



## ST IVO SCHOOL

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

*With the intention of enabling all students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them, St Ivo School aims to encourage excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.*

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Reviewed by	Personnel Committee
Ratified by Full Governors	

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## **Introduction**

An attendance policy is not a loosely defined set of principles which most of the school community generally adhere to. Rather an attendance policy is an agreed and explicitly formulated set of practices and procedures which are clearly communicated to the whole school community and which are capable of being fairly and consistently applied in a manner and spirit which informs the day to day management of attendance matters and reflects the ethos of the school.

The policy will consider catchment area, transport issues and so on and will be aware of the problems facing different groups within the school community. Accordingly the policy will attempt to combine *coherence and consistency* with *realism and flexibility*. This attendance policy should serve as:

- a statement of intent;
- a guide to practice;
- a measure of effectiveness and
- a means of accountability.

## **Statement of intent**

Every child has a right to access the education to which s/he is entitled. Students, parents/carers and teachers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at St Ivo School are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are kept to a minimum.

## **Responsibilities**

Parents/carers are responsible in law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents/carers should familiarise themselves with this attendance policy and should work closely with school staff to overcome any problems which may affect a child's attendance.

St Ivo School will encourage and value high attendance rates. The school will recognise the external factors which influence student attendance and will work in partnership with parents/carers, the Education Welfare Service and other relevant services to deal with any issues. The school will take a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with students and their parents/carers and will provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements.

## **Procedures**

### **1. Registration**

Registration will be carried out at 8.30am and 1.55pm. Registers will be marked promptly at these times and will be closed by 8.45am and 2.00pm respectively. If a student arrives after the start of registration but before the registers have closed, s/he will be marked as late for that session. Registers should be marked in accordance with the school guidelines. Students arriving after 8.45am and 2.00pm will be marked 'U' (late after registers have closed).

### **2. Absences**

All absences will be recorded as either authorised or unauthorised. If an explanation for an absence is not received or if the explanation is deemed unsatisfactory then that absence will be recorded as unauthorised. (Absence will not be authorised for such reasons as shopping, day-trips and birthdays).

Parents/carers are advised to contact the school on the first day of any absence. A written note of any such phone call or other communication will be recorded. On returning to school the student should bring a written note and hand this to his/her tutor. The tutor should initial and date the note and immediately pass this to the Attendance Office.

Students whose attendance falls below 90% will be set targets for improvement and a standard letter sent home to their parents/carers. These targets will be regularly reviewed by the form

tutor and Head of Year. Attendance below 85% will signal a second letter and may involve intervention by the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). Students under 80% will automatically be entered on the school Persistent Absentee (PA) Register.

Students who have been absent for any extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually tailored programme.

### **3. Lateness**

Students who arrive at school after morning or afternoon registration should sign in at reception, entering their time of arrival and the reason for their lateness in the 'Signing-In' book. Students who arrive at school late should not be admitted to class until they have signed in at reception. This is important for health and safety reasons.

### **4. Term-Time Holidays**

Holidays should be arranged outside of term-time. School policy at St Ivo is that holidays in term time will not be authorized. You may be liable for a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued if you take unauthorised term-time holidays.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The Headteacher** has overall responsibility for the whole school attendance.

### **The Attendance Leader**

- Sets annual school attendance target with Leadership Group and returns to Local Authority
- Ensure that whole school attendance policy is implemented (and regularly reviewed)
- Ensure that the policy is communicated to students, staff, parents/carers and Governors
- Ensure detailed attendance data is regularly collected and used to inform strategic planning on attendance matters
- Report to Governors on attendance matters
- Liaise and inform LG on attendance matters e.g. Self Evaluation Form
- Manage Reward Scheme for students who have consistently high attendance and those who have shown a significant improvement

### **Attendance Manager**

- Process registers/absence forms and signing in and out book
- Recording of telephone and email absence notification
- Produce absence lists on a weekly basis to Heads of Year to disseminate to Form Tutors and produce summary attendance data for Attendance Leader and Heads of Year
- First day response calls home
- Weekly meeting with Heads of Year and Education Welfare Officer
- Support individual student's needs re attendance
- Liaise with Attendance Leader on a regular basis
- Requesting Doctor's letters to cover persistent medical absence
- Issue Reconciliation of Absence Forms to be provided on a weekly basis to Head of Year for distribution to Form Tutors to be actioned

### **Heads of Year**

Heads of Year are responsible for monitoring the attendance of their year group.

They should:

- Induct new staff in the year team on attendance procedures
- Monitor attendance on a regular basis setting targets for improvement as appropriate
- Monitor the performance of individual tutor groups, following up with individual tutors instances where patterns of absenteeism are not being effectively addressed

- Review registers and attendance and punctuality figures on a half-termly basis
- Regularly put attendance onto the agenda of year meetings
- Ensure that contact is made with parents/carers of poor attenders
- Meet with the EWO and Attendance Manager on a weekly basis in order to discuss students who have not responded to the school's strategies/interventions and when necessary to make referrals
- Follow up internal truancy with appropriate punishment
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through assemblies, commendations, rewards, etc
- Visit partner primary schools in order to ensure the fullest support for all students during secondary transfer and in order to help identify any students who may need special help

### **Form Tutors**

At St Ivo School the Form Tutor is key in promoting regular punctual attendance.

The Form Tutor should:

- Provide a good example by always being punctual for registration
- Carry out electronic registration in a prescribed manner
- Ensure that students who are late are recorded on the system
- Ensure that all notes from parents/carers regarding absences are scrutinized and passed to the Attendance Manager
- Monitor patterns of absence for individuals within their Tutor group
- Alert the Head of Year when there is an attendance problem
- Offer praise to individual students whose attendance and/or punctuality is good or improves
- Reconcile the weekly absence report and return to the Attendance Manager

### **Head of Department**

The Head of Department should:

- Provide a good example by always being punctual
- Ensure that members of their Department take their register at the beginning of every lesson
- Put attendance on the Agenda of Department Meetings in order that members of the Department may query any anomalies in students' attendance e.g. patterns

### **Subject Teachers**

Subject Teachers should:

- Provide a good example by always being punctual
- Take a Register at the beginning of every lesson (and ensure that the students know that the register is being taken)
- Follow up any suspected internal truancy by informing the Head of Department and Attendance Manager
- Monitor progress of students with poor/good attendance and how it relates to their attainment

### **Education Welfare Officer**

- Supports the regular school attendance of students at St Ivo School and help remove any barriers which may be preventing a student from fully accessing the education to which he/she is entitled
- In some cases of poor attendance a system of Fixed Penalty fines are applied
- In extreme cases parents/carers and students may be subject to Court Action

### **Governors**

- The Governors Personnel Committee will monitor and review the school's attendance figures with the Attendance Leader

## **Parent/Carer**

- Parent/carers should ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually. If their child is not coming into school they should inform the school as soon as possible

## **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

In order to improve levels of attendance and punctuality the School will employ six key strategies:

- Ensure that all telephone communications from parents/carers about non-attendance are formally recorded
- To address serious non-attendance strategically through 'first day absence' contact
- Analyse attendance data to assess patterns of absence and lateness. Once patterns have been established contact will be made with parents/carers
- When prolonged absence is recorded (maximum one week without notification of reason), the EWO service will be notified
- Have clear supportive strategies to address levels of attendance below 90%
- Maintain a Persistent Absentees (PA) Register.

## **PROCEDURES**

It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to inform the School of the reason for a child's absence as soon as possible (as listed in the students' planner and on St Ivo Online).

Where we suspect that students are taking unauthorised absences, we ask parents/carers to inform us **on the first day of absence** so that we are immediately alerted to possible problems.

The School's expectations about the reporting of absence are:

- If a child is not coming into school, parents/carers should call the Absence Line: 01480 375400 and press 2 for Attendance on the first morning they are absent or if they have a medical appointment at the beginning of the school day.

## **Registration**

The register is a legal document, which could be used as evidence in cases where parents/carers are being prosecuted for school attendance offences.

It is of vital importance that all registers are completed punctually and accurately by tutors during morning registration and the subject teacher periods 1-5. Particular attention to accuracy is vital for Fast Track to Prosecution and the termly DCSF Attendance Census.

## **Encouraging Good Attendance**

Good attendance improves peer relationships, allows students to achieve their potential and therefore contributes positively to the school community.

Students with good and improved attendance receive letters of congratulations and/or a reward which may be presented in assembly.

Students' attendance is included on all school references and is requested by prospective colleges and employers and used as part of their admissions and interview procedure.

## **Data Collection – Monitoring and Reviewing**

Data is collected directly from the school system on a fortnightly basis by the LA.

All students' attendance is reviewed daily and intervention strategies take place as appropriate.

The Heads of Year review the attendance of their year group on a fortnightly basis with the Education Welfare Officer. Students with attendance concerns are highlighted and intervention put in place.

## **Reintegration of Students after Absence**

It is vital that students who have been absent feel welcomed back into school. Students who have been absent for long periods may be supported by an Integration programme. This may include a flexible timetable that may result in time spent in 'The Bridge'.

## **Target Setting**

Whilst we would hope for all students to have 100% attendance, we recognise the fact that this is not possible in all cases. Individual students with lower than expected attendance will be given a realistic target for improvement, which will be monitored on a regular basis. Significant improvement or an effort to do so is recognised and often rewarded.

The school has to submit an annual attendance target to the DCSF and the whole school community should strive towards achieving this goal.

## **Communication**

St Ivo School's Attendance Policy will be communicated through:

- A précis in the parents'/carers' prospectus;
- A key point summary in the Student's Planner;
- Student Review and Guidance meetings;
- Assemblies;
- Guidance and advice in the staff handbook;
- School website.

## **Absence from organised visit**

Absence from school because of an organised visit is, of course, marked as an 'authorised' absence. However, if a student for whatever reason does not attend the visit, they are absent and an explanation in the form of a letter must be provided.

## **Organisers of the visit**

The lists of students attending visits must be amended before the party departs from school and be returned to the office before departing. If the visit departs before school, please post the lists through the letterbox.