

### Dear Parents,

Welcome to this month's newsletter detailing what has been happening in school as well as upcoming events.

#### Staffing Updates

As communicated previously, Mrs Hale is leaving us at Easter. We can now confirm that Miss Baranski, who has worked at ASPS previously, will be returning for the summer term and will work in Nursery (F1) on a Monday, Tuesday and alternate Wednesdays.

#### Y6 Fundraising Run

Our Y6 children have been busy preparing for a sponsored run today. Earlier this year in class they read the book *The Boy at the Back of the Class*. There is a performance of this book next week at Sheffield Lyceum and the children (and staff) would love to go, so they decided to raise the money themselves. We are very proud of all our Y6 children for participating. Fingers crossed that we raise enough money.

#### Book Fair

We were pleased to welcome a number of you to our school book fair before half term. Despite the technical issues, which were beyond our control, we hope you enjoyed browsing and buying some new reading material. Thank you for your patience and for purchasing books. As a result of the purchases made we are excited to inform you that Scholastic have gifted us £295 for us to buy some new books for our library. We will be working with our reading ambassadors and librarians to select some exciting and new titles. Thank you to everyone who supported our book fair.

#### Y5/6 Residential

Prior to half term, 24 children and 3 staff embarked upon a week long residential in the Lake District. They had a fabulous time and really pushed themselves to 'have a go' at everything including canoeing, gorge walking and climbing. They also walked miles! We are so proud of all our children for rising to the challenge and being a credit to our school. We would also like to say 'thank you' to the staff who accompanied them. There are photographs on our website for you to see and we will soon be releasing details of next year's residential.

#### Young Voices

We would like to say a huge CONGRATULATIONS to all our children who attended Young Voices at Sheffield Arena last week. They were simply amazing, singing their hearts out, smiling throughout and their behaviour was impeccable. Thank you too to the staff who went, without whom the trip would not have been possible.

#### World Book Day

Don't forget next Friday children can come dressed as a book character, wear pyjamas or non uniform for WBD.

### Bike Shed

You will have seen by now that we have a super new shelter next to EYFS in which children can leave their scooters during the day. This was funded by a local council project and we are grateful that we were selected to receive some funding. Now the lighter mornings and evenings are upon us, we are happy for children to start using the main bike shed too. Please can we just remind you that all bikes and scooters are left at your own risk, and school will not be held responsible for any missing items.

#### Who should I speak to?

We very much hope that 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 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.

#### 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 – 12.25-3.25

FS2 8:45am – 3:15pm

KS1 8:45am – 3:15pm and KS2 8:50am – 3:20pm.

If your child cannot attend school, please contact the office on (01226) 284223 before 9.30am. Mrs. Smith will contact families if an absence has not been reported. This is because we have a statutory duty to ensure all children are safe. Mr. Scarth continues to be our EWO this year and 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. Smith may contact you by phone or you may be invited to attend an internal school panel with Mrs Smith 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 your Diary

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March Y6 Visit to Sheffield Theatre

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> 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. 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  $\frac{1}{2}$  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. 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  $\frac{3}{4}$  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. 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.