

# Thomas Coram Centre

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

January 2020

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### **1. Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

We want to ensure that all children receive a full time education to maximise opportunities for everybody to realise their potential. Thomas Coram Centre strives to achieve high levels of attendance and our attendance target for 2016 is 90%. Experience and research both locally and nationally demonstrates a clear link between good attainment and good attendance. The centre believes that setting a clear policy for attendance and punctuality is an excellent preparation for later school years and future employment.

This policy is written in relation to the following acts of Parliament and guidance relating to attendance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003.
- LB Camden Attendance Strategy 2011
- We will also take account of new legislation and initiatives.

### **2. Communicating with parents and carers**

The centre gives high priority to conveying to parents, carers and children the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role and there is a need to establish strong home-centre links and communication systems, not least because these are very helpful when there is a problem about attendance.

Measures we take include:

- Holding induction sessions for all new parents and children. Parents and carers are advised of the policy during home visits and induction and this makes clear to them that unauthorised absences do not only damage their own child's education, but also others. This is because teachers need to help those children who have been absent catch up which reduces the time available to give to the remaining children in the group. This is one of the crucial reasons for a firm attendance policy, because when parents withdraw their children from the centre, it is not only their children who are affected.
- Including attendance and punctuality reminders in the parents' newsletter.
- Attendance performance reports monitored by the Governing Body.
- Term dates are published in advance and are available on the web site. Any changes in the term date schedule are communicated in advance to the parents.

### **3. Teaching the children about the importance of attendance and punctuality**

Children receive guidance from teachers about the importance of good attendance and punctuality

Children are encouraged to arrive at centre and to be in their classroom area before the bell goes at 9.40am.

Children are encouraged to go to bed at an appropriate time so that they are not tired the next day. Parents are encouraged to prepare children for the school day on the night before as much as possible so they are not rushed in the mornings.

### **4. Exceptional Leave**

Holidays during term-time and long weekends are not acceptable reasons for absence. Since September 2013 the Headteacher no longer has the authority to authorise absences for the purpose of taking a family holiday except in exceptional circumstances. We therefore ask parents and carers NOT to book holidays during term time. If however a parent believes there are exceptional reasons why their child needs to be absent from the centre they need to make a request in writing to the Headteacher stating the dates and the exceptional reasons for the absence. There is no automatic right to a request being agreed.

### **5. What parents can do to help**

The centre works with parents and carers to ensure excellent attendance and punctuality and recognises that parents have a crucial role. Parents can help by following these guidelines:

#### **Attendance**

If a child does miss school, parents/carers should inform the centre of their child's absence and provide an explanation as soon as possible. The nature of the explanation determines whether the centre will authorise the absence or not.

- Make doctor, dental, optician or other appointments out of school time.
- Make sure your child understands you do not approve of them missing school.
- Take an interest in your child's work, ask them about their day and praise them when they are doing well.
- If you are worried or your child has problems at the centre or if your child makes excuses to try and get out of going to the centre, take time to listen to them; there might be an underlying problem. Communicate any concerns to a staff member.

### **Punctuality**

- Make sure your child has a good bedtime routine so they get plenty of rest and are physically prepared for the school day.
- Invest in a good, reliable alarm clock - make setting it part of your child's bedtime routine.
- Get to know your child's timetable - work together to make sure you have everything ready the night before.
- Try to ensure your child has a good breakfast to set them up for the day.
- Have a standing arrangement for getting your child to nursery in case something crops up - friends or family, perhaps neighbours.
- Allow lots of time for your journey.
- If you are finding it difficult to get your child to the centre on time, talk to your child's teacher.

## **6. The Headteacher's Role**

The Headteacher will consider every request for leave. The parents will need to give the proposed dates of absence and return, and cogent reasons for the absence. If an extended absence is taken without authorisation or not being contactable by the centre then a child may then lose their nursery place and may have to reapply for a new nursery place. Due to waiting lists this may not always be possible.

The teaching team closely monitor attendance. Each key worker will check through the registers for problems with attendance and take appropriate action, such as discussing with parents/ carers. This information is shared consistently with the head teacher so that strategies can be employed to improve attendance.

The Head teacher is responsible for all letters in regards to unauthorised exceptional leave.

The Headteacher oversees the collection and reporting of attendance data and the publication of statistics and reports on attendance to the Governing Body.

## **7. The role of Teachers and Early Years Educators**

The administrative team have a responsibility in keeping an attendance register. This is a legal document and must be completed accurately. The attendance register must be marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Absences are coded according to the information received from the parents.

The Early Year's Educators and teachers monitor the register daily and are sensitive to emerging patterns of absence and lateness.

They encourage patterns of punctuality and good attendance by praising those children who came to centre each day and arrive on time.

The class teacher/ Early Year's Educators reports any concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality to the Administration Officer.

## **8. The role of the Administrative Officers**

The administrative officers will communicate with the Headteacher on a daily basis all matters regarding attendance and punctuality.

The administrative staff record late arrivals each day and take telephone calls from parents or carers concerning pupil absence.

The administrative staff make contact with parents who do not make contact to discuss pupil absence, monitor persistent absentees and report back to the Head teacher.

Communicate with the Headteacher, as designated Child Protection Officer with regards to LAC attendance.

Ensure the registers are completed online and on time where applicable and that staff receive the necessary training to carry out this duty.

Each week the Administrative Officer will print weekly registers for each class and enter the attendance data on the database.

Individual pupil attendance reports are compiled on the request of the Headteacher. The administrative staff will also prepare termly and annual returns to the local authority.

## **9. The role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body has the responsibility for monitoring attendance and procedures and to be aware of general attendance issues. It also monitors reports and statistics to improve centre attendance. These are documented in Governing Body minutes (made available to all parents upon request) and the Governors Annual Report.

## **10. What happens after a long absence?**

The school is sensitive to the needs and circumstances of children returning after significant periods of absence and will support the smooth reintegration of children. In such

circumstances the school works with parents, carers and children towards an agreed reintegration plan which may include different strategies depending on the need with an agreed review period.

## **11. Nursery School Timetable**

The school opens at 8.30 am for extended day children and 9.30am for core day children. Children are expected to be in their classroom or play area by the time the bell rings at 9.40am. Parents leave the centre by 9.40am and keygroup is at 9.45am.

The morning only children leave at 12.30pm after lunch whilst the afternoon children begin at 1.30pm. The school day ends at 3.30pm for core day children who can then be collected between 3.15 - 3.30pm.

The day ends at 5.00pm for afternoon children and at 5.30pm for the extended day children. Parents wanting feedback about the children's day should aim to meet their child's teacher around 3.15pm for core day children or 5.15pm for extended day children.

Each parent/ carer must provide the school with contact telephone number details and address of anybody who is designated to pick up their child from the centre. If unexpected circumstances result in a parent being unable to pick up their child from school they must contact the school by telephone, informing them about the adult they are authorising to pick up their child.

A child cannot normally be picked up or brought to school by anyone under the age of 16.

