



## **Colgate Primary School Attendance Policy 2025**

Working together to be our best

<b>Approved by:</b>	Colgate Full Governing Board	<b>Date:</b> July 2025
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	July 2024	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	July 2026	

## **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).

## **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
- Making sure key staff receive adequate training on attendance
- 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 attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

The attendance officer is Maxine Oakes and can be contacted via the school office.

### **3.4 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 using Reach More Parents/Bromcom.

### **3.5 School office staff**

School office staff will:

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

### **3.6 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

Make sure their child attends every day on time

Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30 am 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 the school day

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

Attend school every day on time

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **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:

[For pupils of compulsory school age] 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 must arrive in school by 8.40 am each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45 am and will be kept open until 9 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.05 pm.

### **4.2 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 8.30 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7).

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carers 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.

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/carers notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

To request planned absence, parents and carers should complete an absence form which can be collected from the school office. 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.

#### **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

#### **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 Children's services if applicable and/or the police.

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 Pupil Entitlement Team.

#### **4.6 Reporting to parents/carers**

If attendance falls below 95%, the school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via ongoing conversations, EBSA intervention, Early Help support and/or a personalised letter at the end of each term. The child's annual attendance percentage will also be included on the summer term written report.

### **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 an unavoidable and significant family event. It may also apply to children who are on an agreed part time timetable.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account 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, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may 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

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, barges (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller 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

SEND adaptations – an arrangement can be made between the school and the parents/carers to agree absence for a session/half day on a temporary basis to support the child's access to school.

## 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 £80 within 21 days or £160 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 take into account:

- 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. Attendance monitoring

At the end of each term, those children whose attendance has fallen below 90% without adequate justification, are identified by our attendance officer. Personalised letters are sent home to the parents and carers which identify current attendance data and equivalent days of lost learning. Parents are invited in to discuss ways to improve attendance. Our EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) lead may make contact with the family to discuss barriers to school attendance and then set up a plan to improve attendance.

These children are also discussed with our Early Help school link adviser. In some cases, the EH adviser can meet with the parents and the children to discuss their school attendance and any barriers they may have.

### 6.1 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.

### 6.2 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

### 6.3 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

### 6.4 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 such as our EBSA intervention
- Liaise with the Early Help school adviser to engage with certain families regarding their attendance
- Refer to the School Nurse service if a child is absent due to persistent illness

## 7. Monitoring arrangements

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

## 8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

### Attendance & Absence Codes for 01/09/2024 onwards

/ Morning session – present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken

\ Afternoon session – present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken

B Attending a place for any other approved educational activity

C Absent with leave for other circumstances

C1 Absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance

C2 Absent with leave, of compulsory school age and temporary reduced timetable does not require them to attend

D Attending another school at which they are a registered pupil

E Excluded from the school

G Absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday

H \*\*\*\*\*WITHDRAWN NO LONGER IN USE\*\*\*\*\* prior to 01/09/24 denotes an agreed (authorised) holiday in term time.

I Unable to attend because of sickness

J Approved education activity as pupil is attending interview

J1 Absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

K Attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by LA (under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 of the Children's and Families Act 2014). Where schools use code K, they must also record the nature of the educational activity

L Absent from the school when attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended

M Absent with leave for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment

N Absent - circumstances not yet established

O Absent - other circumstances

P Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity

Q Unable to attend because of lack of access arrangements by LA to facilitate their attendance

R Day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs

S Absent with leave for the purpose of studying for a public examination

T Mobile child whose parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and is travelling with that parent and the child is considered a 'mobile child' and deemed to be of no fixed abode - waiting on further clarity from DfE as to what is a 'mobile child'.

U Absent for registration - arrived in school after registration closed

V Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a visit or trip

W Attending a place for an approved education activity that is work experience

X Absent with leave, not of compulsory school age and timetable does not require them to attend

Attendance & Absence Codes for 01/09/2024 onwards

Y1 Unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of pupil's home and transport to and from school normally provided is not available

Y2 Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency

Y3 Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and pupil cannot be accommodated in parts of the premises that remain in use

Y4 Whole school closed when school was due to meet for a session, but session has been cancelled

Y5 Unable to attend because pupil is subject to a sentence of detention

Y6 Travel to or attendance at school would be contrary/prohibited by guidance/law relating to incidence or transmission of infection or disease

Y7 Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Z Pupil's name entered in advance of start date \*\*

# Planned whole school closure – no session to take place \*\*

**HEAD TEACHER: R. Winn**

**CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: Miss A. Calvert**

**DATE: July 2025**

**REVIEW DATE: July 2026**