



Athersley South Primary School

www.athersleysouth-primary.co.uk

First Friday

Edition 5
January 2022

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year to you all! We hope that you enjoyed the holiday and were able to spend time with family and friends.

Staffing

At the end of last term we said goodbye to Mr Ganley, who has decided to pursue a career away from teaching. Mrs White will take responsibility for Class 6 until the summer. Unfortunately, both Mrs White and Miss Jewkes, in Class 4, suffered a family bereavement during the holiday, but we hope they will be able to return soon. Mrs Wheelwright is currently teaching Class 2 in Mrs Twist's absence and, temporarily, we welcome Mrs Smith and Mrs Bates who will work in KS1 and EYFS respectively, covering teacher's PPA time.

Y4 Swimming

Next week our Y4 children will complete their 15 week swimming programme. We are super proud of the children and the progress they have made, becoming more confident, developing their swimming skills and learning about safety in and around water. Well done to all of our Y4 children 😊.

Winning Team

Last term the Hawks were successful in winning the team trip, having accumulated the most success stones across the term. As a result, all the Hawks were treated to a virtual pantomime in the week before Christmas.

Festive Fundraising

We would like to say a very big thank you to you all for supporting our festive non uniform day. We were delighted to be able to donate over £150 to Barnsley Hospice, a very worthwhile and local cause.

Christmas Performances

It was wonderful to be able to welcome you to our Christmas performances. We were very proud of all that the children achieved and their fabulous singing and efforts and hoped that you enjoyed the performances too 😊.

Relief SMSA Vacancies

We are currently looking 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 school office for an application form. Please be aware that should your application meet 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 and we continue to take appropriate precautions in school, in line with Government guidance, which includes staff wearing face coverings in communal areas. If you are unsure about current isolation rules, please refer to the return to school letter that was sent out on Monday this week via email. It can also be accessed on the letters page on the school website. 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. We would also like to remind you that we are unable to accept negative LFD results when a child has symptoms and it is important to book a PCR in such situations. Please also be aware that guidance changes frequently.

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 will be Mr C. Buckle. 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 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

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

Monday 28th February INSET Day, school closed to pupils, but open to staff for training.

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.