or an indication that they are not normal. We go to the dentist to have our teeth cleaned; we go to the chiropractor to have an adjustment; we go to the eye doctor to get glasses; we go to the therapist because he or she is trained to help us approach social and emotional problems in a productive manner. Ms. Marohn often meets students a few times to help them work through particular problems. If she feels that the student needs more regular and long-term support, she may meet with the student more frequently, or refer the student to another professional. Parents may also refer their child to meet with Mrs. Marohn. They may speak directly to a teacher, or contact Ms. Marohn by phone or e-mail ([smarohn@ghcds.org](mailto:smarohn@ghcds.org)).

## **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

### **Reporting To Parents**

We endeavor to keep open the lines of communication between school and home through the home-school folder, phone, and e-mail. Teachers send home regular newsletters, our Development Office does a wonderful job maintaining an informative website, and the Headmaster’s weekly newsletter includes information from all divisions.

Teachers may require that tests be signed by parents and returned a part of a daily homework assignment. We encourage parents to ask their children about the school day and to look at the homework folder or assignment notebook. This can help establish a routine for completion of assignments.

Formal reporting to parents will take place by quarters. Parent Conferences will take place at the end of the first quarter on November 1. Report cards will be distributed at

the end of the second quarter in January, the end of the third quarter in March, and at the end of the school year in May.

### **Parent Information Afternoon**

A Parent Information Afternoon is held early in the school year. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents to get a glimpse of day-to-day activities in their children's program. Because of limited time, this is not a suitable occasion for a discussion of individual student progress. However, a mutually convenient time for a parent-teacher conference can be scheduled.

We feel that Parent Information Afternoon provides excellent insight into the structure and function of the school. It gives parents the opportunity to meet the parents of your child's classmates. We urge all parents to attend.

### **Parent Conferences**

Conferences between parents and teachers take place throughout the year and may be initiated by either the family or the school at any time. Please e-mail or call your child's teacher if you would like to schedule a conference. Conferences are best scheduled in the afternoon, after the school day. Unless pre-arranged with your child's teacher, the morning time when you drop your child off at school is not a good time for a conference as teachers are busy getting organized for the day and working with students.

A formal conference is scheduled for each student in the fall. At this time, parents receive an invitation to visit the classroom and personally discuss their child's progress with his/her teacher. While we realize that parents may need to juggle their busy work schedules to attend these conferences, it is very important to do so.

### **Cancellation of School**

When rain or another emergency condition makes it necessary to cancel school, it will be announced on these radio stations AM 970, AM 1000, FM 1003 FM 95.1, FM 104.9, FM 93.5 and whenever possible, this announcement will be made before 7:15 A.M.

### **DRESS CODE**

Students should appear clean and neat when they arrive at school. Shorts are certainly appropriate dress in our warm climate. Parents are urged to help their children make the distinction between dressing for school and dressing for the beach. For example, backless tops are appropriate for the beach, but not for school.

In the Lower School, our active children need to have flat shoes at all times at school to avoid injury and to be able to fully participate in all activities. Children should not wear clogs, platforms, high heels, beachcombers or beach thongs; sneakers and socks are best. Certain flat sandals with a back strap, so they are secure on the feet, are

permitted. Students who are not wearing appropriate footwear will not be permitted to join the activities on the slab or playing field.

Hats with brims must be removed indoors. Headcloths worn in a cultural context are permitted.

#### PE Uniform:

Beginning in grade four, the Good Hope Country Day School PE uniform is required for physical education class. The uniform includes a Panther T-shirt. Each student in grades 4 to 8 will receive a t-shirt in the beginning of the year. These t-shirts will be on sale from the school store. On PE days, students should wear shorts with an elastic waist or drawstrings, and have no buttons or zippers for safety reasons and to accommodate a full range of activities. Athletic pants for children who wear them for religious or health reasons, should also have elastic or drawstring waists without buttons or zippers. These t-shirts will be on sale from the school store at the beginning of the school year. Appropriate footwear such as tennis shoes or sneakers is also required.

In grades one through three, the Good Hope Country Day School PE uniform is not required. Students should wear loose fitting shirts, shorts, socks, sneakers or tennis shoes on their assigned PE day. Jeans and long pants are strongly discouraged.

On swim days, pool footwear may be brought to change into at swim time.

#### **Social and Emotional Intelligence: The Ruler Approach**

The explicit teaching of social and emotional skills enables children to manage their emotions effectively, become better problem solvers, and develop positive relationships among themselves and with teachers. The overall effect is to create a climate that improves academic performance. The RULER approach, developed at Yale's School of Social and Emotional Development, is rooted in emotional intelligence theory and research on both child and adult development. The focus is on helping parents, educators and students develop five key skills:

**Recognizing** emotions to obtain valuable information about themselves and their environment

**Understanding** the causes and consequences of emotions to predict behavior

**Labeling** emotions to describe feelings precisely

**Expressing** emotions to communicate effectively and in socially appropriate ways

**Regulating** emotions to promote learning and personal growth, including healthy relationships

There are four anchor tools that provide a common language and set of strategies that integrate into all aspects of learning at school and home. These tools are introduced in advisory and through parent workshops

**The Charter** is a mission statement for the learning and working environment that community members pledge to maintain. The focus is on how each community member wants to feel, what needs to happen for those feelings to be consistently present and guidelines for maintaining a positive climate

**The Mood Meter** helps individuals identify their feelings accurately

**The Meta-Moment** is a process that helps children and adults expand the space between an emotional trigger and a response, learning to respond effectively to challenging emotional experiences with their best selves in mind

**The Blueprint** helps everyone problem solve effectively.

Using these tools at home and in the classroom can help children and adults learn to self-regulate, build positive relationships, make good decisions, improve teaching practice and academic performance, and promote a positive climate.

### **The Discipline Process:**

While teachers always focus on reinforcing and rewarding positive student behaviors, student misbehavior falls into six categories, which may require different responses.

- **Low-level Peer Conflict:** mutual friendship conflicts not involving name-calling, exclusion, rumors, or threats. We respond to these behaviors with suggestions of ways to resolve the problem.
- **Quiet, non-disruptive refusal to do schoolwork.** Parents will be notified. If the problem persists, a parent/teacher conference may be requested.
- **Inappropriate, but not aggressive, actions.** This might include unsafe rough play or swearing not directed at another child. Parents will be notified. If the problem persists, a parent/teacher conference may be requested.
- **Class Disruption or Disrespect.** The student may receive a warning and be asked to sit apart from other students. The student may be required to stay in at the next recess as a consequence and parents will be notified. If the problem persists, a parent/teacher conference may be requested.
- **Severe Behavior.** This involves putting one's own or other's safety at risk, continued disruption of teaching, refusal to follow directions, or threat of serious aggression. Student will be sent to the office. A conference will be required with the parent, division head and /or head of school. A behavioral contract may also be required.

- **Bullying or Peer Aggression.** This may include:
  - Causing physical or emotional harm
  - Threatening to harm another student and/or damage or take their property
  - Creating an unwelcoming or hostile environment at school for another student
  - Infringing on the rights of another person at school
  - Materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of the school
- **Cyberbullying.** Cyberbullying is being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material or engaging in other forms of social cruelty using the internet, cell phones, and other digital technologies. It includes direct and indirect harassment intended to damage another student's reputation and/or their relationships.

Bullying is prohibited on campus and at all school-related events. If bullying any place creates a hostile environment at school for a student or disrupts the education process, disciplinary action will be taken.

To ensure a healthy learning environment, GHCDs encourages all students to adopt the following anti-bullying behaviors:

1. We will not bully others.
2. We will try to help students who are bullied.
3. We will try to include students who are being left out.
4. If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

### **Procedure for Addressing Incidents of Peer Aggression**

The children of the Lower School are just learning how to navigate their social world. It will be important to act upon each incident carefully. The following procedures may be followed:

1. If a teacher or staff member sees an act of aggression, s/he will stop the behavior.
2. The Head of the Lower School will interview all parties involved.
3. The Head of the Lower School will call the parent of the aggressor to explain what happened and what action was taken. The student and parents may be required to sign and return a letter acknowledging the incident and the consequences.
4. The Head of the Lower School will call the parent of the target of the act of aggression to let the parent know what happened and what action was taken.
5. The Head of the Lower School will let the relevant teachers know what happened so they can follow up appropriately.

**The following rubric may be used a guideline for appropriate disciplinary action.**

<b>Behavior</b>	<b>First Incident</b>	<b>Second Incident</b>	<b>Problem Persists</b>
Teasing Name Calling Exclusion	Written warning  Parent is informed	One to three days of quiet recess and lunch Parent is informed Conference scheduled	Behavioral Contract developed with division head and counselor
Hitting, pushing punching, kicking that does not result in serious injury	One day of quiet recess and lunch  Parent is informed	Three days of quiet recess and lunch  No sports or extracurricular activities.  Parent is informed Conference scheduled	Behavioral Contract developed with division head and counselor
Severe hitting, pushing, punching, kicking  Harassment	Three days quiet recess and lunch Possible suspension Parent is informed Parent conference with division head and counselor	In school or out of school suspension  No sports or extracurricular activities. Behavioral Contract	Consequences depend on behavioral contract.
Cyber Bullying	One day of quiet recess and lunch  Loss of technology privileges for one week  Parent is informed	Three to five days of quiet recess and lunch  Loss of technology privileges for two weeks  No sports or extracurricular activities.  Behavioral Contract developed with division head and counselor	Consequences depend on behavioral contract.
<b>Severe acts of aggression, threatening language, or sexual harassment may result in immediate out of school suspension based on the judgment of the administration.</b>			

## **Defining Terms**

Teasing	name calling, insulting, or other behavior that would hurt others' feelings and make them feel bad about themselves.
Exclusion	starting rumors, telling others not to be friends with someone or other actions that would cause someone to be without friends or excluded from an activity.
Harassment	racial, ethnic, or sexual name-calling or other severe harassment.

## **Defining Consequences**

Quiet Recess/ Lunch	The student eats lunch in isolation.
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## **Behavioral Contract**

When routine methods of discipline and parental involvement are not effective in changing behavior, the student may be required to sign a Behavioral Contract. Violation of the terms of the contract may lead to dismissal from school. At the end of the academic year, the progress of any student on a Behavioral Contract is reviewed by the teachers and administration. If there has not been significant improvement in the student's behavior, that student may not be invited to return to GHCDS.

## **Personal Integrity**

Honesty is a particularly important dimension of character and, as such, deserves special mention. Lying, stealing, deceiving, and cheating by any student will not be tolerated on our campus. These behaviors will lead to a parent conference and appropriate consequences.

## **Bus Behavior**

All students riding the bus are required to follow the instructions of the bus driver. The following behaviors are specifically prohibited:

- Excessive noise - shouting or playing of radios, iPods or cell phones
- Throwing objects within the bus or out the window
- Horseplay
- Smoking or lighting any kind of fire
- Extending any part of the body out of the window
- Littering
- Writing or scratching on the seats or walls
- Abusiveness to the bus driver
- Standing up while the bus is in motion
- Eating, drinking or chewing gum

- Displaying any sharp object such as a knife, pencil, etc.
- Engaging in inappropriate displays of affection
- Yelling or making rude gestures out the windows
- Boarding the bus without a shirt

Any violation of the above will result in the following disciplinary action:

- At the discretion of the bus driver, a student may be reported to the school for misbehavior. This communication will be made in writing to any member of the administration and will follow as many "verbal warnings" as the driver deems reasonable. Parents will be informed whenever a student has been reported.
- If a student is reported twice, he/she will be suspended from riding the bus for a period of two weeks. Parents will have to provide transportation during the period of suspension. The student will not be permitted to board an alternative bus.
- If, after bus privileges have been reinstated, and a student is again reported, he/she will be suspended from riding the bus for a period of thirty days. If it happens a third time, the suspension will be for the remainder of the school year.

### **Weapons and Illegal Substances**

One of the tragedies of our society is that behaviors that used to be associated with high school have made their way to the lower grades. As such, we must address them.

#### ● **Weapons**

Weapons of any kind are not permitted in school. If a weapon is brought to school, it will be confiscated, parents will be called, and logical consequences will follow. Possession of a weapon may result in immediate expulsion. We discourage play-acting with simulated weapons. Model weapons may be brought to school for historical programs, news presentations or other class events with the permission of the teacher.

#### ● **Illegal Substances**

We focus on education, prevention, and intervention and believe that students who have been well informed about the consequences of alcohol and drug use are better equipped to resist peer pressure to use these substances.



### **Acceptable Use Policy**

*Technology provides extended educational benefits to students. However, some uses of this technology may be inappropriate or interfere with another student's education. Access to GHCDs's technology is a privilege. We expect responsible and appropriate use of network services and other technologies. Through this consent form, you and your child agree to these terms, and you permit your child to use the Internet, e-mail, and other GHCDs network services. Breaking any of the following rules will result in disciplinary action.*

#### **Technology Use on Campus**

- 1) Use of school or personal technology is at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Refer to your student handbook for out of classroom technology use rules.
- 2) Internet usage is for school-related activities only.
- 3) Student e-mail and other communication accounts may be used for school-related purposes only.

#### **Printing**

- 4) You may print for school related projects. You may not print for personal reasons without permission from a teacher
- 5) When you print, please limit the number of pages you print out because it is costly save supplies, money, and the environment.

#### **Security – your account and password**

- 6) DO NOT let someone else use your username and password to gain access to the computer. DO NOT use or share someone else's account information.
- 7) NO sharing of passwords! Remember you are responsible for the things others do while using your account. If you feel someone else knows your password, report it and change your password.
- 8) Do not access or manipulate others' works and/or accounts

#### **Ethical Use**

- 9) Know and understand copyright laws. Don't plan or conduct **any** illegal activities using GHCDs's computer technology.
- 10) Be considerate of your surroundings. There are often younger students for whom you are role models. Do not display items on the screen that may be inappropriate for younger eyes. Also, students your age or older may be offended by subject matter that doesn't offend you, be aware of what might offend other people and avoid displaying that subject matter on your screen.
- 11) Do not post any personal information to websites or give it in emails to anybody you do not know.
- 12) Don't send or display unwanted, threatening or harassing e-mail to anyone or post such information on websites. This applies to cyberbullying or other inappropriate actions towards other students, teachers, staff, or school entity regardless if the action has occurred on or off campus.
- 13) Do not access any inappropriate websites. If you accidentally go to one, you should stop and get out of it quickly.
- 14) Do not attempt to bypass the internet filter as such actions violate federal law (CIPA).

*Random checks may be performed on my account without warning. Violating any of these rules without prior permission from a Technology Instructor will result in disciplinary action. Good Hope Country Day School authorities reserve the right to suspend my account or restrict my access if it is felt I am breaking these rules, the law, being rude, unhelpful, or uncooperative. Failure to abide by the attached guidelines shall result in disciplinary action such as a 30 day suspension of school and/or personal technology use on campus. This policy remains in effect indefinitely. Repeated offenses or severity of the infraction may result in more severe disciplinary action.*

***I have read and understand ALL of the above and agree to abide by the rules as set forth herein.***

Today's date \_\_\_\_\_ Print your full name \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Student signature \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent/legal guardian of the minor student signing above, I grant permission for the above student to access networked computer services such as e-mail and Internet. I have read this document and accept

responsibility for providing guidance to the above student to follow when selecting, sharing or exploring information and media. Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_