



Athersley South Primary School

www.athersleysouthprimary.co.uk

First Friday

Edition 4
December 2017

Dear Parents,

As ever, please read on to find out what is happening in school and what is coming up before Christmas!

Children in Need

It was wonderful to again see our children raising money for the benefit of others when they participated in our non-uniform day in aid of Children in Need. We raised £173. Well done everyone ☺.

St. Helen's Christmas Lights Switch On

Thursday 14th December is the official turning on of the Christmas lights at St. Helens Church on Laithes Lane and our KS2 children have been invited to sing. We have participated at this event for the last few years and it was lovely to see a number of our children present previously. The children will need to arrive at the church around 4.30pm for the turning on of the lights and some festive singing. The children do not have to wear school uniform. Please be aware that while some ASPS staff will be present, children will need to be supervised by their Parents/Carers. A letter with further details will be sent out shortly.

Junior Road Safety Officers

The Y5/6 children of Athersley South School Council have been given an exciting new role: Junior Road Safety Officers. This role involves being pro-active in making the children safe in and around school and especially near the busy roads. Each month we will have a new focus and actively promote the information and ideas involved in being safe. With the dark months coming, the Junior Road Safety Officers will have all the information and support to help the children to keep safe!

Christmas Charity Non-Uniform Day

On Friday 8th December we are holding a Christmas themed non-uniform day to support Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice and their Christmas Appeal. Children and staff are being asked to wear something festive that day e.g. Christmas jumper, tinsel in their hair, a festive hat/headband or paint your nose red to resemble Rudolph! We would also ask for a donation of 50p for the hospice and the very worthwhile work that they do locally. Further information about Bluebell Wood can be found on their website www.bluebellwood.org.

Letters on Website

You can now receive letters electronically via our website. You will also continue to receive paper copies. Please visit our website www.athersleysouthprimary.co.uk and click on the 'Parents' tab at the top then the 'Letters Home' branch on the next page. Here you will see that you can sign up to 'Newsletter Subscription'. Letters will then be emailed to you when they are added to the site.

Winter Weather

As the cold weather is now well upon us, please can we ask that you ensure your child brings appropriate outdoor clothing to school with them to wear at break and lunchtime.

KS1 Visit to the National Emergency Services Museum

Final preparations are currently underway for the KS1 visit to the National Emergency Services Museum on Wednesday 13th December. It promises to be a very busy and interesting day and both staff and pupils are excited!

Punctuality and Attendance

At Athersley South we have high expectations of all children in relation to punctuality and attendance. Attendance for each class for the term so far is shown below.

F1 (am) – 91.67%

F1 (pm) – 92.32%

F2 – 92.59%

Class 1 – 95.27%

Class 2 – 95.99%

Class 3 – 96.33%

Class 4 – 95.83%

Class 5 – 97.87%

Class 6 – 94.98%

Class 7 – 96.71%

Class 8 – 95.62%

Congratulations to **Class 5** who are currently the class with the best attendance!

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. 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

Wednesday 13th December – KS1 visit to The National Emergency Services Museum in Sheffield

Thursday 14th December – Christmas Dinner in the Dining Room

Thursday 14th December – Christmas Carols in the Community at St. Helen's Church 4.30pm start

Monday 18th December – F2 Christmas Sing-a-long and Christmas Party Day

Tuesday 19th December – KS1 Christmas Show followed by KS2 Christmas Carols

Tuesday 19th December – KS1 Christmas Party

Wednesday 20th December – Christmas Party for Class 4 and Class 5

Thursday 21st December – Christmas Party for Classes 6, 7 & 8

Friday 22nd December – Break up for the Christmas holiday.

Monday 8th January – School re-opens

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 one of the Headteachers. 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.