

### Dear Parents,

Welcome to another First Friday with updates about what has been happening in school and upcoming events.

#### Harvest Collection

Thank you to everyone who donated items for our Harvest Collection. We are very grateful and the goods have now been passed to a local food bank to help our community.

#### Y3/4 Music Workshop

In October we were very fortunate to welcome Mrs Wright from the Barnsley Youth Choir into school. She spent an afternoon with our Y3/4 classes leading a singing workshop. The behaviour of our children was a credit to the school and we hope some of our children will develop their singing abilities further with the youth choir in the future 😊.



#### Spooky Spectacular

Thank you to everyone who supported our Spooky Spectacular event before half term. We were able to raise over £400 which is wonderful and the money will be used to continue to enhance childrens' learning through visitors and other experiences.

#### TT Rockstars

Before half term we participated in an ECM Trust wide TT Rockstars competition in KS2. It was wonderful to see how hard everyone was trying in school, as well as at home to show their times table knowledge in order to score points for themselves and our school. We competed against nine other schools and we are delighted to inform you that we finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place 😊. Well done everyone!

#### Parents Evening

You will have received communication already about our Parents Meeting Events being held next week on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup>. The booking system is now live. Please remember that if you wish to book an appointment you have until 12pm on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November to do so. If you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact the school office for assistance.

#### Bike Shed

Due to the darker mornings and evenings our bike shed has now been closed for the winter. It will reopen in February.

#### Poppy Sales

Thank you to everyone who has supported the British Legion's Poppy Appeal. Once they confirm how much we have raised we will let you know. Last year we raised over £200 which is fantastic, thank you for all your support.

### Food Hygiene Rating

Our on site kitchen, where school lunches are prepared was subject to an environmental health inspection this week. We are delighted to inform you that we have successfully achieved a 5 star rating for food hygiene standards. Congratulations and thanks to our lovely catering team 😊.



### Names on Clothing

To support our efforts to return lost clothing it is really helpful if you can put your child's name in all their clothing, including their coat and PE kit. We continue to offer uniform for sale for just 50p an item and if you are unsure about your child's uniform needs, please consult the uniform policy.

### 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.

### 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 for any reason please contact the main school 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.

# 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.