

Happy New Year to everyone. We hope you all had an enjoyable break. Welcome to our February edition of First Friday which gives an update on events prior to this month, as well as upcoming events. We hope you find it informative.

**Book Fair**

Thank you to everyone who has supported our school book fair this week, it is always lovely to see children browsing new titles. The book fair is open today (Friday) and the last day for sales is Monday.

**World Book Day**

We are excited to be celebrating World Book Day again this year. Our event will take place on FRIDAY 7th March and there will be a themed menu in the dining room on that day too! We also look forward to welcoming Parents and Carers in at the end of the day to share a story.

**Loss of a Much Loved Pupil**

We were all deeply saddened to learn of the passing of one of our school community last week, after a short illness. Some Parents/Carers have asked if they can send a card to his family, if you wish to do so, please take these to the school office and we will pass them on. Staff attended his funeral yesterday and passed on your kind words, love and sympathy.

**Royston Animal Welfare—Can you help?**

One of our Parents who supports the Royston Animal Welfare Charity has asked that we share information about the valuable work that they do in the community, providing care and support for animals in need. They are currently seeking donations to help sustain their important work, whether this be through monetary donations or supplies. Further information about their work, including contact details can be found on their website: <https://www.roystonanimalwelfare.org>

**Barnsley Youth Choir**

We were delighted to welcome Eleanor Wright, one of the musical directors from Barnsley Youth Choir, into school on Monday. She led a singing workshop with our Y34 children that was enjoyed by staff and children. We were extremely lucky to be offered this opportunity and we look forward to working with her again in the future. For any aspiring singers, we would highly recommend you take a look at the Barnsley Youth Choir and the wonderful opportunities they offer.

Their brochure is available via this link <https://content.barnsleyyouthchoir.org.uk/publications/16946-byc-auditions-booklet-2024-pf/>

**Young Voices**

In January, almost 40 members of our Glee Club, along with staff, travelled to the Arena in Sheffield to participate in the Young Voices concert. Everyone involved had a FANTASTIC time and it was truly an experience to be enjoyed. The months of preparation paid off and the look of delight on their faces was a joy to observe. Well done to everyone who attended!



**Who should I speak to?**

We very much hope that all our children will settle quickly and you will not have any worries or concerns. However, please can we take this opportunity to remind you that if you have any concerns about your child at all this year you should, in the first instance, contact your child's class teacher who has the most thorough knowledge of your child. If your concerns remain you should make an appointment to speak with a Leader of Learning (EYFS – Miss Pell, KS1 – Mrs Wheelwright, LKS2 – Mrs Belfield and UKS2 – Miss Stanley). If you feel that these members of staff have not been able to assist you sufficiently, you should contact either Mr Wheelwright or Mrs Sanderson via the school office.

**School Details**

Tel. 01226 284223

Address Wakefield Road, Barnsley S71 3TP

Website: [www.athersleysouth-primary.co.uk](http://www.athersleysouth-primary.co.uk)

Contact Us: [athersleysouthadmin@ecmtrust.co.uk](mailto:athersleysouthadmin@ecmtrust.co.uk)

## 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. Scarth, 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 ½ 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. Smith 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 ¾ 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. Smith 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.