



Attendance and punctuality policy for Mulberry UTC

Approval Body:	Mulberry UTC LGB
Approval Date:	November 2025
Implementation Date:	November 2025
Review Date:	November 2026
Policy Version:	7

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.• 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
7	November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 11 Catch up session added for punctuality concerns.• Golden Lanyard added under recognition for good attendance• KS4 rewards and recognition added for punctuality and attendance• KS5 rewards and recognition added for YLT opportunity.• Senior Vice Principal, amended to Vice Principal.

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 one-third) of PA children in Year 11 achieved grades 9–4 in their English and Maths GCSEs, compared to 84% of 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 for every Mulberry UTC student to develop the skills and habits that will give them an edge in their future careers and enable them to lead fulfilling lives. This includes learning the importance of showing up, being on time, and being ready to learn.

Improving attendance is in everyone's interest and, therefore, everyone's business.

At Mulberry UTC Parents/Carers' Responsibilities

Parents and 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:

- Inform the school by telephone at the start of the day if a child is not going to be in school. The school should be updated each morning if the absence lasts longer than one day.
- Provide a written note or medical certificate to confirm reasons for absence on the day the child returns.
- Apply in advance for any exceptional reasons for absence.
- Make doctor and dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible.
- Talk to their child about the importance of attendance and punctuality.

Students' Responsibilities

Students must:

- Attend school every day.
- Arrive on time for school and all lessons.
- Wear the correct uniform or follow the dress code.
- Attend and take part in lessons.
- Bring any difficulties to the attention of their form tutor, Head of Year, or a senior member of staff.
- Email the school if they are unavoidably late.

School Responsibilities

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

- Contact parents/carers daily by phone or text regarding unexplained absences.
- Provide a high-quality curriculum that motivates students to attend and enjoy learning.
- Cater to the needs of all students, as far as practicable and reasonable.
- Follow up on all unexplained or unauthorised absences.
- Provide support for students experiencing difficulties.
- Implement re-integration programmes for students returning after a prolonged absence.
- Contact parents/carers where there are causes for concern.

In summary:

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

Daily Routines

- Meet & Greet (8:15–8:40 a.m.)
 - Staff warmly welcome students each morning. Students arriving early have comfortable spaces for quiet study or preparation for the day.
 - The Attendance Officer checks the first registers at 8:40 a.m. and follows up immediately on unexplained absences. Where there are concerns about a student’s whereabouts, a home visit may be conducted or external agencies contacted.
 - Promotion and celebration of improved attendance are recognised weekly. The Attendance and Welfare Advisor identifies students eligible for rewards.
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2. Data and Monitoring

Staff, students, and parents are encouraged to remain aware of attendance data.

How do we track attendance?

- Each child’s attendance is tracked live using our Edulink system. This is accessible to staff, parents, and students, providing daily and overall attendance information.
 - Each Head of Year reviews attendance data to identify students who have made significant progress or who may be a cause for concern.
 - Mulberry UTC uses a threshold system for intervention and support when attendance fluctuates. This ensures students are supported to improve attendance and rewarded for doing so (see Section 3).
 - Parents can request up-to-date attendance information from the school office at any time during school hours.
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3. Escalation of Procedures (Years 10 and 11)

Mulberry UTC follows clear procedures for students whose attendance falls within the following groups:

Attendance Band	Action
96–100%	Regular rewards for maintaining high attendance, including half-termly £5 vouchers for 100% attendance and punctuality.
90–95%	Tutor meeting and meeting with the Attendance & Welfare Advisor (AWA). Monitored half-termly and weekly. Parents informed of any drop in attendance.

Attendance Band	Action
80–90% (Persistent Absence)	Parent meetings and Attendance Contracts implemented. Weekly letters sent home outlining percentage and days attended, including lates. Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) issued if thresholds are met.
70–80%	Parent meetings held and Attendance Contracts issued with a <i>Notice to Improve</i> . Medical evidence reviewed; FPNs issued if appropriate. Weekly monitoring continues.
Below 70% (Severe Absence)	Students in this category often face multiple challenges. The school works closely with families and external agencies (e.g., social services). Legal action, including FPNs or prosecution, may be pursued.

The Attendance and Welfare Advisor and Vice Principal meet weekly to review attendance trends—celebrating improvements as well as addressing concerns. Rewards, vouchers, and other prizes recognise students who have shown significant progress.

4. Escalation of Procedures (Sixth Form)

How will we ensure students are safe and tackle absence together?

Mulberry UTC’s attendance threshold system includes five cohorts ranging from Cohort 1 (95–100%) to Cohort 5 (29% and below).

Recognition and Reward

To encourage students to remain in Cohort 1 or progress upward, rewards include:

- Home study privileges
- Golden Lanyards providing special privileges
- Prizes, letters home, and public recognition for improvement

Parents must agree to and support home study arrangements.

Leadership Opportunities:

Excellent attendance is considered a positive factor when students apply for the Youth Leadership Team in Years 10 and 12.

KS4 Recognition and Reward

KS4 students are recognised and rewarded for positive attendance and punctuality in several ways:

- Reward texts:
 - “Your child has been on time every day for the past three days. This is an excellent start, and we encourage you to maintain this consistency.”
 - “Congratulations! Your child has been on time every day for the past week. This is an excellent achievement, and we encourage you to continue supporting their punctuality.”

- Attendance Champions:
Key students are paired as *Attendance Champions*, competing daily for the best attendance record. The winning pair receives a voucher prize.
 - Reward Trips:
Students with excellent attendance are invited to attend cinema trips as recognition of their commitment.
 - Leadership Opportunities:
Excellent attendance is also referenced as a positive factor when students apply for the Youth Leadership Team each year in Years 10 and 12.
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Further Support

Interventions are provided according to attendance cohort:

- Cohorts 1 & 2: Monitored by the student's tutor.
- Cohorts 3 & 4: Monitored by the Head of Year; parent/carer meeting arranged.
- Cohort 5: Monitored by a senior leader; parent/carer meeting arranged.

Students with attendance below 60% complete a Professional Expectation Contract with staff and parents, setting short-term improvement targets.

If a student fails to meet expectations after supportive measures, a meeting is held with senior leadership, parents, and the student. In some cases, the school may support a transition to an alternative course or post-16 pathway, involving Tower Hamlets Careers Service for guidance.

5. Leave in Term Time

In line with Local Authority guidance, requests for holidays in term time will be declined unless there are exceptional circumstances, considered by the Chair of Governors.

If parents take extended leave without permission, the child may be removed from the school roll. Families failing to return by the agreed date may also have the child's name removed.

6. Punctuality

At Mulberry UTC, punctuality is essential to developing young professionals.

Parents are informed about attendance and punctuality at Parents' Evenings.

Form Tutors, Heads of Department, Directors of Learning, and all staff contribute to improving punctuality through consistent reinforcement in tutor time and assemblies.

7. Rewards for Good Punctuality

Mulberry UTC recognises and rewards good or improved punctuality through:

- Verbal praise from form tutors.
- Public acknowledgement and certificates in assemblies.
- Entry into a prize draw for students with excellent punctuality (e.g., £5 token).
- Letters home recognising excellent and/or improved punctuality.

8. Sanctions for Poor Punctuality

Initial Concern:

- A same-day late detention is set for any pupil arriving late.
- An SLT detention is issued for repeat non-attendance of late detentions.
- Daily text messages inform parents of Key Stage 5 students' lateness or absence.

Continuing Concern:

- A Head of Year meets with parents if poor punctuality persists.
- Referral to the Tower Hamlets Attendance and Welfare Service after 15 lates within 5 weeks.
- Referral to the School Police Officer if lateness continues.
- KS5 bursary eligibility is linked to punctuality.
- Year 11 students accumulating more than 60 minutes of lateness in 5 days must attend a 60-minute 'Catch Up' session each Thursday after school to make up lost learning time.

Serious Concern:

- Following referral to the AWA, further action may include:
 - Referral to external agencies.
 - Referral to the Borough SIP Panel for court action.
 - Pursuit of legal proceedings.

9. Year 10 and 11 Removal from Roll

Unlawful removal from roll presents safeguarding risks.

When a parent requests withdrawal:

- A meeting is held with the Head of Year or Director of Learning.
- The Principal is informed.
- Confirmation of the next provision is required before removal.
- For KS4 students, this must be another educational setting.

The Attendance and Welfare Officer and the new school/local authority must be informed. Pupil records, including transfer files, are shared appropriately.

Students remain on roll until:

- The outcome of any exclusion appeal is known.
- A Managed Move is formally completed and the pupil is accepted by the new setting.

A record of all students removed from roll is maintained by the Data Team and monitored by SLT.

10. Year 12 and 13 Removal from Roll

According to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA):

“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.”

At Mulberry UTC, students considering withdrawal first meet with their Head of Year to discuss issues and possible solutions.

If the student decides to leave, every effort is made to secure an appropriate destination—employment, apprenticeship, or further education—with support from Tower Hamlets Young Workpath.

Appendix 1: Staff Guidelines – Children Missing Education (Key Stage 4)

Children missing education (CME) are at significant risk of underachievement, abuse, and becoming NEET later in life.

Mulberry UTC complies with DfE Statutory Guidance: Children Missing Education (2016) and Tower Hamlets Local Authority guidance.

Procedures include:

- Enrolling pupils on the first agreed day of attendance.
- Conducting reasonable enquiries if a pupil fails to attend on that day.
- Monitoring attendance daily and investigating absences promptly.
- Making referrals to the Tower Hamlets Attendance and Welfare Service where thresholds are met:
 - 10 consecutive days of unauthorised absence
 - 10 unauthorised sessions in 5 weeks
 - 15 late marks in 5 weeks
 - 15 authorised absences in 5 weeks without medical evidence
 - Failure to return after exclusion
 - Failure to attend alternative provision
 - Notification of elective home education

The Local Authority is notified when a pupil’s name is to be removed from the register at a non-standard transition point. The following information is provided:

- a. Full name of the pupil
- b. Full name and address of parent(s)/carer(s)
- c. At least one contact telephone number
- d. Details of new residence or school (if applicable)
- e. Expected start date
- f. The relevant ground for removal under Regulation 8