



## Absence / Attendance at Kelso High School

### Absence/Attendance

Thank you to all the parents/carers who contact Kelso High School before the school day to inform us if their youngster is going to be absent. Sometimes the lines are very busy and your patience is appreciated. We also appreciate the letters sent in with pupils when they return to school.

However, sometimes pupils' absences remain 'unexplained'. For pupils whose absence remains 'unexplained' at 9.30 am a groupcall will be sent to parents/carers – It is extremely helpful if you respond to this as soon as possible to allow us to accurately update our register for the day.

Following the group call if we do not receive a reply please ensure your child brings a note in explaining their absence when they return to school, this can be handed to their register teacher or the school office. Where a pupil's absence remains 'unexplained' and no letter is received, the absence may be recorded as truancy.

For pupils in receipt of an Educational Maintenance Allowance, absences can affect the payments they receive.

To support pupils, parents/carers and staff we have developed an updated Attendance Management Policy. This outlines the measures we will all take to promote good attendance and accurately record school absences. We are very grateful for your support in this very important area.

### Please help us by:

- Continuing to contact the school before the school day if your son/daughter is going to be absent (the office is open from 8.15 am)
- Sending notes regarding appointments in to school at least one day before the appointment
- Sending notes when your child returns to school (including child's name, registration class, dates of absence and reason for absence)

A letter is sent to parents/carers of pupils with an attendance record that falls below an acceptable level. A copy of their attendance record will be enclosed with this letter. This system is designed to provide an early warning, and a support to parents/guardians and pupils. Guidance staff are keen to become involved and help support pupils and their parents/guardians before poor attendance has a detrimental effect on their education.

Good school attendance means that a pupil does not miss important work and thus is more likely to achieve his/her full potential and ultimately gain better results at the end of his/her school career.

### **The legal requirements are as follows:**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly. In cases of unsatisfactory attendance, the Pastoral teacher will contact home and discuss the problem with the parents / carers. If such unsatisfactory attendance persists the Deputy Headteacher for the year group, following discussions with pastoral staff and other agencies will decide whether the case should be referred to the Reporter.

If a pupil is absent, parents are asked to telephone the school to outline the reason for the absence as soon as possible and also to send a letter on the pupil's return.

The then Scottish Executive issued guidelines in 2003 relating to school attendance and absence. The main change relates to family holidays during term time. The guidelines state that the majority of family holidays taken during term time should be categorised as unauthorised absence. However, it is acceptable under exceptional circumstances for schools to authorise a family holiday during term time.



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A family holiday classified under the 'authorised absence' category should not include such reasons as:

- The availability of cheap holidays
- The availability of desired accommodation
- Poor weather experienced during school holidays
- Holidays which overlap the beginning or end of term
- Parental difficulty obtaining leave (with local judgement applied in cases where evidence is provided by the employer that it cannot accommodate leave during school holidays without serious consequences).

### **Punctuality**

It is obviously very important that pupils are on time for school as lateness not only causes disruption to lessons but also does not set good work standards. If a pupil is unavoidably late for school parents are asked to send a note with the pupil or telephone to explain the reason. Pupils arriving in school after the 8.50 am bell will be recorded as late.

The parents/carers of pupils whose lateness is causing concern will be contacted in order to pursue an early resolution to the problem.



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**1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem like much but...**

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years of school
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

**How about 10 minutes late a day? Surely that won't affect my child?**

He/she is only missing just...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
10 mins per day	50 mins per week	Nearly 1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly ½ year
20 mins per day	1 hr. 40 mins per week	Over 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 mins per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years

### EVERY DAY COUNTS

**If you want your child to be successful at school then, YES, attendance does matter!**