



Athersley South Primary School

www.athersleysouthprimary.co.uk

First Friday

Edition 1
September 2018

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 your child's progress. If in doubt, please ask us.

Staffing

As many of you will be aware, we said goodbye to some members of staff in July and welcomed others back. Mrs Hale, Mrs Lees and Mrs Webb, have all now returned from their maternity leave on a part time basis. Mrs Fitzpatrick, who many of you will know, has also returned in the role of EYFS Leader of Learning following a two year secondment to the Local Authority.

We are also delighted to welcome Mr Wheelwright to our team. He has been appointed as our new Deputy Headteacher and I'm sure you will join us in welcoming him to our school.

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 – Mrs Fitzpatrick, KS1 – Mr Gledhill or Mrs Twist, KS2 – Miss Stanley or Mrs Twist). 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 and NEW MOBILE APP!

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 and policies as well as being able to access letters that have been sent home. We are also delighted to announce that we now have a mobile app! If you install the app on your mobile device you will have access to school information, the school calendar and receive newsletter notifications. Android users should go to Google Play and search for 'School Jotter' and iOS users should go to the App Store and search for 'School Jotter'. Users need to choose Athersley South from the list and then it will automatically show up each time the app is opened.

Jeans for Genes Day

On Friday 21st September we are again going to participate in the 'Jeans for Genes' Campaign. For a contribution of 50p children can come to school in their jeans and ordinary clothes rather than their school uniform. The money raised will be donated to the charity, helping 500,000 children living with a genetic disorder in the UK. We very much hope you will support us for a very worthwhile cause.

Playgroup

Mrs Walch will once again be running playgroup on a Monday afternoon 1.30-2.45 in the House of Clubs with Mrs Midgley. There are activities, games and a chance for a cuppa and a chat. We very much hope if you have young, pre-school children that you'll join us. Please contact Mrs Walch or Mrs Midgley if you require further information.

Children and Mobile Phones in School

Whilst we do not encourage children to bring mobiles to school we appreciate that some parents do like their child to be able to contact them 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. Thank you.

Names on Clothing

It is really helpful if you can put your child's name in all their clothing, including their coat and PE kit. This helps us to return their items to them more easily when they are lost!

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 12:15 – 3:15pm

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.

Mrs Midgley 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 continue to be Mrs Nicola Fowler. Her role is to work with school and families to offer support, advice and guidance where punctuality and attendance causes concern. In such cases, Mrs Midgley may contact you by phone or you may be invited to attend an internal school panel with Mrs Midgley and Mrs Fowler. 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. If your child has a medical appointment you should inform either your child's class teacher or the school office so the appropriate mark can be recorded in the register. In such cases you will not be asked to complete a form.

Dates for your Diary

Friday 21st September – 'Jeans for Genes' non uniform day

Tuesday 25th September - Macmillan coffee afternoon (2pm)

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. Recent changes in Government guidance has seen the threshold for persistent absenteeism change from below 85% to 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, Nicola Fowler, 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. Following recent changes to guidance and legislation, 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 Midgley our Parent Support Advisor, Nicola Fowler 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 Midgley 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.