



Attendance policy

Gilbert Colvin Primary School



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 attend school to the highest level you can.

Approved by:	James Clements	Date: 24.11.22
Last reviewed on:	November 2022	
Next review due by:	November 2023	



Our school has a strong vision which underpins everything we do- including our high expectations of attendance and punctuality.

At Gilbert Colvin Primary School, we believe that all our pupils have the potential to be changemakers. We believe that confidence, self-esteem and strong moral values are the keys to successful futures.

We empower every member of the school community to embrace challenge, have a passion for learning, take risks, collaborate, and aspire to achieve their best.

Our pupils thrive in a caring, inclusive environment which provides excellent educational opportunities and memorable experiences to prepare our pupils for a positive future.

Contents

1. Aims	3
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. Roles and responsibilities	4
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	7
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	8
7. Attendance monitoring	8
8. Monitoring arrangements	9
9. Links with other policies	9
Appendix 1: attendance codes	10
Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions	9
Appendix 3: Leave of absence request form	10

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the 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

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 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
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 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

3.3 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
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Anne Fitzpatrick she can be contacted via the school office.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Stephanie Evans and can be contacted via the school office.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- › Take calls/messages from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system. Contact parents where no reason for absence is provided.
- › Promote good attendance and punctuality directly to parents
- › Add attendance concerns to CPOMS-therefore alerting the school's designated safeguarding leads

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time
- › Contact the school to report their child's absence before 9.15am on the day of the 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 the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend school every day on time

4.1 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 first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

See appendix 1 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.

Pupils are admitted from 8.45am and must arrive in school by 9.00 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00 and will be kept open until 9.30, after which children will receive an unauthorised absence mark for the whole session and parents will receive a SchoolPing message requesting them to call them office. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.10pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.15 or as soon as practically possible by contacting the school office.

Parents can notify the school by leaving a telephone message or calling during office hours 020 8550 4630.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or the parent has been asked to provide medical evidence because there are concerns about the child's attendance.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide 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. This is

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.

4.3 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. In most circumstances this will be authorised for one session, not a whole day.

Parents should inform us of medical appointments by showing their appointment card/letter or message at the school office. Please note, authorized absence will not be granted when the appointment is for another family member.

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.

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.

A 'leave of absence request form' is available at the school office or on the school's website.

4.4 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

Ongoing lateness will be followed up by the school's Education Welfare Service and can result in a penalty notice being issued.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact external agencies, such as children's social care, the police or the London Borough of Redbridge Education Welfare Service.
- 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 an education welfare officer or other agency
- Where a child is not attending school and the school has not been notified the school will follow the procedures for a 'child missing education' and this will be investigated as a safeguarding concern.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels-specifically in the end of year report. If there are concerns about a child's attendance or other agencies are involved in supporting the family, attendance will be reported more frequently.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as

- Bereavement of parent, grandparent, or 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 requested 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.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, available from the school office or on the school website. The headteacher will require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Travelers pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travelers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travelers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveler family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may consider:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance is celebrated daily in classes and in the weekly celebration assembly. Where there are concerns about attendance or punctuality other rewards and strategies may be implemented for children or families.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data fortnightly, 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.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly 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

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 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 regular meetings with the parents 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, for example completing a CAF to access support from external services.
- Request that our Education Welfare Service carries out a home visit to check on welfare.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions

Q-How do I contact the school if my child is not attending?

A-Telephone 020 8550 4630, Email- admin.GilbertColvin@redbridge.gov.uk

Q-How do I request permission to take my child out of school?

A-For a short medical appointment you can do this by showing proof of the appointment at the school office.

For a planned absence you must complete a leave of absence form (from the office or the [school's website](#)) and return this to school at least 1 week before the absence.

Q-My child has been ill and needs medicine during the day-can they come back to school?

A-Usually yes, the school first aid team are able to support most medical conditions and needs. Please get in touch with the office to discuss.

Q-What should I do if I have an appointment and there is nobody to collect my child or drop them off?

A-Find out if your another parent can help you out on that day. If you are unable to find someone to help please contact the school office- we may be able to help.

Q-Our religious celebration falls on a school day, can my child have time off?

A-Yes, children are allowed days for religious observance. Any extra days taken off to extend the celebration may not be authorised.

Q-I want my child to sit the 11+ exams-can they have authorised time off?

A-Time for the exam will be authorised, study time or illness without medical evidence in the days around the exam will not be authorised

Q-Will time off for a wedding or celebration be granted?

A-Not unless it is the wedding of a close family member, such as a parent or sibling

Q-What if I have to travel abroad for a wedding or a funeral or if a relative is ill?

A-Some travel time may be authorised- each case is judged on the event, distance and previous attendance record. If it is an emergency, for example a relative is seriously ill, we will require flight information which proves the trip is a last-minute booking.

Also, if your flight is delayed and your child does not return at the end of the school holiday we will ask for proof that the original booking would have got you back to the UK on time.

Q-What if someone in my family books a surprise holiday for us during term time?

A-This is a holiday and will not be authorised. You will be liable for a penalty notice.

Q-I want to go abroad-can my child miss a few days in the week before or week after? The flights are cheaper and it's the only way we can afford to go.

A-This will not be authorised and you may be liable for a penalty notice. Illness before and after the school holidays will require medical evidence in the form of a prescription or proof of medical appointment. It is quite common for parents to say their child is ill to avoid a penalty notice, we would ask you not to do this as it puts your child in a difficult position-we teach the children to be honest.

Q-Why have I got letters and had a visit to my home from Educational Welfare Services?

A-This is because we are concerned about your child's absence. We have a duty to check that your family are well. The letters and visits are part of our strategy to improve attendance and punctuality.

Q-What is a penalty notice?

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.

Appendix 3: Leave of absence request form



Gilbert Colvin Primary School
 Headteacher: Mr R. Mark Hemsley

Strafford Avenue, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex, IG5 0TL
 E-mail: admin.gilbertcolvin@redbridge.gov.uk
www.gilbertcolvin.co.uk
 Tel: 020 8550 4630



Application for Leave of Absence

To be completed by the pupil's Parents or Carers:

Pupil's name: DOB: .../.../20.....

Class: Leave from .../.../202... To .../.../202....

Reason for Leave:

.....

Completed by (Full name)

Signature: Date: .../.../202....

Reminder

The Department of Education (DfE) (2013) states that requests for leave of absence during term time should not be granted. The school will only grant leave in term time in the most exceptional circumstances, for which evidence will be requested.

Leave that is taken without the headteacher's permission 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 of the PN issue date).

Office use

Current attendance: %
 Previous year attendance: ... %

To be completed by the school:

To the Parents / Carers of:

As you are aware, we have adopted the London Borough of Redbridge attendance strategy and penalty notice Code of Conduct (these can be viewed on the local authority website www.redbridge.gov.uk). These give clear guidance on relation to exceptional circumstances and a family holiday would not be considered as an exceptional circumstance.

- Therefore I am unable to authorise this time off and your child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This unauthorised absence will be referred to the Education Welfare Service and may result in a Penalty Notice fine being imposed.
- Therefore I am able to authorise this time off and your child's absence will be recorded as authorised.

.....
 Date: .../.../202....

Thank you

Mrs J Donnelly
 Consultant Headteacher