



## ST IVO SCHOOL

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Approved: February 2018, Governors Student Welfare and Community  
Engagement Committee

Next review due: February 2020

### Scope of policy

This policy applies to all students of compulsory school age at St Ivo and will be used to inform attendance practice in relation to sixth form students.

### Key requirements/Legal duties

By law, all children of compulsory school age (5 to 16) must receive a suitable full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure this happens - either by registering their child at a school or by making other arrangements to give them a suitable, full-time education. As a last resort, schools and local authorities have legal powers to deal with poor attendance.

St Ivo seeks to operate in ways that maximise student potential while supporting parents in meeting their legal requirements.

St Ivo fulfils its responsibilities in respect of taking a morning and afternoon session registration, of being open for the required 190 student school days unless prevented by extreme weather or other unforeseen exceptional circumstance, and by using the nationally recognised attendance codes. The school submits both aggregate and individual attendance data to the Department for education on a termly basis.

### Key principles

- Students at St Ivo have the right to the best possible education
- In order for students to access the best possible education, a high level of attendance is essential.
- Students' ability to stay and feel safe, enjoy and achieve and to make a positive contribution are jeopardised by poor attendance.

### Context

St Ivo endeavours to provide a safe learning environment in which students can feel and be safe, enjoy and achieve. We acknowledge the proven correlation between high level attendance and student outcomes. St Ivo's attendance procedures emphasises positive strategies and a range of interventions to ensure the highest levels of attendance. However, when normal St Ivo procedures do not result in good attendance, a range of further measures, including legal action, will be considered.

### Key aims for attendance at St Ivo

- To increase overall St Ivo attendance as near to 100% as possible
- To raise the profile of the importance of high level attendance among students, parents and staff
- To ensure robust procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality and intervention strategies, linked to higher levels of progress in learning.
- To eradicate persistent lateness

### Attendance practice

Improving attendance is a whole school initiative. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility including parents, students and all members of school staff.

St Ivo School takes a whole school approach to attendance monitoring and intervention. This is led by the Attendance Manager and pastoral leaders who work with staff to monitor and improve attendance, while raising the profile and emphasising the importance of attendance at individual and whole school level. The school has an Assistant Headteacher with overall responsibility for attendance, who line manages the Attendance Manager.

All students are categorised based on their percentage attendance and demographics (including FSM, SEN and Pupil Premium). Procedures are then in place to model appropriate interventions.

In order to promote high levels of attendance and to recognise individual and collective high percentage attendance or improvement, St Ivo uses a range of rewards and positive reinforcement strategies.

### **Attendance monitoring and intervention**

St Ivo has an escalating approach to reinforcing high levels of attendance and intervening in respect of attendance concern.

Our procedures promote consistency both across the different year groups of compulsory school age and within each year group. The form tutor has a key role in praising high attendance and monitoring the attendance of tutees. Pastoral leaders and the Attendance Manager will intervene where attendance causes concern.

To support this process the Attendance Manager and pastoral leaders, will hold regular attendance meetings for each year group in which all students are monitored and banded in relation to their attendance percentage. A series of appropriate actions to support individual improvement will be agreed, delegated and recorded.

### **Education Welfare Service**

The Education Welfare Service is a statutory service and a legal requirement. Education Welfare Service involvement is usually triggered by an unacceptable level of:

- Unauthorised absence
- Persistent absence
- Lateness

The Attendance Manager has responsibility to act as the Educational Welfare Officer for St Ivo School and is therefore responsible for ensuring that St Ivo's policy and practice is compliant with the local authority's legal duties and processes. This includes ensuring that only the Headteacher, or the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for attendance, authorise Penalty Notices.

### **Authorised and unauthorised absence**

If a student is absent from St Ivo, it is vital that a parent/carer contacts the school at the earliest opportunity to provide a sufficient reason for absence using the published contact methods.

Absence can only be authorised where there is good cause. If no sufficient reason for absence is provided, attendance will be recorded as unauthorised.

Parents cannot authorise absence. This is a decision which rests with St Ivo in accordance within the boundaries set down by The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1996. Where deemed necessary, St Ivo reserves the right to request medical evidence to support absence due to illness.

Please note that absence from school because of an organised visit, including sporting activities, is coded as such and then counted as a 'present' mark.

## **Lateness**

It is St Ivo's responsibility to provide the best education possible. This can only be achieved if students attend regularly and punctually. St Ivo expects all students to arrive at school and lessons on time. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. A student arriving late will disrupt not only their own continuity of learning but also that of others. Occasional lateness to school or lessons will result in short detentions, a build-up of lateness or patterns of lateness over a period of time will result in further follow-up investigation and action.

## **Avoiding holidays & appointments during term time**

In order to maximise individual achievement, parents/carers should avoid making routine appointments for students during the school day or taking family holidays during the term time period.

Government legislation came in to effect from September 2013 which states that it is now illegal for any Headteacher to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Therefore St Ivo will not consider authorising an absence in relation to any holiday during term time unless exceptional circumstances are detailed on the Application for leave of absence during term time form, which can be found on the school website and must be handed in at least 2 weeks before any absence is taken.

St Ivo School will judge each request for absence on an individual basis.

Whilst an authorised absence may very occasionally be granted for an exceptional circumstance this is entirely the school's decision and not a parental right. Parents/carers should be advised that absence without the consent of St Ivo could result in further action and sanctions including a penalty notice

## **Legal action**

All parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends St Ivo on a regular and punctual basis. Should any student's attendance or punctuality become a concern, they will be subject to an Education Welfare investigation. Where necessary, St Ivo's Attendance Manager with EWO responsibility will recommend legal action. St Ivo and Cambridgeshire Local Authority work in partnership where legal action is required.

Legal action includes:

- **Penalty Notice:** a penalty notice may be issued to each parent for each student who has unauthorised absence or lateness. The penalty is a £60 fine, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within the 28 day period, a prosecution will be sought.
- **Prosecution for unauthorised absence:** it is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at St Ivo. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Any prosecution will appear on a criminal record.

## **Post 16**

Post 16 students will be monitored and expected to adhere to the same attendance levels as main school students i.e. an attendance level as near to 100% as possible is expected. Drops in attendance will be dealt with via the Sixth Form attendance process.

## **Supporting and working with parents**

In order to support parents in meeting their legal requirements and to maximise individual student attendance, St Ivo seeks to keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance and to actively involve parents on attendance issues. Methods include:

- Automated first day absence calling
- Telephone calls to parents to discuss support needed
- Go4Schools individual student attendance record
- Letters detailing attendance concerns and possible future actions
- Parental meetings
- Active involvement of pastoral staff and Attendance Manager
- At parents' meetings/evenings
- Formal Parenting Attendance Meetings where any established barriers to attendance will be discussed.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

Working in collaboration with the Attendance Manager, the Assistant Headteacher will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy, review it biennially (or as required) and submit a regular reports to the Governing Body. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout St Ivo.