



Attendance and punctuality policy for Mulberry UTC

Approval Body:	Mulberry UTC LGB
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Implementation Date:	November 2024
Review Date:	November 2025
Policy Version:	6

Version Control

Version	Reviewed	Changes since last version
1	existing	
2	November 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Minor updates to reflect additional measures that have been put into place to deal with students' poor attendance, including the introduction of Individual Attendance Plans.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of reference to the school’s policy in relation to taking students off roll.
3	November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy updated to reflect addition of Heads of House and Director of Pastoral Provision to the school’s staffing structure
4	November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy updated to reflect the addition of the Attendance and Welfare Officer, Head of Year 12 and Head of Sixth Form to the school’s staffing structure.
5	February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy updated to emphasise Mulberry UTCs expectations and escalation processes as well as opportunities for reward and recognition
6	November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detailed escalation procedures added for Year 10 and Year 11

1. Expectations and daily routines

What is good attendance and why is it important to students at **Mulberry UTC**?

We expect students to have attendance at or above 96%

95% attendance equates to 9 days of learning missed in a year

90% attendance equates to 25 days of learning missed in a year

Students with attendance below 90% fall into the government category of ‘Persistently absent’ (PA)

In the UK 36% (approximately a third) of PA children in Y11 got grade 9-4 in their English and maths GCSEs compared to 84% or regular attenders.

No student should have attendance below 90% as this has a significant impact on their achievement.

The Mulberry UTC community is committed to ensuring that all students are safe, healthy and successful in learning.

Our aim is that every Mulberry UTC student learns skills and habits that will give them the edge in their future careers and fulfilment in their lives. This includes learning the importance of showing up and being on time and ready for learning.

Improving attendance is in everyone’s interest and it is therefore everyone’s business

At Mulberry UTC:

Parents/carers’ responsibilities

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually as defined in the Education Act 1996.

Parents/guardians should:

- Let the school know at the start of the day by telephone if a child is not going to be in school that day. The school should be informed again each morning if the absence lasts longer than one day.
- Provide a written note or medical certificate to confirm the reasons for absence on the day the child returns to school.
- Apply in advance for any exceptional reasons for absence.
- Wherever possible, make doctor and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- Talk to their son or daughter about attendance and punctuality.

Students' responsibilities

Students must:

- attend school every day,
- arrive both for school and lessons on time
- attend school wearing the correct uniform or dress code,
- attend lessons while in school,
- take part in lessons,
- bring any difficulties to the attention of the form tutor, Head of Year or a senior member of staff.
- Email the school if they are unavoidably late for school

School responsibilities:

To improve and encourage attendance and punctuality, Mulberry UTC will:

- contact parents/carers daily by phone or text to find out the reasons for an unexplained absence,
- provide a high quality curriculum so that students enjoy learning and want to come to school,
- provide for the needs of all students, as far as practicable and reasonable,
- follow up all unexplained or unauthorised absences with parents/guardians,
- provide support for all students experiencing difficulties,
- provide a re-integration procedure or programme for students who return to school following a prolonged absence,
- contact parents/carers if there are causes for concern.

In summary, our expectation is very simple:

Attend school regularly, attend punctually and attend prepared for the day!

What are our daily routines?

Meet & greet 8:15am-8:40am

Our staff warmly welcome all students on the door each morning. Students arriving early have comfortable spaces to get prepared for the day or do quiet study.

Our attendance officer checks the first registers taken at 8:40am and follows up on unexplained absences immediately. Where we are concerned about a student's whereabouts a home visit may be conducted or external agencies may be contacted.

Promotion and celebration of improvements in attendance are recognised on a weekly basis. The attendance and welfare advisor identifies students to be rewarded.

2. Data and monitoring

Staff, students and parents should be aware of students' attendance data.

How will we track the attendance of your child?

You child's attendance data is tracked live using our system Edulink. This is available to staff, parents and students and will give daily or overall attendance information.

Each Head of Year meets looks at attendance data and identify students who have made significant progress or are a cause for concern.

Mulberry UTC uses a threshold system for intervention with students and families when attendance goes up or down. This is to support students in improving their attendance and we are committed to rewarding them when this happens. Please see **section 3** for these escalation procedures.

You can request up to date information about your child's attendance from the school office at any time during school hours.

3. Escalation of procedures (Year 10 and 11 only)

Mulberry UTC has set procedures for students whose attendance falls into the following groups:

96-100%

Regular rewards for maintaining high levels of attendance, including half termly £5 vouchers for those who have 100% attendance and 100% punctuality

90-95%

Tutor meeting and meeting with the AWA for any students who fall below 96%. This is monitored over a half termly basis and weekly meetings are held where these students progress is discussed and reasons for absence are problem solved. Parents are informed of this drop in attendance.

80-90% Persistent Absence

Parent meetings and Attendance Contracts are drawn up to address authorised and unauthorised absences. Weekly letters for parents for all students with attendance below 90% which outlines the % and the number of days attended that week (including any lates). The threshold for fixed penalty notices is checked and processed if met.

70-80%

Parent meetings are held and Attendance Contracts are issued with a 'Notice to Improve'. Any medical evidence is reviewed and fixed penalty notices are issued where the threshold is met. These students are monitored weekly.

Below 70% Severe Absence

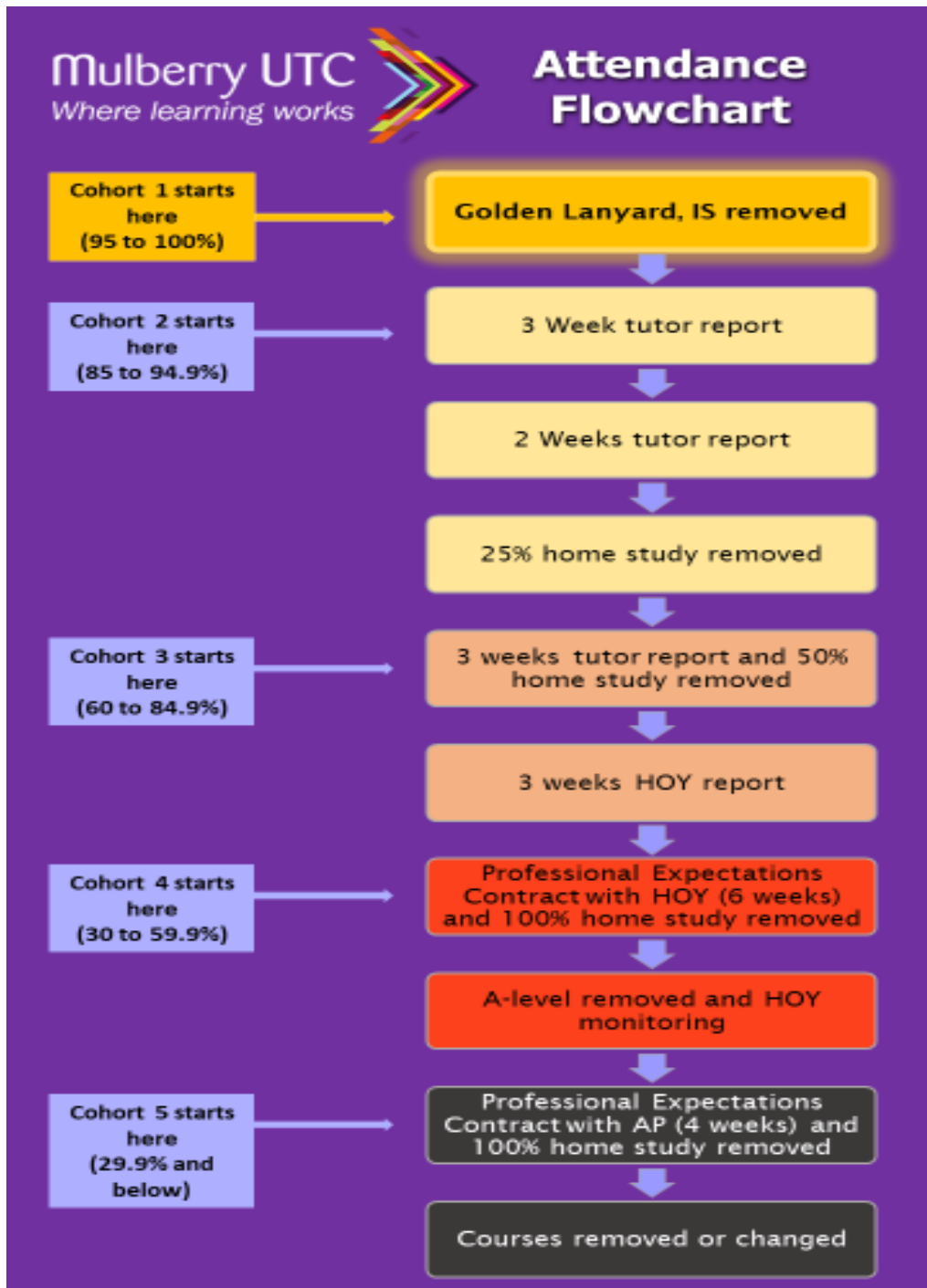
In our experience, students who are severely absent usually have a multitude of issues relating to this. We work with families of severely absent pupils on a case by case basis, often involving external services such as social services where required. In some cases legal action is pursued, including fixed penalty notices or prosecution

The Attendance and Welfare Advisor and Senior Vice Principal meet weekly to discuss students whose attendance has gone up as well as down. In addition to rewards for excellent attendance, vouchers and other prizes are issued for students who have overcome obstacles to attending school and have shown great improvement.

4. Escalation of procedures (6th Form only)

How will **we** ensure children are safe & tackle absence together?

The Mulberry UTC attendance threshold system below has five cohorts ranging from Cohort 1 (95-100%) attenders to Cohort 5 (29% and below).



Recognition and Reward

In order to encourage students to remain in cohort 1 or move up through the thresholds students will be entrusted with periods of 'home study'. Parents must agree to this and to support their child by ensuring they have what they need at home. With every improvement a student makes between cohort they will be rewarded with prizes, letters home and recognition in class or assemblies.

Further Support

Where a student's attendance falls there are several interventions at each tier.

- Cohort 1 & 2 are monitored by your child's tutor

- Cohort 3 and 4 are monitored by your child's Head of Year who will also request a meeting with parent/carer
- Cohort 5 students are monitored by a member of the senior leadership who will request meetings with a parent/carer

A professional expectation contract is completed when students have attendance which falls below 60%. This is done with the student and parent/carer and member of staff. The aim is to remind students of Mulberry UTCs professional expectations in regards to attendance and to set short term targets for the student to reach them.

If a student is unable to meet professional expectations in relation to their attendance or progress and following the supportive measures provided by the threshold system, then a meeting will be held with the student, parent/carer and a member of the senior leadership team. It may be necessary to agree that a student is withdrawn from a course or that the school supports them to identify an alternative post-16 route beyond Mulberry UTC, in this case we would seek to involve the Tower Hamlets careers service to advise the student and parent/carer on their options.

5. Leave in term time

In line with the Local Authority's guidance on holidays in term time, all requests will be declined. Exceptional circumstances must be made and considered by the Chair of Governors. If a parent decides to take a family on extended leave during term time without permission, the child may be taken off roll. Where permission is granted, and the family fail to return by the agreed date, the school may also take the child's name off roll.

6. Punctuality

At Mulberry UTC punctuality is viewed as essential to developing young professionals.

Parents are given information about attendance and punctuality at parents' evenings.

Form tutors, Heads of Department, Directors of Learning and all members of teaching and non-teaching staff play an important part in improving punctuality to school and lessons.

Daily reminders about the importance of being on time are given by form tutors and weekly in assemblies by Heads of Year.

7. Rewards for good punctuality

Mulberry UTC recognises good and improved punctuality through:

- Form tutor acknowledging improved punctuality through praise.
- Public acknowledgement and certificates are issued in assembly.
- Names of students with excellent punctuality are entered into a draw and may receive a £5 token.
- Letters are sent home acknowledging excellent and/or improved punctuality.

8. Sanctions for poor punctuality to school and lessons

The following sanctions apply to students in the case of lateness to school:

Initial concern:

- A same day late detention is set for any pupil who arrives late to school.
- An SLT detention is set for any pupil who repeatedly fails to attend the late detention.
- Text messages are sent each day to inform parents of Key Stage 5 students' absence or lateness to school.

Continuing concern:

- A Head of Year will meet parents if poor punctuality continues to persist.
- A referral to the Tower Hamlets Attendance and Welfare Services is made when a pupil has 15 or more lates within a 5 week period.
- A referral to the school police officer may be made if a pupil continues to arrive late.
- The KS5 bursary is linked to punctuality and detentions and/or supervised study sessions are set for KS5 students whose punctuality is a concern.

Serious concern:

- When a referral to the AWA has been made, she may:
- refer the pupil to outside agencies,
- refer to the borough SIP panel for court action
- pursue court action.

9. Year 10 and 11 Removal from Roll

Unlawful removal of a child from the roll can be dangerous with potential implications for safeguarding. If a parent wishes to remove their child from the school, a meeting is held with the appropriate Head of Year or Director of Learning and the Principal is informed.

Confirmation of the provision to which the student is transferring must be established before removing a pupil from the school roll. In the case of Key Stage 4 students, it must be other educational provision.

When this situation arises, the Attendance and Welfare Officer is informed as well as the school or local authority to which the pupil is transferring. Information about the child and their common transfer file are then passed to the new school.

If pupils have been Permanently Excluded, they must remain on the school roll until the outcome of any appeal is known. If a pupil has a Managed Move, they must remain on our roll until they have been taken onto the roll of another mainstream school or onto the permanent roll of London East Alternative Provision or another alternative provision setting.

A list of all pupils who have been taken off roll during the academic year will be kept by the data team and be monitored by SLT.

10. Year 12 and 13 Removal from Roll

The Education and Skills Funding Agency stipulates the following:

“Institutions must ensure that students are withdrawn from a programme where they have not attended classes for 4 continuous weeks, excluding holidays. Withdrawals must be actioned in a timely manner, and where a student has not been withdrawn but has been absent for more than 4 weeks, there must be auditable evidence of an intention to return.”

The usual procedure for Mulberry UTC students who have expressed that they would like to leave the UTC is to meet initially with their Head of Year to explore any issues they may be having and try to overcome them. If the student still feels that their place at Mulberry UTC is not appropriate for them anymore then every effort will be made to secure an appropriate destination, this may be employment or apprenticeship. Students can also be referred to Tower Hamlets Young Workpath to speak to a careers advisor.

STAFF GUIDELINES: Children Missing Education (Key Stage 4 only)

Children missing from Education (CME) are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse, and becoming NEET later in life.

Mulberry UTC complies with the statutory guidance 'Children Missing Education' and further guidance from Tower Hamlets Local Authority.

The school will enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts before notifying the local authority.

The Attendance and Welfare Officer monitors pupils' attendance through their daily register and enquiries are made with parents as to the nature of any absences. Mulberry UTC adheres to the Tower Hamlets Attendance and Welfare Service criteria for referrals. Referrals are made where there has been one of the following:

- 10 consecutive days of unauthorised absence
- 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a five week period
- 15 late marks in a five week period
- 15 sessions of authorised absences in a five-week period with no medical certificate received
- Failure to return to school following a fixed term exclusion
- Failure to attend alternative provision after the fifth day of an exclusion
- Pupils who parents have notified the school in writing that they are educating the child at home

Mulberry UTC will notify Tower Hamlets Local Authority when a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The school will provide:

- a. the full name of the pupil;
- b. the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- c. at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives;
- d. the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- e. the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
- f. the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (Annex A of the Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance 2016)