



Athersley South Primary School

www.athersleysouth-primary.co.uk

First Friday

Edition 1
September 2021

Dear Parents,

Welcome back! First Friday is our monthly school newsletter, sent home on the First Friday of every month. We endeavour to keep you fully informed about school life and highlight upcoming events.

Return to School

It has been absolutely fabulous to have everyone back in school this week and we are delighted with how well everyone is settling in, especially our youngest children. I would also like to thank you for your support this week.

Covid-19

While we are beginning to return to a more 'normal' way of school life, we are fully aware that Covid-19 still poses risks that could impact upon school. Our revised risk assessment can be found on the website, along with an outbreak contingency plan should we see a large number of cases within school. As you will likely be aware, the rules regarding Covid and isolation have now changed. You will receive a handy guide via email to support you in understanding the impact of this on school.

Staffing

We are delighted to welcome back Miss Jewkes, Mrs Hale and Mrs Lees from their maternity leave. It is great to have them back in the team ☺.

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 Twist, LKS2 – Mr Gledhill 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. You can also find information about the curriculum, extra-curricular activities (once they resume) and policies as well as being able to access letters that have been sent home.

PE and Earrings

Please can we 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.

Breakfast Club

Our new Breakfast Club booking system is now 'live' and you will have received an email from Mrs Hyko about this. Please note sessions must be booked and paid for in advance.

Beat the Street

Following our participation in the Beat the Street Competition in July, we are absolutely delighted to have been announced as one of the winning schools 😊 Thank you to everyone who got involved and supported our efforts 😊. Well done!

After School Clubs

We will be looking to reinstate some after school clubs in the very near future. This is an exciting time for us all as we have missed being able to offer these extra-curricular activities.

School-Home Paperless Communication

We continue to use email communication wherever possible, in line with other schools. This is a more efficient method of communication, avoids letters getting lost and also supports our efforts to be more environmentally friendly. As such, please can we remind you that it is essential that you let us know if you change your email address.

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 after school. Mobiles are collected by staff 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. Thanks.

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.

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 – currently closed

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 the main school office on (01226) 284223 before 9.30am.

Miss Crossland 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, Miss Crossland may contact you by phone or you may be invited to attend an internal school panel with Miss Crossland 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 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 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 Miss Crossland 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.