



12 December 2024

Dear Parent/Carer/Guardian

As I am sure you will all agree, attendance to school is vital for students to fulfil their potential here at The Heathland School. Our expectation is that all students attend school on each day the school is open for pupils. In doing so, students will give themselves the best chance of success.

Strong attendance to school is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance.
- Students with excellent attendance make better academic and social progress than those with poor attendance.
- Students with strong attendance find school routines, schoolwork and relationships easier to cope with than those with poor attendance.
- Strong attendance encourages responsible learning habits and prepares children for life beyond secondary school.

Absence to school should only happen when:

- Your child is significantly/symptomatically ill and therefore unfit or unable to attend school.
- If there is an unavoidable/unforeseen reason or circumstance which is causing a significant difficulty. In these cases, the school will ask for evidence of this.
- If your child has a documented medical condition that affects regular attendance. In these cases, the school will ask for evidence of this.

Reporting Absence

When a pupil is absent from school without prior permission, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer or guardian to inform the school of absence. We have made a change to the absence reporting procedure, so we have one single system for reporting absence. If your child is in Year 7 – 11, we request that you email absence@heathland.hounslow.sch.uk on the first day of absence and inform the school of the reason for the absence and when you expect your child to return to school.

If your child is in the Sixth Form, please email Sixthformabsence@heathland.hounslow.sch.uk.

Please only contact the Attendance team by phone in cases where you are unable to email in. This will allow our attendance follow up routines to run smoothly and efficiently.

Term Time Leave of Absence

The School Attendance Regulations make it clear that a Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time for holidays. There is no entitlement to time off from school during term time and leave of absence will only be considered in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher.



If term time leave is taken without permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and you may be liable for a Fixed Penalty Notice. Where a child's whereabouts cannot be established, he/she may be regarded as a 'Child Missing Education'. This could lead to the child's place at school being compromised.

If you are requesting term time leave, please complete a Term Time Leave Request form, which will be available at the Main School Reception and on the school website.

Once a child's attendance falls below 90%, he/she is automatically defined as a Persistent Absentee (PA) by the Department for Education (DfE). This is irrespective of the reason/s for absence. Once a child's attendance falls below 50%, they are termed Severely Absent.

The School maintains an attendance register and uses this to record each student's attendance at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon. Morning registration is at 8.40am. You need to aim for your child to be in school by 8.30am at the latest. Morning registers close at 9.05am.

Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as an unauthorised absence using code 'U', in line with the DfE guidance, unless there is an acceptable mitigating reason. The 'U' code is classified as an unauthorised absence.

All unauthorised absences are reported to the Local Authority and includes absence due to significant lateness. The School Attendance Support Service (SASS) may contact you where unauthorised absence continues to be a problem and could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action.

As a parent/guardian or carer, you can support us by:

- Ensuring your child attends school punctually on each day the school is open.
- Arranging all non-emergency medical and dental appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.
- Not planning any holidays during term time.

Please do have a look at the attached document, which reinforces the importance of strong attendance and good punctuality to school.

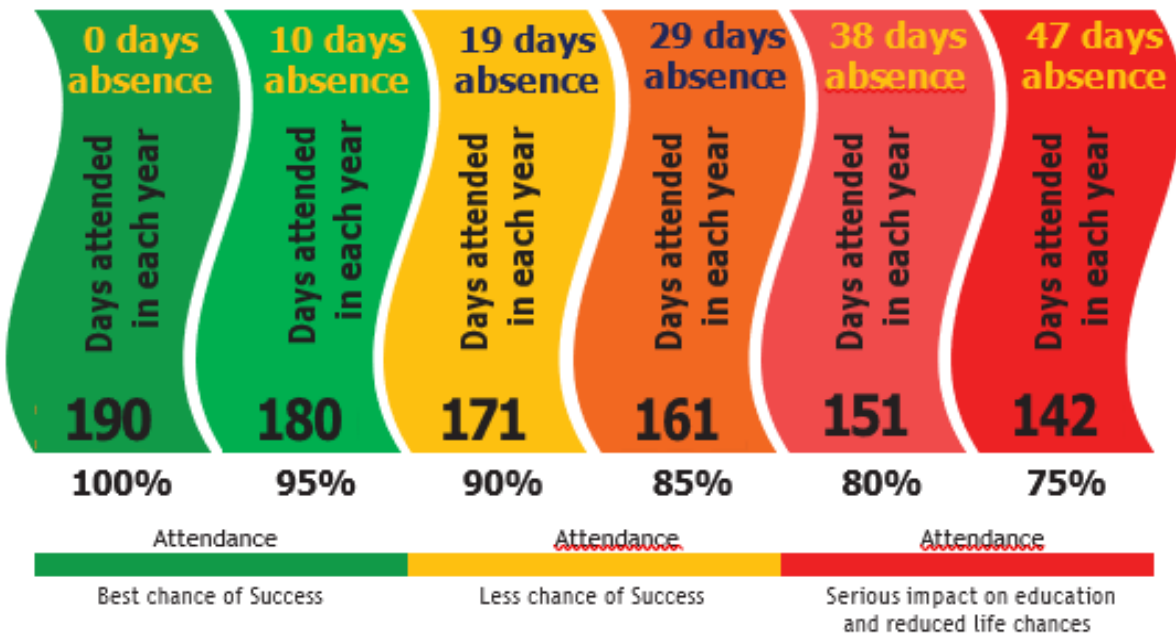
Yours sincerely,

Mr Rose
Headteacher



Attendance and Punctuality Counts

190 days in school
for learning



96% attendance means 8 days of absence and 48 lessons lost where there are 6 lessons a day.

90% attendance or less can significantly reduce chances of success.

Medical Appointments: book these outside of school hours.

Illness Unless it is serious, come into school, it's best to come in and try to get through the day.

Family Holidays You have 175 days a year where you are not in School. A one-week holiday in term time means that the highest attendance you can get is 97%.



5 Minutes Late each day 10 Minutes Late each day 15 Minutes Late each day 20 Minutes Late each day 25 Minutes Late each day

Average learning hours per day is **5 hours**.
If you are 15 minutes late each day you will have missed **2 full weeks** of school in one year!