



Athersley South Primary School

www.athersleysouth-primary.co.uk

First Friday

Edition 6
February 2022

Dear Parents,

We hope you find this month's First Friday useful in providing information about what is happening in school.

Staffing

We are pleased to have welcomed Miss Jewkes back to Class 4 and look forward to Mrs White's return to Class 6 on Monday 14th February. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Smith who has been teaching Class 6 in Mrs White's absence. Mrs Twist remains absent from work at this time, with Mrs Wheelwright currently teaching Class 2.

As you will appreciate, recent spikes in covid infections across Barnsley have also impacted on ASPS leading to some staffing capacity issues. Please be assured we strive hard to ensure your child is taught and/or supported by familiar adults wherever possible. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Young Voices

Our Glee Club were disappointed that the Young Voices concert was postponed in January, due to covid. However, we are pleased that the children now have a rearranged date to look forward to and their singing continues to go from strength to strength each week. It promises to be a super show 😊.

Residential

We are excited for our Y5/6 children and staff who will embark on a residential in the Lake District on Monday 14th February. The week will be full of fantastic activities and opportunities and we know everyone will have an amazing experience. We look forward to seeing the photos 😊.

Safer Internet Day

This year Safer Internet Day is on 8th Feb. The theme is 'All fun and games? Exploring respect and relationships online' which is all about children learning to be respectful to others online and not getting involved in online bullying or making others feel unhappy or unsafe. In school next week all children will be participating in activities around this theme as we continue to support our children in their understanding of how to use the internet and IT safely. As part of this support, you will be aware we are now sending home a monthly newsletter with up to date information on current IT trends and any issues to be aware of, with helpful guidance. We would encourage you to read this as it is very useful.

Y4 Swimming

Following completion of their 15 week swimming course, we are now awaiting certificates from Royston Leisure for our Y4 children in order to celebrate their achievements. We are hoping to have these before half term and they will be presented as soon as we are able.

Relief SMSA Vacancies

We continue to recruit relief School Meals Supervisory Assistants to work on an 'as and when' basis at lunchtime. If you would be interested in applying, please contact the office for an application form. Please be aware that if your application meets the criteria you will have to attend an interview and a full DBS check will be undertaken.

Covid-19

As you are more than aware, Covid-19 continues to be prominent in our local community. If you are in any doubt about whether your child should attend school, please contact us via telephone or email and we will endeavour to advise as best we can.

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 8:45 – 11:45am

FS1 afternoon – 12:10-3.10pm

FS2 8:50am – 3:00pm

KS1 8:50am – 3:00pm and KS2 8:50am – 3:05pm.

If your child cannot attend school for any reason please contact school 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 is Mr C. Buckle who works 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 Buckle. 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 from school.

Dates for your diary

21st - Friday 26th February Half term, school closed.

Monday 28th February INSET Day, school closed to pupils.

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 Miss Crossland our Parent Support Advisor, Mr Buckle 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.