



Athersley South Primary School

www.athersleysouth-primary.co.uk

First Friday

Edition 6
February 2023

Dear Parents,

Please find below updates and information for your attention.

Staffing Update

We have now welcomed back Mrs Roberts on a full time basis in Class 3. We would like to say a HUGE thank you to Mrs Smith who has been working with Class 3 in her absence. We are pleased that Mrs Smith will continue to have some links with school when we require additional staff cover and we look forward to working with her again moving forwards.

KS1 Florence Nightingale Visit

We were delighted that 'Florence Nightingale' was able to join us for the day in January. The children were very excited and were able to share and extend their knowledge of what she was able to achieve in her lifetime.

NSPCC Rocks

Thanks to everyone who has participated today in our NSPCC Rocks event and for your contributions for a very worthwhile charity! It has been great to see some creative rockstar 'looks' 😊. Mrs Belfield will update us in due course with details of the class who have won the TT Rockstars class competition but remember, children can play until 7.30pm this evening (Friday 3rd February).

Eco Schools Update

The Eco Schools children have been really busy over December and January. Key Stage 1 children have been making lots of posters to raise awareness about our chosen areas of Healthy Lifestyles, Energy and Water. Children from Class 3 have designed some posters reminding children (and teachers) to turn off lights, smart boards and (in warmer weather) fans. We also have 'Energy Monitors' whose job it is to make sure that electric devices are turned off when not in use.

Children in Class 2 made some fruit and vegetable face posters to encourage children to make healthy choices, which will be displayed on the way to the dining room. Children from Class 1 have made some posters that will be displayed near toilets and classroom sinks, telling us to 'Save Water!'

And finally, in KS1 and KS2 all classes now have fabulous, new recycling bins for cardboard and paper, which will allow us as a school to ensure more of our waste is being recycled rather than sent to landfill.

Packed Lunches

Please can we politely ask that if you send your child with grapes in their packed lunch that these are cut up. This is for safety reasons. Grapes should always be cut lengthwise so they can pass more easily through smaller throats. Never slice widthwise because they'll still be big enough to choke on. Thank you for your co-operation.

Easter Competition – ADVANCE warning

This year will see the return of our 'Decorate an Egg'

Easter competition and our children will be voting for their favourites. We look forward to everyone's EGGstravagant ideas and creations!

Residential

On Monday, 24 children and two staff will be setting off to Ullswater for this year's residential. We hope they all have a fabulous time, making fantastic memories.

World Book Day – Advance Notice

We are currently planning activities for this year's World Book Day which will be held on Thursday 2nd March. We are very much looking forward to celebrating our love of books and reading. We are planning a non-uniform day, with further details to follow, but please be aware there will be NO expectation for you to buy a costume as we continue to make these days accessible and manageable for all.

School Uniform Sale

We would like to remind you that we have an extensive range of school uniform available to buy from school. Items cost just 50p each and we have a range of sizes available. If you are interested in looking for some items, please contact the school office.

Attendance

At Athersley South we have high expectations of all children in relation to punctuality and attendance. Please can we remind you that if your child is late they must enter school via the main school office, this includes any children in F1 or F2. If your child cannot attend school for any reason please contact the main school office on (01226) 284223 before 9.30am.

Mrs Smart will contact families if an absence has not been reported. This is because we have a statutory duty to ensure all children are safe. Our EWO this year will be Mr D. Scarth. His role is to work with school and families to offer support, advice and guidance where punctuality and attendance causes concern. In such cases, Mrs Smart may contact you by phone or you may be invited to attend an internal school panel with Mrs Smart and Mr Scarth. Home visits may also take place as and when necessary. If your child will not be in school for any reason other than illness you will need to complete a 'Request for Leave of Absence' form, available at the school office.

Concerns

A reminder that if you have any concerns, please see your child's class teacher in the first instance or the teacher in charge of their phase in school (Miss Pell, Mrs Wheelwright, Mrs Belfield or Miss Stanley). If they cannot resolve your issue it can be referred to Mr Wheelwright, our Deputy Headteacher or Mrs Sanderson. A copy of the complaints policy is also available on our website.

Dates for the Diary

Monday 13th - Friday 17th February School closed for half term
Monday 20th February - INSET Day – school closed
Thursday 2nd March – World Book Day

Attendance

Raise Your Attendance – Raise Your Chances

We place a high importance on attendance at our Athersley South and feel every effort should be made to attend school regularly and to achieve 100% attendance. The greater your child's attendance at school, the more likely your child is to achieve their targets. The following information gives you some idea of what pupils should be working towards, and what action might be taken if you fall below accepted levels in line with LA guidelines. Government guidance dictates that the threshold for persistent absenteeism is below 90%.

Attendance %

100% Excellent – this is what pupils should achieve. It means they can be really successful and make lots of progress.

95% Satisfactory – This means a pupil has missed almost 10 school days in a year. In five years this is almost a full term.

Below 95% is considered 'Unsatisfactory' At this stage our EWO, Mr Buckle, will be informed and a pupil's absence will be monitored. Parents may be contacted and may be invited to an internal school panel meeting in school.

90% attendance means a pupil has missed almost 20 days in a school year. In five years this is $\frac{1}{2}$ a school year. This now puts a pupil in the Government category of 'Persistent Absence' and the school is expected to put things in place to improve a pupil's attendance. Parents will be contacted and expected to attend a meeting in school with Mrs Smart our Parent Support Advisor, Mr Scarth our EWO and the Headteacher. At this stage parents can face further action such as a Fixed Penalty Notice.

85% Poor – This means a pupil has missed almost 30 days in a school year. **In five years this is $\frac{3}{4}$ of a school year.** At this stage parents face the possibility of court action.

80% Very Poor – This means a pupil has missed almost 40 days in a school year. **In five years this is a whole school year off school.**

At Athersley South we fully understand that there are exceptional circumstances that can impact on attendance and Mrs Smart works closely with families to offer the necessary support and advice. Ultimately we want all our children to attend for as many days as is possible to enable them to progress to the best of their ability and we hope to work with you to enable this to happen.