

Forming responsible habits regarding attendance and promptness is important. Parents are expected to support the goal of punctuality by having their children arrive on time, remain in school for a full day, and schedule appointments after school hours whenever possible.

Under the laws of the State of Delaware, parents/guardians of children between the ages of 5 and 16 are required to ensure that their children attend school (See Delaware Code, Title 14, Chapter 27: School Attendance, <https://delcode.delaware.gov/title14/c027/sc01/>). Sussex Montessori requires that students attend school in accordance with these laws. Punctual and regular attendance is extremely important. Unless it is impossible to do so, each student should attend school every day.

TARDINESS AND EARLY DISMISSAL: All students are expected to be punctual to school. Students may be dropped off at school no earlier than 7:30 a.m. Classrooms will open at 7:45 a.m. and students are expected to be in the classroom by 8:00 a.m. and remain until the end of the school day at 3:10 p.m. If a student arrives after 8:00 a.m., they will be considered tardy. For safety reasons and accountability, a parent/guardian must accompany a tardy child into school and sign the child in at the main office.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Sussex Montessori School Board has approved the following attendance policy, in adherence with Title 14, Chapter 27: School Attendance of Delaware Code [<https://delcode.delaware.gov/title14/c027/sc01/>]:

- Absences, tardiness, and early dismissals are considered excused for the following reasons:
 - Illness of the student
 - Scheduled appointments to a physical or mental healthcare provider, including, but not limited to, a physician, a dentist, an orthodontist, or a psychologist
 - Contagious diseases within the home of the student
 - Death in the family or of a close friend
 - Legal business requiring the student's presence
 - Observance of religious holidays
 - Medical diagnosis and/or treatment
 - Absence, pre-approved by the administration, to participate in other educational experiences or authorized school activities
 - Emergency situations as determined by the Head of School
 - Suspension
- When a student is absent, upon their return to school and no later than the fifth school day after return, a signed, written note from the parent/guardian must be presented to the SMS office for the absence to be excused. Written notes may be faxed or emailed with a scanned parent/guardian signature. Absences will be marked as unexcused until a written note is submitted.

- An unexcused absence from school or class for all or part of a day, including absence due to tardiness, is an absence that cannot be explained by any of the reasons listed above and is not otherwise approved.
- SMS will contact parent(s)/guardian(s) by letter after a student is absent for any reason for all or most of five (5) days, or if the student is tardy or leaves school early for five (5) or more days, or if SMS otherwise determines a concern with chronic absences
- SMS will arrange a meeting with the family, the child's teacher, and the Head of School after a student is absent for any reason for all or most of ten (10) days, or if the student is tardy or leaves school early for ten (10) or more days, or if SMS otherwise determines a concern with chronic absences
- Chronic absenteeism that cannot be resolved will be referred to the SMS Board for a decision as to next steps
- Students meeting the requirements of remote attendance, including participation in scheduled and unscheduled synchronous communications and completion of expected work, will not be considered absent

LEAVING SCHOOL: Sussex Montessori School is a closed campus. Students are not permitted to leave campus during the school day without parent/guardian permission and administrative approval. The "campus" refers to the school buildings and outside areas utilized regularly during recess and physical education. Students arriving by bus, or other means of transportation, are to proceed directly to the school.