



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.

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Planned review: September 2023



Attendance Policy

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 absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

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 [school attendance guidance](#) from 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.

Practice

The school follows the Government and Local Authority guidelines on attendance.

- Pupils are required to attend school regularly and punctually. Registers are taken at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- 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
- After 9:30, 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.
- 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.

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.

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 schools protocols for administering medication.

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 observation
- 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).

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.

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.

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.
- Celebrating class good attendance in weekly achievement assemblies and with the daily GILBERT 100% strategy
- Meeting with parents/carers of children where there is a concern

