Admissions Policy

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1. Introduction

At Cobham Montessori School we welcome children from the age of 2, up to the end of the Summer term after the child's 11th birthday (end of Year 6). Applications may be made at any time during the school year.

All children who are below the normal school starting age may attend on a part-time basis. Unless otherwise agreed, children under 3 begin by attending a minimum of two mornings per week: we take care to help the child settle in happily and quickly and provide parents with appropriate feedback during their first few weeks.

Children in the Children's House should normally attend on a regular basis a minimum of 5 sessions per week, so as to achieve maximum benefit from the school's Montessori curriculum. Each half day counts as one session and the 5 sessions may be taken as a combination of full days (2 sessions) and half days (1 session).

Children who have reached school age (aged 4 before the 1st September in the new academic year) are expected to attend full-time and full-time fees will be charged accordingly. Children who have reached statutory school age (from the beginning of the term following the child's 5th birthday) must attend full-time in the Children's House and Elementary class. Any part-time attendance for school-age children must be agreed in advance by the Head of School.

Children who are joining the Elementary class directly will be expected to have attended a Montessori school for at least some of their prior education.

2. Arranging a Visit

All enquiries are invited to view the school and meet the Head of School during an Open Day. This event includes an explanation how the Montessori method delivers the child's education through supporting the child's natural development. We encourage parents to ask questions and to explore whether our school is a good 'fit' with the family's own ethos.

3. Allocation of Places

We endeavour to accept all pupils, regardless of any disability (SEND) of which we are made aware. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the school may take such advice and require such assessments as considered appropriate. This is to ensure that we can provide the right environment for each child's academic and pastoral needs. The life of the school is enhanced by inclusive policies but equal importance is given to ensuring that no pupil's education is impaired.

We must be made aware of any known or suspected additional needs which the child may require at the point of initial enquiry, so that we can work with parents to determine how the child's needs might best be met in our school.

We consider all children for admission to the school who have the ability to benefit from our Montessori curriculum which encourages children to develop a high degree of independence in their own learning. Pupils whose SEND are suited to our environment are welcomed where we have, or can reasonably obtain or put in place, the appropriate resources and facilities to offer them the support they require.

Subject always to not exceeding our maximum limit of 35 (full time equivalent) places, we do not, in fact, operate on the basis of a fixed number of places but rather base the size of the group taking into account the mix of children and their individual needs. Consequently, we need to meet each child before an offer of a place can be made. Children who are of school age (Age 4 or older), will be invited to join us for a taster day and we shall seek reports from a child's former school or nursery to help us establish whether a child is likely to thrive in our school.

Places are usually offered on the following basis.

1. Siblings of children already attending the school;
2. Children of parents who wish to keep their child in the school until the end of their primary education;
3. Children of families who have a genuine interest in the Montessori approach to child development;
4. Thereafter, in order of date of receiving the completed Registration requirements.

We shall not usually offer a place to a child if parents plan to move the child to another preschool before Reception year.

Other than rolling admissions during the academic year (if places are available) places will be confirmed no less than 6 weeks before the start of the term of entry.

4. Registration Process

Following attendance at an Open Day or a visit to the school, parents interested in a place at the school should complete an Application Form and pay the Application Fee. This places the child on the waiting list for a place.

If/when places are available we will arrange to meet the child if we have not already done so and, if the child is attending another school or nursery, we shall seek reports from their current setting. Children who are of school age (age 4 or older), will be invited to join us for a taster day without parents. Occasionally, we may suggest a second taster day. Parents will be advised as soon as possible whether their application is successful. An offer letter and Terms and Conditions will be sent to the parents. Should they wish to accept the offer, parents should return a signed acceptance of the Terms and Conditions and pay a deposit to secure their place (as indicated in the current Fee Schedule).

Parents will be asked to provide original identity documentation and to complete the New Starter Forms before the start of their child's first term.

5. Starting and Settling In

For children of preschool age, we will invite the parents to visit with their child for a short taster session. Once their start date is agreed we will arrange settling in days beginning with a parent staying at first and leading to the child remaining on their own. Further details about settling in, can be found in our Settling In Policy.