



Athersley South Primary School

www.athersleysouth-primary.co.uk

First Friday

Edition 1
September 2023

Dear Parents,

Welcome back! First Friday is our monthly school newsletter, sent home on the First Friday of every month as we endeavour to keep you fully informed about school life.

Return to School

It has been absolutely fabulous to have everyone back in school this week although a little warm!! We are really pleased with how everyone is settling in, especially in EYFS.

Staffing

We are delighted to welcome Miss Lavery, Ms Hayward, Mr Balmforth and Mrs Powell to our staffing team this year. We would also like to inform you that we now have a new Premises Manager, Mr Marson.

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 Website

Please access our school website to look at the learning activities happening across school. Each Friday we also post photos of our Learners of the Week, Class of the Week and other super learners 😊. You can also find copies of all letters that are sent home.

PE and Earrings

PE is a statutory part of the curriculum and we would kindly ask that you ensure your child has their PE kit in school on their PE days. Please can we also politely remind you that children are not allowed to wear earrings for PE lessons. These should be removed before your child comes to school on their PE days. Please be aware that staff are not allowed to cover earrings with plasters or assist your child in removing their earrings.

School Car Park

We wish to remind you that the school car park is for staff only. Blue Badge holders can access the car park, but we ask that you show your valid pass to a member of staff in the school office. Please note that the person who holds the badge must themselves be collecting a child from school. We ask that you do not use the school drive when the children are entering/leaving school for the safety of all site users and appreciate your support in this matter.

Y4 Swimming

Our Y4 children begin a 15 week course of swimming lessons next week. We look forward to following their progress.

Breakfast Club

A reminder that all places at Breakfast Club must be pre-booked and paid for no later than midday on the day before the booking is being made for.

School-Home Communication

Please can we remind you that it is essential that you let us know if you change your phone number or email address. Changes of address should also be communicated to the school office so we can update your child's records. We use email communication wherever possible, in line with other schools, as this is an efficient method of communication, avoids letters getting lost and also supports our efforts to be more environmentally friendly.

Children and Mobile Phones in School

Whilst we do not encourage children to bring mobiles to school we appreciate that some parents like their child to have one for their journey to and from school. Mobiles are collected by staff in a morning and kept until the end of the school day. If you wish your child to bring a phone to school, please can you collect and complete a form from the school office. I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that school takes no responsibility for any damage or loss of mobile phones while in school. Thank you.

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.

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.