



University Technical College Warrington (UTCW)

Attendance Policy

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Rationale:

Regular UTC attendance is essential if students are to achieve their full potential.

Warrington UTC is committed to providing all students with the best possible start in life and will work hard to ensure that all students attend UTC regularly. We believe that regular UTC attendance is the key to enabling students to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome, allowing individuals to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

The aims of this policy are:

- To promote good attendance and punctuality for all students
- To enable all students to have full access to the curriculum through regular attendance
- To intervene and challenge all students who require the necessary support to achieve good attendance
- To meet targets set by the LA regarding attendance and to drive UTC attendance beyond national averages.

We are committed to tackling poor attendance because:

- Irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, leading to underachievement and low attainment
- Students with poor attendance will have gaps in their learning
- Poor attendance will hinder the students' ability to develop friendship groups
- We want to make sure students are safe
- We want to increase students' opportunities.

UTC values all students; we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

Attendance targets:

Each year the UTC will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets for the new academic year. These will reflect both national and Warrington attendance targets. The UTC will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. For the academic year 2024/25, the UTC attendance target is 96%.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the UTC will use to meet its attendance targets.

The law:

- Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory UTC age receive efficient full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance or otherwise.
- A child is of compulsory UTC age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory UTC age on the last Friday in June of the UTC year in which they reach the age of 16.
- Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory UTC age and, where necessary, use legal enforcement.
- The Education (student registration) (England) Regulations 2006, requires schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the student was:
 - Present
 - Absent
 - Present at approved educational activity; or
 - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Roles and responsibilities:

The Governors of the UTC are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of UTC attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure UTC leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Working alongside Senior Leaders in monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.

The designated Senior Leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families.

The Senior Leader responsible for attendance is Mr P Rigby and can be contacted via prigby@utcw.co.uk

The UTC Attendance Mentors are responsible for:

- The daily monitoring and analysing of attendance data
- The daily management of attendance on the UTC system
- Working with students and families to ensure the removal of barriers preventing UTC attendance
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Liaising with members of staff regarding the actions and intervention to reduce absence from school
- Working with the Local Authority to tackle persistent absence and raise UTC attendance.

The Attendance Mentors are Miss P Crean and Mrs S Grady can be contacted via pcrean@utcw.co.uk and sgrady@utcw.co.uk

Parental responsibilities:

- Parents have a legal obligation to educate their children and can be prosecuted if they do not meet this obligation
- It is the responsibility of parents to ensure their child arrives to UTC promptly each day - the school, in loco-parentis, is responsible for the child from the start of the UTC day
- Parents/Carers must contact the UTC on the first day of absence if the UTC has not previously been informed and maintain daily contact should the absence continue
- Parents must avoid taking holidays in UTC time or, if they cannot do so, must apply to the Principal for permission in advance.

The UTC requests that parents will:

- Talk to their child about UTC and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instil the value of education and regular UTC attendance with the home environment
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make any medical or dental appointments outside of UTC hours
- Ask the UTC for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the UTC of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the UTC, taking every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with UTC and acknowledging the importance of children receiving consistent messages from both UTC and home.

UTC responsibilities:

- The UTC will enable all students to achieve their full potential and expect regular attendance to best prepare them for life after school
- The UTC will inform parents in cases of known truancy
- The UTC will make contact with parents/carers on the first day of absence when no initial contact is received
- In the case of absence due to prolonged illness the UTC will provide work in liaison with parents/carers
- When the number or frequency of absences gives cause for concern the appropriate intervention will take place between school, parents and the Local Authority
- Persistent lateness will be challenged and parents will be contacted regarding the concerns.

The UTC will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents
- Form positive relationships with parents and students
- Ensure that there is a whole UTC approach which reinforces good UTC attendance
- Ensure effective teaching and learning experiences take place to encourage all students to attend and to achieve
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off site, are implemented.

The UTC requests that students will:

- Attend UTC every day
- Sign in every day using the 'Entry sign' electronic system with their lanyard
- Arrive in UTC and to class on time
- Remain in class unless given permission to leave
- Remain in UTC unless given permission to leave
- Catch up with missing work following absence.

Monitoring students' attendance:

- When a student is absent, it is expected that the parents/carer will contact the school either leaving a notification on 'Classcharts' or on the Attendance voicemail. Where this is not the case, the UTC will aim to contact parents/carers by 9.30am to establish the reason for absence and if the child is safe. We use a system called 'Classcharts' on each day of absence if no contact has been made. A text messaging system which parents/carers can respond to

- If it is the case where a member of staff cannot make contact home and the UTC is unsure whether the child is safe, a home visit for specifically identified students may be arranged
- Should absence continue and patterns emerge, then the Attendance Mentor's will work with the Pastoral team to develop a strategy to improve attendance for specific students
- If truancy is identified, parents/carers will be notified via a phone call and/or letter
- If there are punctuality concerns, parents/carers will be contacted and intervention will take place.

Unplanned Absence:

The student's parent/carer must notify the UTC of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence before 8am or as soon as practically possible by calling the UTC or via 'Classcharts'.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the UTC has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. Where the absence is longer than 3 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the UTC will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the UTC is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence:

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the UTC in advance of the appointment. The Attendance Mentor's, should be notified of any appointments or known absence.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of UTC hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of UTC for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Following up unexplained absence:

Where any student we expect to attend UTC does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the UTC will:

- Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the UTC cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the UTC may conduct a home visit, or contact 101 if there are known vulnerabilities
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence

continues, the UTC will consider involving the appropriate services, including the Local Authority Attendance Team manager, Debbie Parlane.

Reducing persistent and severe absence:

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The UTC will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of students who the UTC (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

Internal Truancy:

Internal truancy is where students have been registered during a session (AM or PM) but fail to attend particular lessons without a valid reason. Subject teachers are required to complete a register at the start of every lesson. Where a student is absent but has previously been in during the day, the teacher must notify the UTC reception immediately so the students' absence can be investigated. All staff have the responsibility to report any suspicious absence and challenge students who are outside of class during lesson time. All truancy will be sanctioned appropriately and proportionately.

Students off site:

When students have to leave the site for any reason, UTC should be provided with a letter signed and dated or receive a phone call from the parent/carer. The information should indicate the reason for leaving the UTC site, the time that the student should leave and information regarding their child's return. All students leaving the UTC site must sign out at the UTC office.

Lunchtime:

All students must remain on-site at lunchtime at all times. Any students leaving the UTC site without permission will be sanctioned appropriately and proportionately.

Punctuality:

It is important that students arrive promptly to the 'Hangout' before 8:48am. They are expected to in 'line up' ready to go to down to PAT time at 8:50am. Students arriving after the bell recorded as late and those arriving after the bell will be recorded as Late and those arriving after the register has closed, will be marked using the appropriate code.

Students who arrive late must register their lateness on the Ventrysign system using the two portals at Reception and inform a member of staff, an appropriate mark

will be recorded on the register. Students who are late without an appropriate reason will be sanctioned on the same day. We ask for the parents support to ensure that this is not a regular occurrence.

Support systems:

The UTC recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a student's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make UTC aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/ separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the UTC identify any additional support that may be required.

Warrington UTC also recognises that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those students with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee students and children in care.

The UTC will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Form tutor intervention
- Attendance Mentor strategies for success
- Discussion with parents and students
- Attendance panels
- Referrals to support agencies
- Time limited reduced timetables
- Reintegration support packages
- Reward systems
- Liaison with the Local Authority
- Other strategies deemed appropriate to motivate and engage young people and families.

Local Authority support:

Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Warrington UTC and Warrington LA attendance team will consider the use of legal sanctions. The LA will consider prosecuting such families under the Education Act (1996). As a parent you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends UTC regularly and is punctual. If you fail to ensure this you are committing an offence under the Education Act (1996) which may lead to a fine of up to £2500 and/or a prison sentence.

Police:

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the police now have powers to remove truants found in public places and to return them either to their schools or a place of safety designated by the LA.

Rewarding good attendance:

The UTC also recognise the importance of celebrating good attendance and motivating the students to improve their attendance. A number of initiatives and rewards events will take place throughout the academic year and will include:

- Attendance raffles
- Attendance lottery
- 100% attendance certificates
- Most improved attendance rewards
- Form competitions
- Attendance data supporting other rewards event decisions throughout the year

Categorising absence:

Where students of compulsory UTC age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by the UTC and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the student's absence has been received.

Parents should advise the UTC by telephone on the first day of absence, with follow up contact on a daily basis for further absence.

Authorised absence:

Parents have informed the UTC of the absence and the reason for it is seen as reasonable from the school's viewpoint.

Reasonable reasons are listed below:

Illness: In most cases a telephone call from the parent informing the UTC that their child is ill is acceptable. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Medical/dental appointments: Parents are advised, where possible, to make medical and dental appointments outside of the UTC day. Where this is not possible, students should attend UTC for part of the day.

Other authorised circumstances: This relates to occasions where there is a cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances; for example, family bereavements, serious family crisis or emergency UTC closures etc.

Suspensions: Suspension from UTC is counted as an authorised absence. The student's class teacher and Head of Year will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Family holidays and extended leave: This will only be granted for exceptional circumstances.

Religious observance: The UTC acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside UTC holiday periods or weekends. This necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

Dual registration: Where a student is dually registered at two institutions; for example, a mainstream school and a Student Referral Unit (PRU), hospital school or special school. The student is registered as having an approved education activity while they are attending the other institution on a temporary basis.

Approved educational activity off site: This category can be used when a student is:

- Receiving education off site or other than at the UTC where registered
- Participating in an approved sporting activity
- At a work experience placement
- Educational visit or placement (including college-link courses)
- Attending an interview with prospective employers or for a place at another educational establishment.

Pregnancy: Where possible a student should attend UTC. Home tuition will be offered to students who are no longer medically able to attend UTC or after week 36 of the pregnancy. A period of home tuition will also be offered after the baby has been born until the student can return to UTC.

Unauthorised absence: When parents/carers fail to notify us of their absence or do not provide a satisfactory explanation that has been accepted by UTC. Your child's absence will not be authorised if they are absent for:

- To look after the house or other members of the family
- To go shopping or visit relatives
- Persistent illness that is not covered by medical evidence
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of the school
- Because it's raining
- Because you/they got up late

- Because they missed the bus
- For family birthdays or to go on family outings.

Holidays:

The Department for Education (DfE) announced important amendments to legislation surrounding holidays in term time. From 1 September 2013, **the new**

law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any applications for leave of absence must be in exceptional circumstances and the Principal must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Parents can be fined via Warrington Borough Council's Attendance Service for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the UTC and the absence would be 'unauthorised' on the student's record.

In the case of an unavoidable holiday in term time, parents must ask permission from the Principal in advance, explaining the circumstances behind the request. Parents should do this as soon as they are aware that their child may be at risk of missing UTC time.

Travellers:

The aim for the attendance of traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend UTC regularly and as frequently as possible.

To help ensure continuity of education for traveller children it is expected that the child should attend UTC elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dually registered at that UTC and the main school. Children whose families do not travel are expected to register at a UTC and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as the other children in terms of the requirement to attend UTC regularly once registered at a school.

Warrington UTC will be regarded as the base, if it is the UTC where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the student must have attended in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily whilst travelling. This is to protect them unfairly losing their place at their UTC of attendance.

We can only effectively operate as the child's base UTC if we are engaged in on-going dialogue with traveller families. This means that parents must:

- Advise of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen
- Inform the UTC regarding proposed return dates.

Warrington UTC will authorise absence of traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling and has given indication that they intend to return. Where traveller children are registered students at a UTC and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any student.

Deletions from the register:

In accordance with the Education (student registration) (England) Regulations 2006 & 2013 Amendment, students will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The UTC is replaced by another School on a Attendance Order

- The UTC Attendance Order is revoked by the local authority
- The student ceased to be of compulsory UTC age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Death of a student
- Transfers between schools
- Student withdrawn to be educated outside the UTC system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the UTC and the local authority have tried to locate the student
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the UTC before ending compulsory School age
- In custody for more than 4 months
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and the local authority has failed to locate the student

Warrington UTC will follow Warrington Borough Council's missing education protocol when a student's whereabouts is unknown.

Related UTC policies

This policy to be read in conjunction with these other UTC policies and guidance:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- E-Registration Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Attendance updates and changes from September 2024

Codes

/\	No change – present am, present pm when register was taken
L	Late - Arrived after the register was taken but before the register closed
V	Attendance at an educational visit or trip organised by or for the school and supervised by a member of school staff

Approved educational activity	
Conditions that apply to these codes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The place where the pupil is attending is not the school or any other school at which the pupil is registered • The activity is educational in nature (and not arranged by the LA under Section 19 or a trip/visit) • Attendance at this place has been approved by the school • The activity is to be supervised by a person thought by the school to have appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the attendance has been approved. 	
P	Participating in a sporting activity approved by the school (NB - this code should only be used on the days of the sporting activity)
W	Participating in work experience approved by the school
B	Approved attendance at a place for any other educational activity. As per above, the child must be supervised in person i.e. remote online learning cannot be B coded. ORGANISED BY THE SCHOOL
K	Approved attendance at a place for any other educational activity. As per above, the child must be supervised in person i.e. remote online learning cannot be K coded. ORGANISED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY
Authorised absences:	
C1	Taking part in an approved performance that has been licensed
M	Medical or dental appointment
J1	Approved absence to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational establishment
S	Study leave in preparation for public examinations NB This code should not be used for mocks
C2	Compulsory school age child subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances NB A holiday or other absence for leisure or recreation would not constitute exceptional circumstances
H	code has been removed to make clear that it is very, very unlikely that a holiday would be considered exceptional circumstances
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes. Family have no fixed abode and child cannot attend as parent is travelling.

Authorised absences:

R	Child is absent for religious observance on day set aside by religious body the child's parents belong to such that the religious body would expect parents to absent themselves from their own employment to mark the occasion.
I	Illness (both physical and mental) Medical evidence would not routinely be expected
E	Suspended or excluded
X	Child is not statutory school aged and is not expected to attend Will most commonly be used in Nursery and Post-16 settings
Q	Absence where the LA has the legal duty to provide the pupil with transport and it has not yet been provided Does not include any wider/other barriers to attending school
Y1	Pupil unable to attend school, which is not within walking distance, and transport that is normally provided is not available Walking distance: Children under 8 years, 2 miles. Children 8 and above, 3 miles.
Authorised absences:	
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption e.g. school open on a snow day, but buses are unable to run and a group of children do not attend
Y3	Partial closure of school site
Y4	Unexpected closure of whole school – e.g. snow day where decision is made to close the entire school
Y5	Child is in criminal justice detention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police detention • Remanded in youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause The 'cause' must be preventing the child from attending Very, very rare that this code will be used e.g. a child who is moved to an immigration detention centre and therefore unable to attend
Unauthorised absences:	
G	Holiday not granted by the school Cannot approve holiday retrospectively A 'family visit' is a holiday under the definition in new code
N	Holding code when reason for absence is not known If reason is not obtainable within 5 days, the code should be changed to O or other appropriate code
O	Absence with no reason given or where school is not satisfied that the reason given can be recorded using one of the other valid codes
U	Arrived after the register has closed e.g. the register is open 9:00am – 9:30am. Child arrives at 10:00am – U code
Z	Prospective student, not yet on roll. This code is not collected for statistics. # Planned whole school closure e.g. holidays, INSET days, school being used as a polling station, weekends