Cobham Montessori School
Education for life

Attendance and Absence Policy

Contents

Key References: In addition to this policy Cobham Montessori School has due regard for, and refers to the following legislation and guidance, any additional details found in the following publications:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907535/School_attendance_guidance_for_2020_to_2021_academic_year.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2021-to-2022-academic-year

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007260/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2021.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Links are current as at August 2021

1.0 Importance of Attendance

Children need a continuity of experience in order to fully benefit from the education offered at Cobham Montessori School. Children thrive within the stability of the community in terms of both the adults and children who are present each day. Regular, punctual attendance will establish good habits that will support children throughout their lives. For these three reasons we emphasise the importance of consistent and high attendance over the school year.

1.1 Scope

Children in the Infant Community and children below compulsory school age in the Children's House may attend on a sessional basis and, whilst we encourage regular attendance in all communities, there are no restrictions on parents removing their children during term time for family holidays.

The requirements of this policy apply to children who have reached primary school age (i.e. their 4th birthday occurred prior to 1st September of current school year).

1.2 The Government expects us to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (less than 90%);
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education, to which they are entitled; and,
- act early to address patterns of absence.

2.0 Procedures

Parents will:

- Ensure that their children attend school regularly
- Notify school on the first day of absence before 8.30am by phone or email
- Complete a request form for absence during term time for exceptional circumstances
- Ensure when their child returns to school they bring in written confirmation of why they were absent.
- Hand in medical evidence for 4 or more days consecutive absence due to illness
- Meet with the Head of School to discuss their child's attendance when necessary

Class Teachers will:

- Complete a register at the start of each session (morning and afternoon)
- Monitor daily patterns of attendance and report any concerns that arise to the Head of School
- Provide work for children to do at home if an absence is due to a long illness, disability or other circumstances
- Make parents aware of concerns over attendance

Office Staff will:

- Input admissions data on the Admissions Register
- Input attendance data on Register system
- Review registers each term for monitoring purposes
- Monitor alongside the Head of School patterns of attendance and lateness
- Make first day absence calls and record reasons for absence
- Instigate procedures with parents of children whose attendance is of a concern.

Head of School will:

- Monitor official registers and take actions where concerns have been identified
- Inform parents of individual pupils' attendance record in the end of year schools report

- Inform/Meet with parents whose children's attendance causes concern
- Involve Surrey County Council's Inclusion Service where appropriate

2.1 Late Procedures

- Children who arrive late (after the doors close at 9.10am) must wait with their parents until it is convenient for the child to be taken to class.
- Children who frequently arrive late will be monitored;
- Children who arrive late after the registers have closed due to a medical appointment will be marked M (in).
- Any child arriving after 9:15am for any reason other than medical will be marked U (late after registers closed).
- Children who have to leave for any reason throughout the day should be signed out. This is strongly discouraged.
- Parents are requested to make dental or medical appointments outside of school hours wherever possible.

2.2 Holiday in Term Time Procedures

Children attend school for approximately 37 weeks in the calendar year. There are many weeks for holidays – 2.5 over Christmas, 2.5 over Easter, and more than 6 over the Summer. In addition, there are the half-term breaks and the bank holidays. We encourage parents to make the most of these holiday periods, and to avoid booking holidays during term time.

Children are generally not allowed days absence for holidays or other elective reasons. Any absence, other than for illness or emergency medical attention, will be coded as Unauthorised (G) – Family holiday not agreed or (O) Unauthorised.

Parents may choose to complete an 'Approval for Absence Request' stating why they are removing their child during term time. This is given to the Head of School. Only exceptional circumstances will be authorised.

If an 'Approval for Absence Request' is rejected, then the absence; should the parent still proceed with the removal of their child during term time, is recorded as unauthorised (Code G or O) as appropriate.

2.3 Children with attendance below 90%

Persistent Absenteeism will be monitored by the Head of School. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff will follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

All Schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12.

This attendance policy is part of broader suite of Safeguarding policies including the schools Child Protection Policy.

2.4 Illness

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases a parents' note explaining that their child was ill can be accepted without question or concern (we may request medical evidence to be provided for absences of more than 4 days). In exceptional circumstances further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

3.0 Part Time Attendance for Children of Compulsory School Age

As a rule, we will not offer part-time places to children of compulsory school age. All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education.

In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs: for example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package or the child has a SEND which cannot be met by the school in the short term (for example while specialist resources including specialist staff are being sourced). A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.

In agreeing to a part-time timetable the school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore will record it as authorised absence.

Appendix A – Registration Codes

Codes
PRESENT
/   Present (AM)
\   Present (PM)
L   Late (before registers closed)

AUTHORISED ABSENCE
C   Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)
E   Excluded (no alternative provision made)
H   Family holiday (authorised)
I   Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)
M   Medical/Dental appointments
R   Religious observance
S   Study leave
T   Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE
G   Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)
N   No reason yet provided for absence
O   Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)
U   Late (after registers closed)

APPROVED EDUCATION ACTIVITY = PRESENT
B   Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)
D   Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)
J   Interview at another educational establishment
P   Approved sporting activity
V   Educational visit or trip
W   Work experience
X   Not attending in circumstances related to Coronavirus

ADMINISTRATIVE CODES - NOT COUNTED IN POSSIBLE ATTENDANCES
X   Non-compulsory school age absence
Y   Enforced closure – whole school or partial
Z   Pupil not yet on roll
School closed to pupils (planned)