

## **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

**Status:** Advisory

**Member of Staff responsible:** Principal / Assistant Principal

**Associated Policies and documentation:**

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

**Implementation Date:** September 2016

**Review Date:** January 2019

**Next Review Date:** September 2021

## **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

### **Aims**

The UTC Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park (OLP) is committed to getting the most out of educational opportunities and achievement for all students. For students to gain the best from their time at the UTC, it is vital that attendance and punctuality is excellent. We strive for 100% attendance for all students. The UTC will actively promote good attendance and discourage unjustified absence.

The UTC needs to ensure that all its students access a full-time education which meets their needs and allows all to realise their potential.

### **What we as a UTC will do to encourage good attendance (96% and above)**

- We will strive to provide a safe and caring environment where each student can engage in all opportunities offered.
- Engage with students and their families to ensure every student has good attendance and punctuality.
- Challenge the behaviour of those students and parents/carers who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- Systematically report attendance to parents through the six progress trackers a year.
- Continue to develop ICT-based attendance recording systems in order to provide accurate information and to use suitable tracking strategies to recognise any trends that can damage good attendance and learning.
- We will adhere to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and make reasonable adjustments will be made for young people.
- Through our rigorous QA processes, we will ensure that lesson quality is consistently excellent so that our students are engaged, motivated and challenged as learners.

### What the UTC expects from students:

- To attend regularly and on time.
- To be punctual to all lessons.
- To ensure that they register for all timetabled lessons and inform the Learning Managers, where appropriate if they are not able to be registered.
- To take responsibility for their own punctuality, where possible, by making contact with the UTC should they know they are going to be late.

Students know that they can ring **0114 260 3940**

Or email [OLPattendance@utcsheffield.org.uk](mailto:OLPattendance@utcsheffield.org.uk)

By students taking responsibility for their own communication, the UTC hope to promote a sense of responsibility and accountability similar to that expected from the world of work.

- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that any communication from parents is handed to the Learning Managers.

### What the UTC expects from parents/carers:

- To ensure their child(ren) attends the UTC on those days it is open, punctually, dressed in full business wear and equipped to learn.
- To ensure their child(ren) attends every day the UTC is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- To avoid keeping their child(ren) away from the UTC for any reason other than illness or other authorised explanation.
- To avoid arranging holidays during term time.
- To immediately inform Learning Managers / UTC if their child(ren) is unable to attend (by 8.30am where possible), including the reason for absence and expected date of return.

- The UTC should be updated daily with regards to student absence and failure to do so could result in an unauthorised absence, which could be used to take legal action.

## **Registration**

The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – during the morning Tutor period and once in the afternoon session. This is at 8.30am and 12:10pm. Students are expected to arrive by 8.25am in order to be ready for the start of Tutor period at 8.30am. We are aware that students travel quite a distance to attend the UTC, which is unique, we will therefore take every individual students circumstances into consideration. Students are registered at the start of every lesson of the day. Registers close at 9.00am in the morning and 1:40pm in the afternoon, after which students will be marked as unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory explanation has been received.\*

***Please see Appendix 1 (page 7)***

## ***COVID 19 Attendance Procedures for amendments to Policy active from September 2020***

The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes. Guidance on applying the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 can be found in 'Advice on School Attendance' published 2012 by the DfE.

## **Punctuality**

The UTC day starts at 8:30am, any student arriving after this time should sign in at reception, giving their reason for being late. The Learning Managers for each year group will take the primary responsibility for monitoring punctuality and where any student arrives at the UTC after 8:30am the student should expect to receive a C4 detention.

We understand that students attending the UTC have chosen to do so and may have a significant distance to travel. We expect that if a student is going to be late, for any reason out of their control, that they make contact the UTC prior to their arrival.

Students should contact through telephone or e-mail via 0114 2603940 or [OLPAttendance@utcsheffield.org.uk](mailto:OLPAttendance@utcsheffield.org.uk)

Students arriving to the UTC after 9.00am without prior consent or without medical evidence, such as a GP appointment card, will be coded as a "U" in the register. This means they have arrived after registration has closed. Having U codes in the register could provide grounds for prosecution as it is an unauthorised absence code which subsequently impacts on a student's overall attendance.

## **Responding to Absence/Lateness**

If a student is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent/carer to explain the absence, the UTC will contact parents/carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of the student's absence.

***Contact will be made via the Learning Managers and Admin team who will attempt to call/text landline numbers and mobile numbers for priority 1 and 2 contacts provided by the parents. Parents/carers are able to respond directly upon receiving this call.***

Alternatively, where a message has been left by the automated service, a parent should contact the Learning Manager / Reception to inform the UTC of the reason for the student's absence. We ask that parents/carers ensure that the UTC always has their most up to date contact details. All absence notes will be retained on the student's file.

Where a student's absence is a cause for concern, the UTC will follow this up with parents/carers and this may include any of the following:

- A written letter advising of our concerns
- An invitation for the parents/carers to come into the UTC
- A visit to the parents/carers at home.

Where no sustained improvement in attendance is demonstrated despite intervention, the Fast Track to Attendance process will be followed. Penalty notices may be issued in line with each relevant Local Authority's Code of Conduct.

### **Persistent Absence**

A student becomes a Persistent Absentee (PA) when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

Learning Managers are responsible for monitoring cases of persistent absence within their assigned year groups. Learning Managers will provide intervention through the Attendance Monitoring process:

- Initial Attendance Monitoring Meetings – Meeting with Learning Manager
- Stage 1 Attendance Meeting – Meeting with Learning Manager and Assistant/Vice Principal
- Stage 2 Attendance Meeting – Meeting with Learning Manager and Principal
- Stage 3 Attendance Meeting – Governor Panel

During these meetings, interventions to improve a student's attendance will be discussed and agreed upon. Failure to comply with agreed interventions will result in moving through the Attendance Monitoring process. The expectation is that parents make every effort to engage with these agreements in order to support the UTC in promoting good attendance (96% or above) for every student.

Persistent Absence data is communicated to the relevant Local Authority via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

### **Leave of Absence during Term Time**

Any absence interrupts the continuity of students' learning. Government Legislation now states that only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence, please refer to the Department for Education for the latest guidance. Parents/carers are strongly urged not to take students out of the UTC for holidays during term time.

Where the circumstances are considered exceptional, please be aware that:

- Your request will not be authorised during exam periods (these could be throughout the year).
- Your request will not be authorised during the month of September.
- Your request will not be authorised for any student in Year 11.
- Your request will not be authorised if your student's attendance is below the respective UTCs attendance target for the 12 months prior to application.
- Your request will not be authorised if your student has unauthorised absences.
- Your request will not be authorised where a previous holiday has been taken.

Any authorised absence will be at the discretion of the Principal.

It is expected that an Absence Request Form is submitted to the reception at least 4 weeks in advance of the proposed absence. All factors that need to be considered must be stated on the request form. The UTC has the right to serve a Penalty Notice on parents/carers who insist on taking their students out of school without authorisation. Penalties require each parent to pay a fine of £60

per student if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Non-payment of a Penalty Notice fine will result in the withdrawal of the Notice and will trigger the fast-track prosecution process under the provisions of Section 444, 1996 Education Act. This legislation also applies to any student taking leave of absence without prior notification to the UTC.

***Please see Appendix 1 (page 7)***

## ***COVID 19 Attendance Procedures for amendments to Penalty Notices active from September 2020***

### **Post-16 Specific Procedures**

#### **Key Stage 5 attendance**

The expectations for KS5 students are in line with KS4 expectations.

When attendance decreases for KS5 students they will run through the attendance monitoring procedure, however they will also receive disciplinary/warnings for poor attendance.

To further embed employability skills, KS5 students will now be expected to use Absence Request Form and Self-Certification forms when they are absent / or have been absent from the UTC.

*See Appendix 2 - KS5 Student Absence Request Form*

*See Appendix 3 - KS5 Student Absence Self Certification*

#### **How the UTC will promote good attendance**

- The UTC knows that all students are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is engaging and personalised to meet their needs. The curriculum is subject to a rigorous Quality Assurance (QA) process to ensure that students are in receipt of the highest quality teaching and provision at all times.
- Students are regularly informed of their attendance levels and, if appropriate, how they can improve. Where appropriate, students whose attendance falls below the appropriate target for the UTC will be set a target for improvement and progress towards these targets will be regularly reviewed by the Learning Manager.
- Good and improved attendance and punctuality will be promoted, acknowledged and rewarded. Students, parents/carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the UTC at any time to discuss the student's attendance. Regular meetings will be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those students whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Students who have been absent for extended periods of time will be supported, as appropriate, to re-integrate back into the UTC.
- UTC staff will make appropriate referrals to external agencies to offer support for students and their families where attendance is a concern

## **Statutory Requirements, the Law and the Local Authority**

Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers are responsible to ensure the student receives a suitable education. Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a parent who fails to ensure the student attends the school at which they are registered, is guilty of an offence.

The UTC works together with the relevant Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: Penalty Notices, Parenting Contracts and Orders, Education Supervision Orders or referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines (up to £2500) or up to 3 months in prison. All sanctions are used to improve attendance and punctuality and reduce absence.

## **Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

Subject teachers are committed to ensuring that students attend all subject lessons to facilitate learning and maximise progress. We will ensure all students are accurately registered and that students know the register is being taken. The subject teacher / Curriculum Director will identify student absence to lessons and take appropriate action. The subject staff will identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.

Tutors will discuss absence and attendance weekly with students. They will identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff. In collaboration with Learning Managers, tutors will work with identified students, setting targets to improve attendance and monitoring progress towards those targets.

Learning Managers will monitor absence and attendance regularly, by use of the weekly Cumulative Attendance report. They will discuss absence and attendance concerns with students and set targets for improvement. They will contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified. If attendance drops below 96% and then subsequently 92% the Learning Manager will seek advice and support from the appropriate Senior Leader and outside agencies to support an improvement in attendance. Where this fails attendance falls below 90% the UTC reserves the right to consider issuing a penalty notice.

The UTC will promote the importance of regular attendance through assemblies. It will work with other members of staff to share information and support students and their parents/carers to improve the attendance of students.

The Principal and Senior Leaders, including Sheffield City Council will ensure that the UTC Attendance Policy is implemented and regularly reviewed. They will report to Sheffield City Council on attendance. The UTC will routinely monitor the curriculum, implementing changes and developments where necessary so that students' educational experiences support a desire to learn and achieve.

## **Appendix 1 – COVID 19 Attendance Procedures**

**Please note, under lockdown restrictions, attendance requirements may change.**

### **Travel to the UTC**

Students (so far as is practical) need to maintain social distancing on arrival to the UTC. Public transport should be used only if necessary and masks should be worn in accordance with government guidelines. Students will need to plan their routes if using public transport. They should avoid travelling in large groups. Traveling with siblings or with one or two others in their year groups (whilst socially distancing) is advisable to keep their bubbles as small as possible.

### **Punctuality in the UTC**

Normal punctuality rules will apply when lockdown restrictions are lifted.

We have currently amended our timetable. We have temporarily removed the tutor time in the morning 8:30am – 8:40am. Period 1 lessons now start at 8:30am – this is to maximise student learning and also to reduce the amount of times students move from lessons within the UTC.

We understand that students attending the UTC have chosen to do so and may have a significant distance to travel. We understand that students who use public transport may have longer than normal journeys due to measures taken by travel companies.

We expect that if a student is going to be late to the UTC, for any reason out of their control, that they make contact the UTC prior to their arrival.

Students should contact through telephone or e-mail via 0114 2603940 or [OLPAttendance@utcsheffield.org.uk](mailto:OLPAttendance@utcsheffield.org.uk) to report their lateness.

### **Entering and exiting the UTC**

The Senior Leadership and Inclusion Team will be on duty at the entrance and within the Creative Exchange every morning and at the end of the school day, to ensure a smooth and staggered entrance for students. Staff will ensure all students are wearing face coverings and are sanitising their hands on entry.

Students are then required to sit in their year group bubbles until 8:25am, where students will then be sent to lessons one year group at a time. Students will also have staggered finish times to reduce mixing year group bubbles and to ensure a steady flow of students leaving the UTC.

Y9 – 2:30pm

Y10 – 3:25pm

Y11 – 3:30pm

### **Penalty Notices**

As of September 2020, Sheffield City Council currently ceased all penalty notices for attendance for the first term of the academic year 2020/2021. However, poor attendance to school during Term 1 (September – December) which is not COVID-19 related may be used towards further penalty notices in the upcoming academic year.

As of January 2021, Sheffield City Council have suspended penalty notices for schools until further notice. Please note, poor attendance during Term 1 (September – December) which is not COVID-19 related may be used towards further penalty notices in the upcoming academic year.

### **Possible Covid-19 Illness**

If your student has ANY COVID-19 symptom, they **MUST NOT** come into the UTC.

This means:

- a fever
- a new or continuous cough

or

- has lost their sense of taste or smell

A COVID-19 test must be booked.

Students who live within the same household **MUST NOT** come into the UTC.

When a parent/carer calls the UTC to report a COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19, they must give the names of all the students in the household as they will all need to self-isolate.

Tests can be booked online through the NHS testing and tracing for coronavirus website, or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Most tests are returned within 24 hrs when a booking is made. This route is advisable to reduce lost learning days. When a test is booked, the UTC must be informed and we **must** be updated as to whether the test is negative or positive.

Students cannot return to the UTC without prior communication as to the test result.

If a student tests negative, they can stop self-isolating and return to the UTC if they are well enough to do so. Other members of their household can also stop self-isolating.

If a student tests positive, they should follow the 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection' and must continue to self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and return to the UTC only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste (this is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone). The 10 day period starts from the day when they first became ill or the date of the test (if symptoms begin after the test, this becomes day 1 and the 10 days starts from the onset of symptoms). Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

Cases of Coronavirus known to the UTC will be treated confidentially.

### **NON COVID-19 illness**

For a non COVID-19 illness, normal rules and procedures would apply. Unless students are too ill to be in the UTC, they should be in the UTC. The number and lengths of illnesses are monitored and if a student's absence falls below expected levels, it would be followed up with our normal procedures.

However, please note, if a suspected non-COVID illness presents with ANY COVID symptom: i.e.

- fever
- continuous cough
- loss of taste or smell

self-isolation must begin and the UTC **must** be informed.

This must be treated as COVID-19 illness until a negative test has been returned. After a negative test result, students should only return if they are well.

If a member of the household displays symptoms, any students would need to self-isolate for 10 days. This means they should not come to the UTC until the self-isolation period is complete. If the student displays no symptoms during this time, they would return to the UTC from day 11 (assuming all temperatures have gone completely).

If your household is told by NHS test and trace to self-isolate, the self-isolation guidance must be followed by all the household (this will be for 10 days). Please ring the UTC and notify us immediately.

Any students in the UTC when the call is received would need to be sent home straight away. If you are told to self-isolate, students **MUST NOT** come to the UTC until 10 days have passed.

Absences relating to coronavirus do not count as a negative attendance and therefore does not reduce a student's attendance percentage. Repeated general illness (not Coronavirus related) does bring down a student's attendance percentage and would be followed up as per our normal procedures.

No legal proceedings linked to attendance or term time leave will take place in Sheffield until 2021.

### **Positive Test Results in the UTC**

In the case of a positive test result known to the UTC, the UTC will report this to Public Health England. Public Health England may also contact the UTC if a positive case comes through NHS Test and Trace. They will advise which students or adults have been in close proximity to an affected person and who should be sent home and advised to isolate. We will contact directly the families of affected students should this occur.

Students are taught either in class group or year group bubbles. If a bubble is sent home, these absences would be authorised. If students are absent (due to fears relating to COVID) but are not part of the bubble that has been sent home, this would be considered an unauthorised absence and normal absence procedures and follow up with regards non-attendance to school would apply.

The UTC is taking considerable measures to keep staff and students safe. As well as robust absence reporting procedures to keep COVID-19 off site, the UTC has implemented:

- Year group bubbles which enable to a broad and balanced curriculum to be taught to all students
- One way systems in corridors
- Increased the number of double lessons to further reduce movement
- Considerable infection control measures for handwashing/hand sanitising
- The use of the catch it, kill it, bin it approach re: sneezing/coughing
- Amended timetable at the start of the day

- Staggered finish times at the end of the day for year groups

If a student in your bubble tests positive, a 10 day self-isolation period begins for all students in the bubble (the rest of each household does not need to self-isolate unless someone in the household shows symptoms, in which case all the household must self-isolate).

Households should follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'. They should get a test, and:

If the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 10-day isolation period. This is because they could still develop Coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days.

If the test result is positive, they should inform the UTC immediately, and must isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 10-day isolation period). Their household should self-isolate for at least 10 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'

### **Holidays during COVID-19**

As per our normal policy, holidays are not permitted in term time. For this year, we would advise not taking your students abroad at any point during the holidays if a 10 day quarantine is required on your return, as this would impact on term time education.

Even if you return from holiday and have a negative covid-19 test you must follow the quarantine periods as laid out by the government and self-isolate for 10 days. This is because an infection may develop during this time. If you are returning from a country on the quarantine list (please note that the guidance is changing at very short notice), it must be respected.

**Start Date: September 2020**

**Review Date: February 2021**

## Appendix 2

### KS5 Student Absence Request Form

#### Your details:

Full name

Year & Tutor Group

Specialism


#### Details of absence:

Start date of absence:

End date of absence:


#### Reason for requested absence:

Please give details and attach evidence where necessary. You must give at least 2 days' notice before your request to allow this to be processed.

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I declare that the information I have provided in this form is correct and complete.

Signature:		Date:	
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When completed this certificate should be handed to the Learning Manager's Offices in the Creative Exchange where a Learning Manager will make a decision on whether this is authorised or not.

#### STAFF USE ONLY

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_ Authorised absence: Y / N Staff Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for non-authorisation:

Student informed via e-mail: Y / N By: \_\_\_\_\_ On: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 3

### KS5 Student Absence Self Certification

#### Your details

Full name

Year & House

Specialism

#### Details of absence

Date absence began

Date absence ended

#### Reason for absence

Please give details, words like unwell or illness, on their own, are not acceptable. This form must be completed and handed in within 2 days of your return to the UTC.

I declare that the information I have provided in this form is correct and complete.

Signature:		Date:	
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When completed this certificate should be handed to the Learning Manager's Offices in the Creative Exchange where a Learning Manager will make a decision on whether this is authorised or not.

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**STAFF USE ONLY**

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_ Authorised absence: Y / N Staff Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for non-authorisation:

Student informed via e-mail: Y / N By: \_\_\_\_\_ On: \_\_\_\_\_