# HEATHCOAT PRIMARY SCHOOL

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www.heathcoat.devon.sch.uk

**Interim Headteacher:** Carly Wilkins


**HPS: Helping People Succeed**

11th November 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

**School attendance @ HPS – An important message for all parents and carers**

Good school attendance for every child is a priority for us at Heathcoat Primary. We are keen to work with you, as well as the Local Authority, to ensure the best outcomes for your child. **A big thank you to the majority of parents who make sure their children attend school regularly.**

A child who attends school each day will have the best chance to achieve their academic potential and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. It will also enable your child to:

- access the lessons needed to achieve their expected grades
- maintain friendships and develop new ones
- have access to social and sporting events offered by the school
- explore potential life skills
- develop work habits such as good punctuality which are essential to thrive in the world of employment

**What does good attendance mean?**

| Attendance during one school year | equals this number of days absent | which is approximately this many weeks absent | which means this number of lessons missed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 95% | 9 days | 2 weeks | 50 lessons |
| 90% | 19 days | 4 weeks | 100 lessons |
| 85% | 29 days | 6 weeks | 150 lessons |

**Holiday requests**: Absence for purposes of leave during term time can only be authorised by the Headteacher, within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations (2006). “Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.”

The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional circumstances’ are that they are; ‘rare; significant’ unavoidable and short’. Holidays during term time will not usually be considered as exceptional circumstances.


All Personal Data is collected and processed in accordance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Full details can be found for all the Personal Data and Special Category Data we collect and process, in our Data Protection Policy and our Privacy Notices which can be found on our website www.heathcoat.devon.sch.uk

Devon County Council

Schools are required to notify the Local Authority if a pupil has a number of unauthorised absences. Unauthorised absences can be acquired when;

1) Leave has been requested, but the circumstances are such that the school is unable to authorise the leave and it is taken anyway.

2) Leave is not requested and/or the school has grounds to believe that the child has been taken out of school for an avoidable reason (example – a family holiday). There have been occasions when schools have been notified that the pupil is sick, but the school later discovers and reasonably believes that the reason given for the absence is not genuine.

3) A child continually arrives late after the registration period has closed.

The school gates open at 8.40am and registers are taken promptly at 8.50am.
Children who arrive between 8.55am and 9.00am will be awarded **late** marks.
Children arriving after 9.15am are marked as **unauthorised**.
If your child arrives after 9am you will need to sign them in at the office.

**Medical appointments**

Term-times are for education. Children and families have 175 days off per year, including weekends and school holidays. Please ensure that, wherever possible, medical appointments are made outside of school time. **Please provide evidence for medical appointments.** This can be in the form of an appointment card or screenshot and can be emailed to school.

**Reporting absences**

If your child is absent from school due to illness, please contact the school office before 9am stating the nature of their illness. You can contact the school via phone (01884 252445) or email (attendance@heathcoat.devon.sch.uk)

Please see the following link for advice from the NHS regarding Government guidelines for medical conditions: Is my child too ill for school? - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

If you are worried about your child's attendance, please speak to your child's teacher in the first instance. We have specialist staff at HPS who may be able to help with any concerns that you have. All schools work closely with Early Help, health and the local authority teams who may also be able to offer further help if needed.

For further information about attendance at HPS, you can read the school's attendance policy which is on the HPS website.

At HPS we are committed to supporting you and your child's attendance, so please do contact us promptly if any concerns arise. Thank you for your anticipated support in this matter.

Kind regards,

Mrs C Wilkins
Interim Headteacher