

Dear Parents,

Welcome to this month's newsletter.

Hello Yellow Day

A HUGE thank you to everyone who supported our fundraising efforts on Hello Yellow Day on Monday 10th October. It was really fantastic to see the school flooded in yellow ☺. Following the non-uniform day we were able to make a donation of £132 to the Young Minds charity. Please remember that their website is a really useful point for information and advice and can be accessed via the following link <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

Water Bottles

If at any point you wish to purchase a water bottle from school, please be aware that there is now an option to pay for one on ParentPay. If you do credit your child's account, please contact the school office in order for your child to be provided with one as we do not automatically receive a notification when you pay.

Eco Schools Update

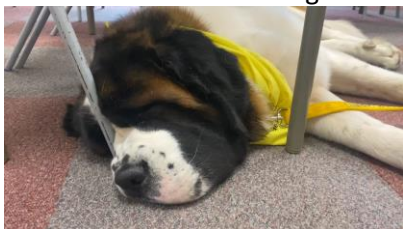
Throughout October Mrs Webb, Mr Simpson and children from Year 3, 4 and 5 have been busy completing an Environmental Review. They looked at lots of different areas including waste, energy, litter, biodiversity, global citizens and transport; to see what we already do and how we can get better. Next, children from Years 5 and 6 will develop an action plan to improve some of the areas, which children from Years 1 and 2 will help work on and put into action.

Spooky Spectacular

It was fabulous to see everyone looking fantastic at the Spooky Spectacular. We hope everyone enjoyed it ☺.

Bernard Visits

We are delighted that Bernard, the St. Bernard therapy dog, continues to visit us. He is loved by the children and on his last visit we tired him out and he had a nap before he went home! If you visit the Praise Page on the school website you can even hear him snoring!



Parents Evening

We are looking forward to welcoming Parents/Carers to our Autumn Term Parents Evening on Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th November. Please can we politely remind you to book online before the system closes at 12pm on Monday 7th November. If you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact the school office.

Children in Need

Earlier this week you should have received an email detailing our next fundraising day for BBC Children in Need. Continuing with our annual tradition we will be having a non-uniform PJ day with the option of dressing in spots in keeping with the Be 'Spotacular' theme of this year's appeal. Save the date in your diary – Friday 18th November ☺.

WOW – Walk to School

The Walk to School Initiative is back! Walk, scoot or cycle to school in order to earn a badge each month! Further information can be found on their website <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/walk-to-school/primary-schools>

SMSA Recruitment

We are currently looking to recruit additional relief SMSAs to provide 'as and when' cover in the event of staff absence. If you are interested, please call at reception for an application form and job description.

School-Home Paperless Communication

As we continue to use email for communication we would politely request that if you change your email address you contact the school office so your details can be updated.

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 – currently closed

FS2 and KS1 8:45am – 3:15pm

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 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 D. Scarth. 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 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.

Dates for Your Diary

Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th November – Parents Evening
Friday 18th November – Children in Need PJ day

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 Mrs Smart 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 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.