



Heathwood Lower School
Leighton Buzzard

Heathwood Newsletter



January 2026

"Our vision is for every child to develop a love of learning, to be curious about the world around them, and to feel a true sense of belonging. We nurture kindness, encourage children to be courteous and respectful, and celebrate the differences that make each individual unique. Through the development of essential life skills, we prepare our children to be confident, successful learners, ready for the next steps in their lives."

Diary Dates

January

- 1st Bank Holiday
- 2nd School Holiday
- 5th Inset Day
- 6th Children back to School
- 7th Class R MK Museum
- 15th School Census Day
- 23rd-25th The Big Garden Birdwatch 2026
- 20th SNAP Coffee Event 2-3pm

February

- 3rd Gymnastics Competition
- 10th Yr 4 Bikeability bookable by link:
<https://consent.bikeability.org.uk/opt-ray-lane>
- 16th - 20th Half Term

March

- 2nd Yr2 Firefighter Visit
- 4th Mid Year Reports sent home
- 4th Start of Book Fayre Week
- 5th Let Girls Play Day 2-4pm
- 5th World Book Day
- 9th Class R Hearing, Heights & Weights
- 10th Yr4 Hazard Alley Trip
- 10th Virtual Parents Evening 3.45-6pm
- 12th Virtual Parents Evening 3.45-6pm
- 13th Mothers Day Enrichment morning 9-10am
- 20th Outside Achievement Assembly
- 23rd Yr 3/4 Joy of Movement Festival 1-4pm
- 25th Yr 3/4 Netball 2-4pm
- 27th Last Day of Term

April

- 13th Inset Day
- 14th Children back to school



Welcome back to the Spring Term 2026!

I hope you all had a fabulous Christmas break and I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our families and friends a very Happy New Year! A massive thank you to you all for the kind, thoughtful and generous Christmas gifts and cards. 😊

We have a very busy term ahead of us and are looking forward to lots of exciting learning. Memorable experiences are planned and new class projects are underway. Curriculum documents and Class Curriculum Overviews are on the website, please check for up to date information about your child's class and what they will be learning this term.

We will start the new year with a reminder of 'The Heathwood Way', and focusing on continuing to build resilience and stamina, positive attitudes and a pride in ourselves and our environment. This includes smartness of school uniform, tidy work books with neat handwriting and an organised, litter-free environment. I hope you will join us in encouraging 'The Heathwood Way' at home. We will also be talking with children about our school valued behaviours and the feelings associated with behaviour, in line with our school Behaviour Curriculum. Please see the school website for further information.

We look forward to sharing this term with you all so please take a moment to look at the diary dates to ensure that you don't miss any of the exciting events we have planned.

Happy January!
Jackie Wright
Headteacher



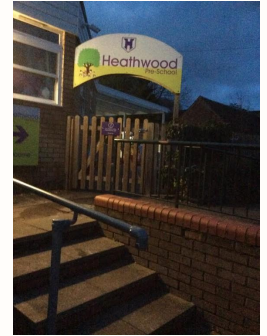
Preschool News

Welcome back.

We hope you all had a wonderful christmas break. On behalf of all the staff we would like to say thank you for all wonderful gifts and cards we received.



Our topic this half term is 'starry night' This project explores the differences in the world at night compared to during the day. It teaches children about the importance of a good night's sleep, and helps them to discover what is happening in the world while they are sleeping, including finding out about nocturnal animals.



We would love you to get involved by emailing in pictures of your children's favorite outdoor place to play during the day and at night, or by going out for a torch lit walk and making note of what you see. We will also be sending home some bedtime routine sheets for you to complete at home.



Reminder: PE days: Tuesday and Thursday (appropriate shoes please), Wheelie Wednesday: scooters and push bikes only with helmets, Please label clothes and water bottles

Governors News

Happy New Year to everyone in our Heathwood Community! I hope you all enjoyed a joyful and relaxing festive holiday.

The last meeting of the Governors for 2025 took place on December 16th, where we reflected on the autumn term. We examined reports from Mrs. Wright, Mr. Dicker and Miss Romaine. Additionally, several policies were also reviewed and ratified.

The governors really enjoyed the school play, Class R Nativity and the carols from Preschool, a big thank you to all of the staff involved without them these events could not happen.

Governors will participate in the school's inset day for training alongside the staff on 5th January.

We are excited for the upcoming Spring Term and eager to witness some incredible learning experiences.

Happy Learning!

What are we learning?

If you would like to know what your children are learning this term then please follow the website links below for your class page. Here you will find information on the topics that will be covered throughout the term.

[Class R](#)

[Class 1](#)

[Class 2](#)

[Class 3](#)

[Class 4](#)



Tuck Shop

Fairtrade Council sells tuck (Chocolate Cookie) on Fridays.

This is £5.50 for the Spring term.

Tuck Shop is available to pay on School Money.



Term Dates 2025/2026

Autumn

Wednesday 3rd September 2025 - Friday 24th October 2025

Monday 3rd November 2025 - Friday 19th December 2025

Spring

Tuesday 6th January 2026 - Friday 13th February 2026

Monday 23rd February 2026 - Friday 27th March 2026

Summer

Tuesday 14th April 2026 - Friday 22nd May 2026

Monday 1st June 2026 - Friday 17th July 2026

INSET Days

Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd September 2025
Monday 5th January 2026

Monday 13th April 2026
Monday 20th July 2026

Monday 4th May 2026 - May Day Bank Holiday

[2026/27](#)

Council News

The School Council will be continuing to look at ways to improve and support our children's experiences in school and promote positive wellbeing and support.

Therefore, all children will be completing a 'child friendly' wellbeing questionnaire.

Once the questionnaires are complete, the School Council will review the results and identify ways to address any areas for improvement.

The Eco Council are again promoting the RSPB Big Bird Watch. Please see below for further information and how you can get involved.

Pupil Premium

If you believe that you may be entitled to claim Pupil Premium grant for your child and you do not already do so, or if you are not sure, please contact Central Beds Council to lodge an application. Tel: 0300 300 8306 or customers@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

If your family is 'hard pressed' you may be eligible for this grant; the school uses this funding to support your child's learning in a variety of ways, it can also cover some of the cost of trips, school clubs and music lessons.

Do please come and speak confidentially to Mrs Wilkins in the Office.

Application for Schools

Lower School Applications and Middle School Transfers - Deadline is Thursday 15th January 2026.

School admissions for 2026 are now open, and Central Bedfordshire have been publicising the message widely over the last months, including making parents aware of all open evenings for prospective pupils.

There is **NO automatic transfer** - parents must apply for all school places to their local authority.

If you have a child born between 1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022 and you are interested in a place at Heathwood, please call the School Office on 01525 377096.

School Meals

School dinners for children in Reception, Class 1 and Class 2 are free, funded by the government (UIFSM-Universal Infant Free School Meals). We are very proud of our super school meals.

We work really hard to provide a nutritious and delicious selection of food every day. I would encourage all children to have a free meal at lunchtime instead of bringing a packed lunch.

For children in Years 3 & 4 the price for school dinners has been increased and is £2.60 per day / £13.00 per week / £75.40 for the January/February half term

Payment for school meals is on School Money This will be updated weekly to record the meals that your child has had. You can make payments weekly or you can add money to your account and check your balance.

Link to winter [Menu](#)

Clothing Bin



As part of our commitment to reducing our environmental impact, and to raise some money for school, we have a Clothes and Shoes bin on the school site. The bin is sited on a concrete block behind the school bins to the left of the main school entrance.

Just drop your items in the bin (In Bags) and when it is emptied the school will receive money for the number of kilograms collected. Please support the school by filling the bin when you Spring clean!



Designated Safeguarding Information

If you have any concerns or worries , speak to one of the following:

Designated Safeguarding Officer is Jackie Wright
Deputy Safeguarding Officers are Paul Dicker and Talia Romaine

Preschool Safeguarding Officer is Tasmin Morrell
Designated Safeguarding Governor is Paul Bangs
Local Authority Designated Officer 0300 300 4825
Local Authority Centre: The Hub 0300 300 8585
Emergency Duty Team: 0300 300 8123

School Communication



In an attempt to be more environmentally friendly we are now texting links to all letters unless they require a reply slip.

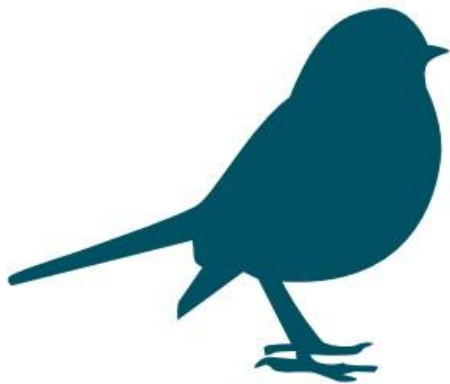
All copies can be found on the school website [Letters to Parents](#)

Parking

Parking can be a problem around the school area and we often receive complaints about inconsiderate parking in Cotefield Drive, Chiltern Gardens, Heath Park Drive and Heath Road which causes difficulty for the residents and is potentially dangerous for you and your children. When dropping children off in the morning can we ask you do not park in front of the School gates in Chiltern Gardens, as this prevents staff from getting into the carpark and is a danger to those accessing the school by foot. And finally, please could you turn off your car engine whilst waiting outside school. We appreciate your support in this matter. Thank you.

Come and get your bird tally sheets from the office

Your how-to-guide and tally chart



Big Garden Birdwatch

23–25 January 2026

Taking part is as easy as 1, 2, 3

- 1** Count the birds you see in your garden, from your balcony or in your local park for one hour between 23 and 25 January 2026.
Use the tally boxes on the next page to count and record the birds you spot. Transfer your count to the results form. This chart shows some birds you might see. You may see others, if so record those on the results form too. Where only one bird is shown on the ID Chart, both male and female birds look similar but are not always identical.
- 2** Following these simple rules makes it easy to count the birds you see.
Only include birds that land, not those flying over. Count the highest number of each species you see at any one time, otherwise you could count the same bird twice. For example, if you saw a group of eight Starlings but then towards the end of your hour you saw six together, record '8' as your final Starling count.
- 3** Go online and tell us what you saw at www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch
Submitting online is quick and easy and it means we can spend more on saving nature as it reduces our costs. Whatever you saw – even if nothing at all – please tell us. The more results we have, the better the picture will be of how garden birds are faring.
If you are unable to submit your results online, please complete and send us the print-from-home form.

Helping you make your Big Garden Birdwatch count

Get involved on our social channels

Throughout the Big Garden Birdwatch long weekend, you can join in the conversation on our social channels. See what other nature lovers are spotting across the UK and you can upload pics and comments about your Birdwatch. Go to [#BigGardenBirdWatch](#)

Get ID tips and expert advice

You'll find lots of advice on identifying birds by sight and sound, as well as expert insights into garden wildlife at www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch

R E S P E C T



Our Value in January is

RESPECT

- A feeling of regard for the qualities and achievements of oneself and others
- A caring and appreciative attitude towards the world in general

In school we will begin by admiring and enjoying the wonderful learning environment that we are so fortunate to have. We will discuss the importance of respecting and caring for our school and everyone in it. Emphasis will be placed upon the need to think before we speak and treat others as we would wish to be treated. It all starts with self-respect so we will always try to build our pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to look after themselves by getting plenty of sleep, exercise and healthy food as well as taking care of their own property and respecting possessions belonging to others. Quote for the month: "I speak to everyone in the same way, whether he is the garbage man or the president of the university." — Albert Einstein

At home you could remind each other of the need to show respect in order to live a calmer, happier life. It would be a good idea to make a family list of all people and things which should be cared for and respected every day, eg. each other, pets, toys, furniture, the garden etc.. Encourage the children to respect their own property by looking after it at home and at school (it helps if it's all named). Make sure that toys are put away, pets are fed and responsibilities undertaken willingly.



WOW



Let us know how your child has demonstrated this month's Value of Respect at home.





CENSUS DAY

THURSDAY 15TH JANUARY

National School Census Day Announcement

On Thursday, January 15, 2026, we will celebrate National School Census Day. To maximize our potential funding, we urge all families with children eligible for Universal Infant Free School Meals to take advantage of this benefit by opting for a free meal instead of sending a packed lunch. This applies to all children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2.

The number of Key Stage One children who enjoy the free meal on this day has a direct impact on our funding. Unfortunately, students who bring packed lunches from home will not be counted, if your child normally brings a pack lunch from home and is nervous about trying a school dinner why not bring a packed lunch and try alongside your school dinner.

We kindly request that as many families as possible commit to having the school dinner on Thursday, January 15, as this will help ensure our school secures the best possible funding for the year! We hope this initiative will also inspire children who typically do not participate in the meal program, encouraging more of them to enjoy school meals throughout the year.

The menu for the day will feature the usual Friday options, as we know the children enjoy them!

Thank you for your continued support.



Road Safety New Year Resolutions

NEW YEAR NEW APPROACH

I WILL TRY TO...

Walk whenever possible.

Drop my children away from the school so they can walk.

Turn my engine off when sat in my vehicle waiting.

Put my phone on do not disturb mode whilst driving.

Read the road earlier and give way to help ease the traffic flow.

Not speed.

Not park dangerously! Avoid parking on the kerb, yellow lines or zig zags. I will try to park away from entrances or driveways.



Bedfordshire Road Safety Partnership
Working together to reduce road casualties