



Athersley South Primary School

www.athersleysouth-primary.co.uk

First Friday

Edition 5
January 2023

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! We wish you all the very best for 2023.

Staffing Update

We are pleased that Mrs Roberts is returning to teach in Class 3 this term. While she gradually returns to her full time role, Mrs Smith will continue to teach in Class 3 as well. Following Mrs Walton's departure, we are pleased to welcome two members of staff to the Y5/6 team. Miss Dixon will work on a Monday and Tuesday and Miss Constable will be with us from Wednesday to Friday. We hope you will join us in welcoming them to our school. We continue to take applications for relief SMSA positions in school, please contact the school office if you would like more information.

Crucial Crew

Our Y6 children enjoyed their visit to the Lifewise Centre in Rotherham before Christmas for their annual visit to Crucial Crew. The day is always very informative and the children developed their understanding of the rules of law and their responsibilities.

Y5 Visit to Pantomime

Thanks to a very generous donation, our Y5 children enjoyed a visit to Wakefield theatre in December to watch the pantomime 'Dick Whittington'. Everyone had a fantastic time and they were even treated to an ice cream/lolly during the interval!

Mobile Phones

Following the Christmas break we are aware that a number of children are now the proud owners of new mobile phones. We would like to remind you that before your child brings a mobile phone to school you must complete a form in the office to give your permission for their phone to be in school. Please also be aware that all phones are switched off as soon as children arrive in school and they are then stored by class teachers before being handed out at the end of the day.

Breakfast Club

With effect from January 2023, we are reintroducing some more breakfast items to our offer. A choice of two cereals will now be available in addition to toast. During the autumn term we also invested in a selection of new games for the children to enjoy once they have eaten their breakfast and these have been very well received.

Top Trump Cards

Last term we invested in a number of packs of Top Trumps cards for our KS2 children to enjoy at break and lunchtime. These have been very popular, especially the 'plop trumps' which contain lots of fascinating facts about animal poo! If you have any unwanted Top Trump packs at home, we would welcome any donations.

Eco Schools Update

The Eco Group are proving a very dedicated and passionate team! They'll update us next month with their activities.

PE

We have a dance specialist working with us this term and look forward to seeing our children develop their skills.

Residential

Final preparations are currently underway for this year's residential in the Lake District. 24 children and two staff will be attending this year and we anticipate another fantastic week for all.

World Book Day – Advance Notice

We are currently planning activities for this year's World Book Day which we 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. The following is a reminder of the start and finish times for different parts of school. 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 FS1 or FS2.

FS1 morning 8:40 – 11:40am

FS1 afternoon – 12.25-3.25pm

FS2 and KS1 8:45am – 3:15pm

KS2 8:50am – 3:20pm.

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.

Dates for the Diary

Monday 6th-Friday 10th February - Residential

Monday 13th-Friday 17th February School closed for half term

Monday 20th February - INSET Day – school closed to pupils

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.