

Thomas Coram Centre and Nursery School

Attendance & Punctuality Policy



Thomas Coram Centre
and Nursery School
49 Mecklenburgh Square
London WC1N 2NY



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Reviewed bi-annually	

Introduction

We want to ensure that all children receive a full-time education to maximise opportunities for everybody to realise their potential. Thomas Coram Nursery strives to achieve high levels of attendance and our attendance target is 90%.

Experience and research both locally and nationally demonstrates a clear link between good attainment and good attendance. Setting a clear policy for attendance and punctuality in nursery school, is an excellent preparation for later school years and future employment.

The school gives high priority to conveying to parents, carers and children the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Parents and carers are advised of the policy during their New Start Meeting and reminded throughout the year.

We understand that young children can become unwell, and we believe that the best place for them then is at home. However, as a school, attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored because poor attendance and lateness can:

- Affect your child's confidence and sense of belonging;
- Your child's ease of access into friendships and activities;
- Distract the teachers from the children and their tasks, as they have to confirm each latecomer in the register;
- Compromise the safety of the children. For example, in the event of a fire, a completed register is essential to ensure everyone has been evacuated from the building.

The government funds nursery education and so are looking for good value on their investment. In the event of regular poor attendance or lateness (arrival and collection), a meeting will be requested with the Head Teacher. This information can be passed on to the Local Authority and on transfer to the child's receiving primary school.

- You should only bring or collect your child outside of the agreed times with prior permission - for example, if your child has an appointment.
- The beginning of the school day is a vital time for children to build relationships with their key workers and peers. The register closes at 9.40am.
- Any child arriving late to school will be issued with a late mark in the register and may be requested to return either the following day or at 1.30pm. If you arrive late, you must report to the school office.
- Please remember, children cannot be collected between 3.00-3.15pm as every child is having their group-time.

- To enable staff to plan the next day's activities, it is vital that 'core day' children are collected between 3.15-3.30pm and 'extended day' children by 5.30pm.

Late Collection

If you realise you are going to be late collecting your child, it is essential that you contact the office (keep our number on your mobile - 020 7520 0385). In order to reassure your child fairly, we need to know how long they will be waiting for you. The class staff are very busy after the children have gone home (each day the sessions are evaluated, focus children reviewed and the relevant activities prepared). The school follows the local authority's Child Protection Procedures when children are not collected by 6.00 pm.

Absence / Illness

Please contact the school on your child's first day of illness and indicate, where possible, how long you expect your child to be away from school. Please update us when any illness lasts longer than one week. There are guidelines available in school regarding infectious diseases (list available on request).

If we do not receive a phone call from you, we will contact you on the second day of absence regarding the unauthorised absence. If no contact can be made, then the relevant outside agencies would be contacted as necessary. If you do not contact us, your child will have an unauthorised absence. For long-term illness or irregular attendance over a period of time, we may need to ask for a doctor's note or evidence of hospital appointments.

With illness such as diarrhoea and vomiting, please keep your child at home for at least 48 hours from the last episode. Please note that playing outside or with water is an integral part of nursery and Foundation Stage provision. If your child is not well enough to play in these areas, please keep them at home. We encourage the children to play outdoors as one of the most effective ways of reducing the spreading of such illness as colds.

In the case of children who fall ill at school, the next of kin will be contacted so that the child can be collected. Similarly, any child found with head-lice, ringworm or conjunctivitis will also need to be collected so that treatment can commence as soon as possible.

Holidays

Holidays and long-weekends during term-time 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, 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. Families that take a long-extended break (more than 2 weeks) may have their place withdrawn.

Where the government fund your child's place, the local authority now has the right to withdraw funding for your child's place if the above is not adhered to and your nursery place may be offered to another family on the waiting list. These measures will be followed as your child's attendance has a direct impact on the school because our funding will be reduced.

We have found that often children who are regularly absent miss out on valuable social and learning experiences. For example, one day a week, we have our music sessions. Missing our teacher-led music sessions can prove unsettling for children as it is hard for them to participate in the follow-on lessons and join in with the songs and music the other children have learnt. The dynamic of friendship groups is also affected when a child is regularly absent, making it harder to establish a sense of belonging.

We request that extra-curriculum activities are restricted to weekends and after school hours.

The Role of Governors

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.

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 absence and late arrivals each day and take telephone calls or emails 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. They communicate with the Headteacher, as designated Child Protection Officer, with regards to Looked After Children (LAC) attendance.

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.

We thank parents and carers for their support.

Appendix A

In case of illness, children should stay at home until they feel better. We follow the illness exclusion periods as advised by the Health Protection Agency. If your child has diarrhoea or vomiting, please advise the school and keep your child at home for 48 hours from the last episode.

Diseases notifiable (to Local Authority Proper Officers) under the Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988:

- Acute encephalitis
- Acute poliomyelitis
- Anthrax
- Cholera
- Diphtheria
- Dysentery
- Food poisoning
- Leptospirosis
- Malaria
- Measles
- Meningitis
 - meningococcal
 - pneumococcal
 - haemophilus influenzae
 - viral
 - other specified
 - unspecified
- Meningococcal septicaemia (without meningitis)
- Mumps
- Ophthalmia neonatorum
- Paratyphoid fever
- Plague
- Rabies
- Relapsing fever
- Rubella
- Scarlet fever
- Smallpox
- Tetanus
- Tuberculosis
- Typhoid fever
- Typhus fever
- Viral haemorrhagic fever
- Viral hepatitis
 - Hepatitis A
 - Hepatitis B
 - Hepatitis C
 - other
- Whooping cough
- Yellow fever
- Covid 19 (Corona Virus)

Leprosy is also notifiable, but directly to the HPA, CfI, IM&T Dept

Appendix B

In-House Systems ensure high profile:

- Regular Newsletter/ *Parent Hub* item.
- Guidelines sent to all parents.
- First day response - Parents are regularly reminded to contact us on the first day of illness and should always notify the office team.
- If parents haven't called, we call them.
- Reason for absences noted for analysis.
- Head teacher responds to holiday requests.
- Key workers talk to parents about attendance at regular intervals and consultation meetings.
- Attendance assessed when analysing attainment.
- Key workers report to head teacher if regular poor attendance.
- Head teacher speaks with parents to enforce importance of good attendance.

Appendix C

Arrival and collection times

- 9.30-9.40 (9.42) parents should arrive.
- 9.42- 9.45 parents are leaving.
- We all need to help parents know they have to leave, so that at 9.46 there are no more parents in the room.
- Myself, Jan, Philli and Andrew will not let any parents down after 9.45 unless in exceptional cases and then we will come with them to explain to you. If a parent does come down on their own accord, please ask them to come and see me, Jan or the office team.
- If they ring to say they are running late, they are still late and will still need to wait.
- Children with SEND also need to wait. Where possible their 1:1 support person will come to the foyer ready to greet their late child.
- Late Kinder children are collected by the person bringing the register.
- Late Toddler children wait until someone from the office can take them down. The office cannot be left unattended.
- Parents who arrive after 9.45 DO NOT go into the rooms.
- Children who arrive after 10.00 have to wait until it is convenient for office team to take them down, whether they have rung or not.
- Repeated lateness after 10.00 can result in being sent home. Perina or Jan should be called to discuss this with the parents when it arrives.
- Parents arriving early can come in to use the toilet but if they then come down to class early, they need to be sent back. Office staff cannot see beyond the door.
- Parents can come in early and wait in the parent's room. With the weather getting colder more families will be in the parent's room before the start of the day. Staff should be primarily using the staffroom rather than the parent's room at the start of the day.
- Toddlers should not be picked up before 12.20. If a parent comes down early then they should be asked to wait. The office team try to keep an eye out for parents sneaking down early but it is difficult if the team are on the phone or working.
- If a child has an appointment and has pre-arranged to come in later, and they can arrive in school before 11.00am, they can come in. Otherwise they should wait until 1.30 and ensure their child fed.
- Toddler children with appointments should also arrive by 11.00 or return at 1.30, having been fed at home (if an all- day child