

Dear Parents,

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

Celebrating the Queen's Jubilee

Wow! What fun we had celebrating the Queen's Jubilee before half term. We trimmed school with bunting and enjoyed a lovely 'street party' in school with scrumptious food and treats made by the children.

Thank you everyone for dressing up in your red, white and blue for the occasion. Pictures of our activities can be found on individual class pages on the school website, but also on the praise page via this link,

<https://www.athersleysouth-primary.co.uk/praise-page.html>

Coal Mining Museum Visit

Y3/4 have participated in their visit to the Yorkshire Coal Mining Museum last week. This included a trip down the mine and was both interesting and informative, enjoyed by staff and children alike.

KS1 Visit to Yorkshire Wildlife Park

Final preparations are now under way for the planned KS1 visit to Yorkshire Wildlife Park. This promises to be a really enjoyable visit and we look forward to hearing all about it on the children's return.

Chicken pox

Please be aware that we have recently seen a high number of cases of chicken pox, particularly amongst our younger children in school. Please monitor your child for symptoms.

Learners of the Week

Please can we remind you that if your child receives a Learner of the Week certificate we take their photo and this can be found on the school website on the Praise Page 😊 Top Table will be making a return soon and from September we hope to invite Parents and Carers back into assemblies so you can see your child receive their certificate in person.

Y6 Leavers Assembly

Towards July, staff and children in Y6 will be preparing for their Leavers Assembly which will be celebrated with us in school. This will be held on the final day of term. Parents/Carers will be invited to this and further details will follow closer to the time.

Therapy Dog

We are delighted to now be working with Therapy Dogs UK, a national charity that supports volunteers in taking their own dogs into establishments, including schools, to provide comfort, distraction and stimulation. We

hope that by working with Lucy, our nominated volunteer and Bernard, a beautiful St. Bernard dog, we will be able to support more children with a range of social, emotional and educational needs. The children were all introduced to Bernard some weeks ago and his photo can be viewed on the school website's Praise Page 😊.

Transition Days

In preparation for their move to new classes in September, children will all spend time in their new classes, with their new teacher on Thursday 14th July and Friday 15th July. Further details will follow closer to the time.

Mayor's Inauguration

We are delighted to have been invited to send a small representation from Athersley South to the Mayor's inauguration service this week. The local councillor Sarah-Jane Tattersall is due to take over the role of Mayor for a year and we will see her begin her term of office.

Coats and Water Bottles

Please ensure your child has a coat and water bottle in school every day. The English weather is very changeable as we know so children need to be prepared for rain and have a coat available in school. Thank you for your help.

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.

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.