



Gilbert Colvin Primary School

Attendance Policy

Our Mission Statement

At Gilbert Colvin Primary School, we believe that we can achieve an ever-increasing potential by meeting challenges head on, working together, valuing our diversity and giving generously of ourselves.

As a result, we will become lifelong learners fully prepared for an exciting future.



As A Rights Respecting school this Policy supports the following article:

28. You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.



Attendance Policy

1. Vision and Aims

At Gilbert Colvin Primary School, we aim to promote good attendance and punctuality for our pupils to ensure that they access their entitlement to education.

Gilbert Colvin Primary School aims to meet its obligations about school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

As a school we will work with parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory age attend regularly and are punctual.

All those with parental responsibility have a legal obligation to ensure that their children receive an education.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

It also refers to:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the headteacher and can be contacted via the school's email address.

The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Nas Idris and can be contacted via the school's office email address.

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis and submitting this information to the school office twice a day.

School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of school hours

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

3. Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the school day and once again at start of the afternoon. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The initials of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 2 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Families of pupils who are persistently late may be contacted by the EWO

Punctuality – Legal Context

Persistent lateness does not constitute as full school attendance at school (Section 444 of [Education Act, 1996](#)).

School Punctuality Codes

The school gates open at 8:45 am.

The school doors open at 8.45 am for children to enter the building.

Children are expected to be in their classroom by 9:00 am when the morning register is submitted.

Parents/Carers of children who arrive after 9.00 am will be asked to explain the reason for their lateness by signing in on the school's visitor managements system at the main reception. The child will receive a late mark in the register and their late arrival time will be recorded along with the reason provided.

Arrival after 9:30 results in an unauthorised absence mark for the whole morning.

The records of lateness are regularly monitored by the Attendance Officer, the Leadership Team and EWO. If a child is persistently late, this will be challenged by the school by letter and may be referred to the EWO and a Penalty Notice may be issued by the EWS.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff.

Parents/carers are expected to contact the school as early as possible to explain the reason for their child's absence. Parents/carers can contact the school by leaving a message on the school answerphone, by emailing admin.gilbertcolvin@redbridge.gov.uk or by speaking to a member of the school admin team.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, or your child has been absent for medical reasons repeatedly, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment by contacting the school office and provides evidence of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, preferably towards the end of the school day.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Following up unexplained absence

The school follows the government and Local Authority guidelines on attendance. Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- After 9.30am, a SchoolPing message is sent to parents/carers of pupils with unexplained absence to request a reason for absence. If a response to this request is not received, a member of the admin team will call parents/carers. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the education welfare officer

The school works closely with the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) who comes into the school on a regular basis to meet with the attendance officer in order to closely monitor attendance and respond to any concerns raised by the school.

Where the school and EWO are unable to make contact with a family and the reason for absence is unknown, a home visit may be undertaken. In such cases, the Local Authority is notified that a child is 'Missing Education' and will investigate as this is a safeguarding concern.

4. Role of the Education Welfare Service (EWS)

The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to enforce regular attendance of registered pupils at school, which is carried out by the Redbridge EWS working with schools.

The school provides the local authority with attendance data on a termly basis.

- This allows the analysis of school level data.
- Provides information to allow schools to take action to improve attendance and review school targets on a half-termly basis.
- Ensures effective and regular liaison between the EWS, school management teams and other key agencies or organisations.

EWS – Direct Intervention with Pupils and/or Parents and Guardians

The EWO aims to:

- Provide direct intervention with pupils who fall below target levels of attendance and devise strategies to improve their attendance in partnership with schools.
- Ensure that the school policy on attendance is implemented appropriately in each individual case including the use of legal action against parents where they are failing to fulfil their child's regular school attendance.
- Work closely with the main secondary schools to ensure that identified vulnerable children are provided with all possible support to reduce the likelihood of increased non attendance, where necessary working and liaising with partner agencies.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is defined as:

- When a pupil is absent as a result of illness and an acceptable explanation has been received
- Religious observance
- Where a child has been given a fixed-term exclusion from school.
- Medical/dental appointments which must be supported by evidence of the appointment presented to the office prior to the appointment by the parents/guardian.
- Appointments are to be made outside of school hours wherever possible and the minimum amount of time should be taken.
- Exceptional circumstances (unavoidable absence).

School Policy of Leave of Absence

"Leave" in relation to a school means leave granted by any person authorised to do so by our governing body. This responsibility may be delegated to the Headteacher.

The school will implement procedures where parents/carers must apply for permission to authorise a term-time absence in advance.

Permission will not be granted after the absence has been taken.

All requests should be made in writing using the Leave of Absence Request Form (Appendix 1). All decisions are recorded. The school is committed to a policy to minimise absence from school during term time. School does not expect children to take leave of absence or a holiday during term time.

Exceptional Circumstances and Special Considerations

The Governing Board provides within this policy a guide to parents/guardians by which the school may use its discretion.

- Bereavement of parent, grandparent, and sibling. To be agreed with by the Headteacher.
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sports operating at a high standard of achievement and agreed by the Local Authority (LA). The EWS will advise schools on individual circumstances. This includes examinations by recognised authorities across the sports and arts fields.
- Time off relating to Licensed Children Entertainment Performances, which is subject to a licence being issued by EWS, will be considered on an individual basis.
- Religious observance. Pilgrimage (for example, Lourdes, Mecca, Rome or Jerusalem) are **not** religious observance that require absence during school term time.

Leave of absence must be discussed and agreed with the head teacher **before** leave is taken. In cases where leave is taken without permission or when the school is informed after the event, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised absence** and reported to the EWS.

Absence that falls immediately before or after a school holiday will only be authorised if the school is provided with medical evidence where it is for illness, or written evidence from an airline in cases where flights have been delayed but that demonstrate the original booked tickets would not have caused an absence from school. Holidays or similar events will not be authorised.

Sanctions for Unauthorised Leave of Absence without Permission

A fixed Penalty Notice can be issued for unauthorised leave of absence after the third day of absence. This will incur a fine of £60.00 per child, per parent, being imposed, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 per child, per parent, thereafter to be paid by day 28. Subsequently, consideration will be given for the matter to be investigated by the EWS and possible legal action.

Absence Due to Ill Health

Any absence relating to illness of 5 days or more must be supported by medical evidence. Prescriptions will not be accepted for the medication of paracetamol or Calpol, as these can be self administered within the school environment following the school's protocols for administering medication.

Cases of Dual Registration

In cases of dual registration, the EWO of the 'lead' school will undertake register trawls and monitor attendance in partnership with the EWO of the dual education provider.

6. Attendance Monitoring

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly with the EWO to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold meetings every two weeks with the EWO to identify families whose children's attendance is of concern. Send a letter to all pupils whose attendance is less than 90%
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

7. Strategies to Improve Attendance

Strategies that have been introduced to improve our attendance include:

- Attendance audits
- Governor training for attendance and the use of Penalty Notices
- Training on the analysis of data and accurate register recording
- Rewarding good attendance and punctuality
- Recording attendance in reports sent home to parents and including a statement of impact in relation to the attendance of the individual child
- Identifying vulnerable children to ensure that appropriate support is provided
- Including attendance information in the newsletters to parents/carers.
- Meeting with parents/carers of children where there is a concern

Appendix 1

Gilbert Colvin Primary School

Strafford Avenue

Clayhall

Ilford

Essex

IG5 0TL

Tel: 020 8550 4830

Email: admin.gilbertcolvin@redbridge.gov.uk



Request for Leave of Absence during Term Time

Pupils attend school for a maximum 190 days each academic year. Full attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. The school regards absence as a very serious concern and it is a proven fact there is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement (Department for Education (DfE), 2012).

The DfE (2013) state that leave of absence requests for holidays should not be granted. The school will only grant leave in term time in the most exceptional circumstances for which evidence will be requested. Request for leave during term time must be applied for in advance. Leave taken without the permission of the Headteacher will be recorded as unauthorised and you may be liable to a Penalty Notice fine of £120 per parent, per child (£60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days). The fines will be issued by Redbridge Education Welfare Service.

Pupils full name	Date of Birth	Class
1.....
2.....
3.....
Parents full name		
Mother.....	tel	
Father.....	tel	
Full address		
.....		
.....		
Reason for absence		
.....		
.....		
.....		
.....		
Date of absence		
From...../...../20..... to...../...../20..... Total..... days		
Parent Signature	Date	
I have read and understood the above information	

To be completed by school

Copies of travel arrangements seen: Yes / No

Penalty Notice to be requested: Yes / No

Leave to be: Authorised / Unauthorised

Signature of Headteacher:

Date:

.....

Appendix 2

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day