

Tobin Montessori School

2017-18 FAMILY HANDBOOK



Our Mission

The Tobin Montessori Mission is to combine the best practices of Montessori philosophy and public education to develop children who are resilient learners and who construct together cooperative, caring communities.

Our Vision

At the Tobin Montessori School, children become resourceful, resilient learners; together we construct cooperative, caring communities within the classroom, the school, and the world.

Our Core Values

1. We value diversity.
2. We are respectful.
3. We strive for excellence.
4. We are responsible.
5. We are resourceful, resilient learners.
6. We care about each other.

About Our School

Tobin Montessori School is an American Montessori Society Accredited elementary school dedicated to providing a quality educational experience for children in the Children's House (3-6 years old), Lower Elementary (6-9 years old), and Upper Elementary Programs (9-11 years old). All of the classrooms are multi-age, and students remain in each level with the same teacher. In each of the levels, students engage in a wide range of activities to stimulate intellectual, physical, and social growth. In Montessori, the beautifully prepared environment includes areas of: practical life, sensorial, math, language, geography, cultural studies, science, art, and music.

In addition to academics, children learn how to become responsible members of the school community. We support this work through Grace and Courtesy, and Responsive Classroom curriculums. Self-respect, respect for others, respect for the environment, compassion, and cooperation are key elements that are taught and modeled throughout the school.

Tobin Montessori
2017-18 Family
Handbook

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Tobin Montessori School

197 Vassal Lane
Cambridge, MA 02138
617.349.6600
Fax: 617.349.6890
tobin.cpsd.us

CPS

Cambridge Public Schools

HOURS & CONTACTS



The School Day

SCHOOL OFFICE: 617.349.6600 x150

SCHOOL HOURS: 7:55AM-1:55PM

SCHEDULE:

- 7:15AM Bus drop-off begins, Breakfast Program begins
(all students gather in the cafeteria until 7:40AM)
- 7:40AM Students enter the classrooms
- 7:55AM Instruction begins
- 11AM Three-year old (half day) pick-up
- 1:55PM Student Dismissal and three-year olds (full day) pick-up

The Tobin After-School Program is available to all students ages 3 years and up. Please contact the After School Program Office for more information: 617.349.6300; Katie Gladfelter, Director.

School Administration

Jaime Frost	Principal
Joseph Huber	Assistant Principal
Mary Frawley	Family Liaison
Fay Chaisson	School Clerk
Ian Kenney	School Adjustment Counselor
Kim Boglarski	School Psychologist
Toya Scott	School Nurse

If you have questions about... Please contact:

CPS Forms, Paperwork, Records, Attendance, etc.	Fay Chaisson, School Clerk 617.349.6600
School & Family Events	Mary Frawley, Family Liaison 617.349.6600 x153
Transportation	Joey Huber, Assistant Principal 617.349.6600 x152
Special Education	Kim Boglarski, School Psychologist 617.349.6600 x235
Social/Emotional Issues	Ian Kenney, School Adjustment Counselor; 617.349.6600 x233
Math at Tobin Montessori	Eileen Gagnon, Mathematics Coach 617.349.6600 x239
Literacy at Tobin Montessori	Heather Kolbe, Literacy Coach 617.349.6600 x239
Montessori Curriculum or Pedagogy	Erin Gutierrez, Montessori Resource Teacher; 617.349.6600 x239
Cub's Corner Three-Year-Old Program	Stephanie Burgess 617.349.6600 x128
Library Books/Online Resources	Jessica Gillis, School Librarian 617.349.6600 x333
Technology at Tobin Montessori	Sarah Rosenberg, Technology Teacher 617.349.6600 x213
Health	Toya Scott, School Nurse 617.349.6600 x295
School Policies	Jaime Frost, Principal 617.349.6600 x151



DAILY ROUTINES

Arrival

TIMES

Breakfast	7:15AM
Classrooms Open	7:40AM
School Day Begins	7:55AM

** School doors open at 7:15AM, and students should not arrive earlier. There is no supervision available before 7:15AM.*

PROTOCOL

- **ALL families and students should remain in the front lobby or cafeteria until 7:40AM.** Please do not wait outside the classrooms. At 7:40AM, children may head up the ramp and enter their classrooms to prepare for their day. Morning Announcements begin at 7:55AM. **Students will be marked tardy after 7:55AM.**
- In order to foster independence, we encourage families to say goodbye at the front door and allow Tobin students to walk independently to the cafeteria or their classrooms during morning arrival. We know our youngest students still need the support, but in time, they will gain the confidence to venture up that ramp alone!

PARKING

There is no parking in the circle during arrival. The front circle is reserved for school buses. Please utilize street parking located on Vassal Lane, Standish Street, Lakeview Avenue, and other neighboring Cambridge streets. If you are dropping your child off at the front door:

- **Live Drop Off:** Pull over on the right side of the circle and the child exits the car (on the right) independently onto the sidewalk.
- **Stop & Drop:** Pull further up on the right side of the circle and exit the vehicle. Walk around to the right side of the car and assist your child onto the sidewalk. Your child walks independently into school and to their classroom. Please exit the circle promptly.
- **Handicap Parking:** Located on the left side of the circle (island side).

Dismissal

TIMES

3-year-old half day	11AM
3-year-old full day	1:55PM
Gr. JK/K-5	1:55PM

PROTOCOL

- **Bus Students:**
–All Bus students will be escorted to their buses by a Tobin Staff Member
- **Parent/Guardian Pick-up Students:**
–Cub’s Corner students will wait in Room 128 with a Tobin Staff Member for their parent/guardian
–JK/K students will wait in their classrooms with a Tobin Staff Member for their parent/guardian
–GR 1-5 students will wait on the ramp with a Tobin Staff Member for their parent/guardian

PARKING

- **There is no parking in the circle during dismissal.** The front circle is reserved for school buses. Please utilize street parking located on Vassal Lane, Standish Street, Lakeview Avenue, and other neighboring Cambridge streets.
- **Handicap Parking:** Located on the left side of the circle (island side).

EARLY RELEASE DAYS

Dismissal Time is 11:55AM

2017-2018 Early Release Dates

- September 19, 2017 (Tuesday)
- October 18, 2017 (Wednesday)
- November 2, 2017 (Thursday)
- November 22, 2017 (Wednesday)
- March 13, 2018 (Tuesday)
- May 16, 2018 (Wednesday)
- June 6, 2018 (Wednesday)

Absences/Tardiness/Dismissal Procedures

One of the most important factors influencing student achievement in school is regular attendance and punctuality. According to the state of Massachusetts, students may not be absent more than seven days, or fourteen half days, in one calendar year.

ATTENDANCE

- If your child will be absent or significantly tardy, please call your child’s teacher(s) as soon as possible to directly report the absence. Their extension is their room number. This is important so that teachers know whether or not to expect a child at school each day.
- Please remember to report an absence or tardy as soon as possible. If you do not contact the school, you will receive an automated message to let you know your child is not at school. If you believe the message is in error, please call the office to confirm.
- Students are marked Tardy after 7:55AM. If arriving after 7:55AM, students must check in at the Tobin Main Office to obtain a late slip before entering the classroom.
- We encourage all students to be at school by 7:40AM. Arriving at this time allows students to settle in, get organized for the day and also decreases disruptions to other learners.

DISMISSING A CHILD EARLY FROM SCHOOL

If you need to pick up your child before 1:55PM, you must report to the Main Office and sign your child out at the office laptop. You will receive an early dismissal pass. A Tobin Staff Member will then call to have your child come to meet you in the main office.



SCHOOL CLIMATE



At Tobin Montessori, we believe that social emotional learning is just as important as learning academics. Our goal is to prepare students with the skills they need to be successful in both regulating their own emotions and navigating challenges they may encounter with others. We work alongside students:

- Learning about their strengths and areas of growth as individuals
- Developing classroom/school community guidelines
- Modeling/teaching positive behaviors
- Modeling/teaching strategies for emotional regulation
- Providing feedback for students as they encounter social/emotional successes or challenges
- Providing quiet spaces for student breaks or sensory items for calming down

Discipline

- At Tobin, discipline is approached in a positive manner, stressing what can be done and providing the child with positive choices. Tobin Staff Members do not use punishment that would be detrimental to the child's emotional security or self-image.
- Respect and kindness towards others and responsibility for one's own behavior are stressed throughout the school. The student's behavior is reinforced by the respectful ways in which the Tobin Staff work with them. Students are involved in developing and understanding the rules within their classroom environments, and they are responsible for holding themselves accountable.
- When a student's behavior is unacceptable, it is our goal to help the child learn appropriate behavior. We work with the student(s) to develop appropriate behavior skills. Parents will be notified of any behavior modification program that may be necessary. After an initial time period, the program will be reevaluated, revised, or eliminated, depending on the progress of the child.
- The Tobin Main Office is a positive space, and administration works alongside students when they are celebrating successes or working through challenges. If behavior is deemed unsafe, parents will be notified immediately.

Bus Behavior

Transportation is a privilege. Students are expected to treat bus drivers and bus monitors with the same respect they treat other Tobin Community Members. When students board the bus, they are expected to choose a seat quickly and remain in that seat. Switching seats while the bus is moving or during stops is not allowed. If the driver or the bus monitor feels that a student is being unsafe, the student may be assigned to a seat in the front of the bus. As per district policy, "Students who fail to comply with the rules may be suspended and/or removed indefinitely from his/her bus if the violation warrants. More serious incidents may involve suspension from school and possible police action." For more information, please visit the CPS Transportation homepage or click on this link to view the CPS Transportation Disciplinary Policies: <http://bit.ly/2wFYgUY>



Communication is the key to a successful school year! Whenever you have a question, positive feedback or a concern about your child's experience, please speak directly with your child's teacher. There are a few ways to communicate with your child's classroom teacher:

- **Communication Folders:** Every child in Children's House and Lower Elementary will have a communication folder that will go home in backpacks every day. Please check this folder for written notes from teachers, newsletters, or other notices sent home. If you need to write a note to the teacher, please write your notes in the communication folder.
- **Email:** Every Tobin Staff Member has access to email, however, email is best for quick questions and not the best medium for dialogue. Please do

not use email for time-sensitive information as teachers may not check their email until after school hours. Tobin Staff Members will do their best to respond to email questions/comments in a timely manner.

- **Phone/Live Conference:** When you need to speak to your child's teacher, please set up a time to talk on the phone or in person. It is important to schedule these conversations at a time when the teacher can provide undivided attention, rather than at arrival or dismissal time.

We encourage families to help their children become problem solvers! When your child shares a challenge they are having at school, work with them to develop some strategies so they can try to solve it. It is more empowering for children to be included in the problem-solving process. If you have worked with your child and the classroom teacher but feel you need more support, please contact school administration to help out.

Family Conferences

The school year at Tobin Montessori is divided into trimesters, and formal Family Conferences will occur at the end of the first and second trimesters. Conferences are generally about 20 minutes long and may vary in some ways from classroom to classroom. Some teachers do conferences jointly with the parents and child present. Others do conferences with parents only. However, all conferences at Tobin Montessori will include examples of your child's work and assessment information. Conferences at Tobin are a time for the teacher to share, but also listen. This is an important time for teachers to hear from parents about their child's experience in school, as it directly impacts their learning in the classroom.

Your child's classroom teacher will reach out to you to schedule your family conference. Family conferences will be scheduled after the end of the first and second trimesters.

Trimester Dates

- **1st Trimester – September 5th to December 8th**
Report Cards will go home on December 13th
- **2nd Trimester – December 11th to March 16th**
Report Cards will go home on March 21st
- **3rd Trimester – March 19th to June 18th**
Report Cards will go home on the last day of school, June 18th
(with no snow days)

HEALTH & SAFETY



Health

There are times when a student should remain at home for his/her own health and welfare and for the protection of other students. When a child becomes ill at school, a parent/guardian will be notified and is expected to come for the child immediately. The following is a guideline of symptoms to be used in deciding whether or not your child should be in school. Please do **NOT** send your child to school when any of these symptoms are present or if they have experienced these symptoms in the last 24 hrs:

- Temperature over 100 degrees
- Discharge from ears
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Changes in mental alertness
- Discharge from the nose that is not clear
- Eye inflammation or crusting
- Undiagnosed rash or skin eruption

Children may return to school when they have been symptom free for 24 hours.

ALLERGIES

Before the school year begins, each parent is required to fill out a form listing any of their children's known allergies. If a child has a severe food allergy, the Tobin Montessori School may ask the entire class to refrain from bringing that food to school. Please make sure your child's needs are conveyed to the teacher and the nurse. A list of building-wide allergies will be kept in the Tobin Main Office, as well as the cafeteria.



Safety

Student safety is our number one priority, and you can help us keep Tobin Safe. Please report any unlocked doors to the Main Office. The school doors are locked at all times, and during arrival and dismissal, the front door is supervised by administration. You can also help by adhering to our visitor protocol – even if you are coming in for a short visit. All visitors are required to check in at the Main Office upon arrival to obtain a visitor’s badge that must be worn during the duration of the visit. All visitors must also sign out in the Main Office. Please note – Tobin Staff Members will not open the front door if you are buzzing. The office will unlock the door for you. Also, Tobin Staff Members will stop any visitor who is not wearing a visitor badge and direct them to the Main Office. This is in an effort to keep our community safe.

Students will only be released to parents/guardians or an adult who has been approved in writing by the parents/guardians. If a friend or babysitter will be picking up your child from school, you must write a note to the teacher. If we do not have this information in writing, we will not release the child.

It is required that all parents fill out the emergency forms provided by the school. In the case of an emergency, the school will make every attempt to reach the parents first and then use the backup list if the parents are unavailable. Please remember to list the names of people who agree to be available to come to school in the case of an emergency. Please also remember to update this information if it should change.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills will be held periodically throughout the school year. These drills are not announced, and teachers and students are required to follow the appropriate procedures within conducting these drills. Teachers practice the routines and procedures with all students at the beginning of the school year and reinforce and remind students of them frequently.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Lockdown drills will be conducted periodically throughout the school year. The goal of this drill is for students to become silent and invisible. Parents/guardians will be notified about these drills. It is important to stress that these are drills that will help keep everyone safe.

Bus Safety

A CPS student can begin riding the bus on the day they turn four years old.

In accordance with CPS Transportation Department Safety Procedures, the following protocols are in place:

- JK - grade 2 students who ride the bus will receive a yellow bus tag that must be attached to his or her backpack.
- A designated parent/guardian must be at the afternoon bus stop to meet all students in JK, Kindergarten, First, and Second grade. The driver cannot drop off a student when the appropriate person is not waiting for the student at the assigned bus stop.
- Children who are not met at the bus stop will be taken to the Security Office at Cambridge Rindge & Latin High School after the driver completes the bus route.
- Bus Tracker is now available!! Please take full advantage of this new CPS feature that helps track buses to and from school in real time! Sign up for Bus Tracker here: <http://bit.ly/2vGLu3Z>. Please be patient the first few weeks, as buses are sometimes delayed.

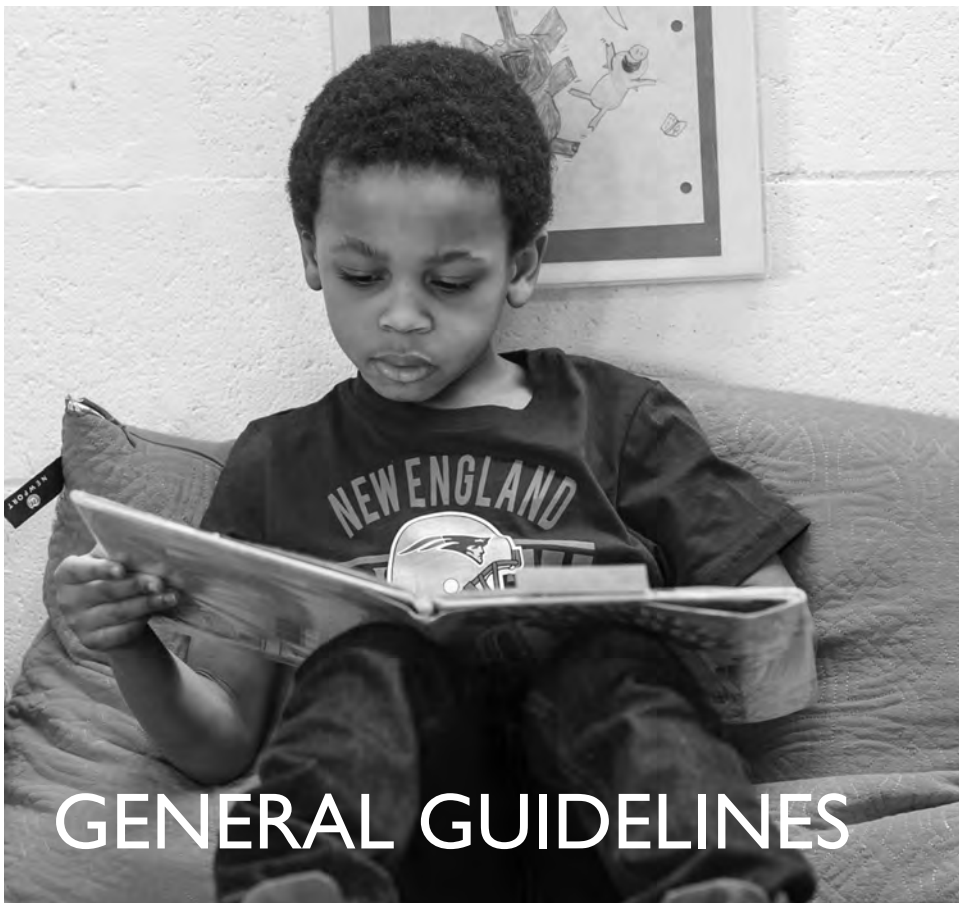
What to do if your child does not come home on the bus as expected?

First, call the Tobin School at 617.349.6600 and then the Transportation Department at 617.349.6862. If there is no answer, call the Safety & Security Office at 617.349.7787. The Security Office is where students are brought when there is not an adult waiting for them at the bus stop (JK-2), the student misses their stop, or they get on the wrong bus. The office is in the High School located at 459 Broadway.

Please find the complete list of CPS Bus Safety Procedures at:

<http://bit.ly/2iG3tqa>





Snacks

We ask that all families in the lower grades participate in contributing a snack for their child's class on a rotating basis. Each class will have its own schedule, and your child's teachers will inform you of the details. These should be healthy snacks, such as fruit, vegetables, cheese and crackers, graham crackers, pretzels, etc. If you feel that you cannot participate in this program, please let your child's teacher know.

Toys

Children should leave their toys at home because they are often misplaced and can be distracting to learning. Toys include, but are not limited to: Legos, jewelry, video games, Pokémon cards, rainbow looms, etc. We do welcome books or other educational material for sharing.

Candy & Soda

Please refrain from sending candy and soda to school. We adhere to the CPS Wellness Policy, and Tobin promotes healthy food and beverages. At times, gum may be allowed in classrooms (during standardized testing), but this will be determined by the classroom teacher.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are allowed in school; however, during the school day, they are to be powered off. If you need to get a message to your child, please call the office or the classroom.

Dress

- Tobin adheres to the standards stated in the *CPS Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* excerpted here: *Clothing will be deemed inappropriate if it is disturbing to other students or in any way interferes with the educational process. This includes, but is not limited to: bare midriffs, short shorts, low slung trousers, and other clothing which is offensive and/or violates acceptable standards of dress.* Parents/guardians will be notified, and students will be sent home to change if their clothing is not suitable for school.
- Hats and hoods are not allowed in classrooms, except when worn for religious or health reasons. Students may wear hats out to recess and take them off when returning to the building.
- All children under age six should have a complete change of clothes (including socks and underwear) packed in a clear plastic bag and labeled with the child's name on each piece of clothing. Please be sure to change clothes seasonally and replace immediately if used.
- All students should wear appropriate footwear on the days they have physical education. Sandals, slippery shoes, and boots make it unsafe for students to run in the gym. Please feel free to leave an extra pair of sneakers in your child's cubby if needed.

Birthdays

The celebration of a child's birthday is a wonderful event, and we are happy to share in it. It is suggested that parents provide a healthy snack for their child's birthday celebration. Some options might be cut-up fruit, cheese and crackers, or vegetables and dip.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT



There are many ways for families to be involved at Tobin Montessori. We welcome and encourage you to participate in our school community in any way you can – whether this is visiting your child’s classroom to read a book or becoming a member of our School Advisory Council – any participation helps strengthen the home school connection! There are parent led groups that may vary year to year based on school and community needs – however, there are three consistent opportunities for parents to volunteer their time to support Tobin:

- **School Advisory Council**

The State of Massachusetts mandates that every school elect a group of staff, community, and family members to advise the administration on the creation of the School Improvement Plan and to set goals and objectives for the community. The Council meets the second Thursday of the month from 8-9AM and is open to the public. Agendas will be made available a week in advance.

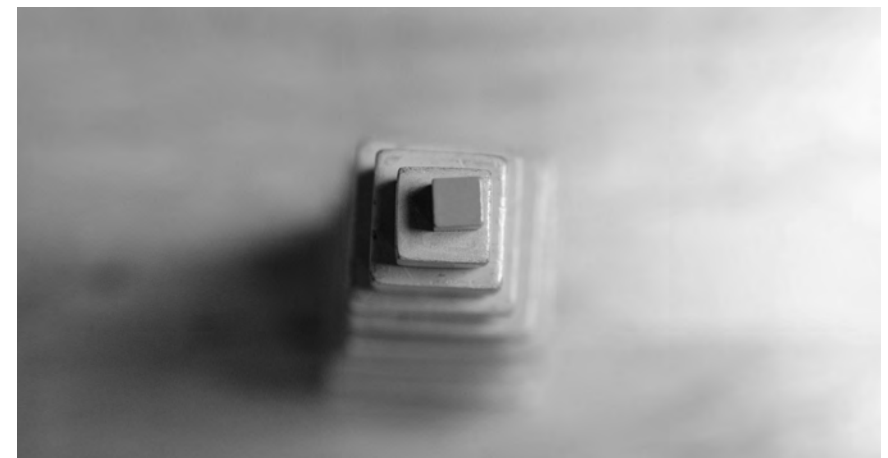
SAC Leadership – Two co-chairs of the Council are elected to design the agenda and facilitate the meeting in conjunction with the principal.

- **Friends of Tobin**

Friends of Tobin (a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation) – The goals of this group are to supplement funding that advances learning and family involvement at Tobin Montessori and also to conduct outreach to families.

- **Room Parents**

Room Parents – Each classroom has 1-2 room parents who volunteer for the school year. Responsibilities vary with individual classrooms but usually include creating classroom contact lists, coordinating volunteers, organizing potlucks, communicating with families about classroom activities, recruiting field trip chaperones, and/or organizing rides for families to attend school events.



School Events

The Tobin Community hosts a wide range of events each year ranging from parent education to family celebrations. All events are on the Tobin Family Calendar. At times, events may be added or changed due to weather, so be sure to check the calendar frequently. If an event is going to be rescheduled, notification will be sent home via backpack express or by email.

Tobin Events include, but are not limited to:

- **Family Education Mornings**
Please join Ian Kenney, our School Counselor, Erin Gutierrez, our Montessori Resource Teacher, and experts in the field, to learn more about life from the child's perspective.
- **Academic Mornings**
Curriculum Morning, Classroom Author's Breakfasts, and Parent Conferences are all opportunities for you to learn more about the work your child is doing.
- **Socials and Celebrations**
The Winter and Spring Concerts, Ice Cream Social, Family Coffees, and International Night are all opportunities to meet staff and families to help us build a vibrant home away from home.

More Ways to Get Involved

If you have any questions about ways to get involved in our Tobin Community or you are interested in assisting in organizing any of these events, please see Mary Frawley (mfrawley@cpsd.us), our Family Liaison, with the hours and days that are most convenient. We are particularly in need of translators for languages, such as Amharic, Bengali, Hindi, and Arabic.



This handbook is not intended to be a complete directory of guidelines related to students, parents, and guardians. All students and parents are governed by the policies stated in the Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook and Guide to Policies for Students and Parents. Federal and State laws and Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) policies are subject to change. Many policies can be found on the CPS website and at the Tobin Montessori School.



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