

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope you all had an enjoyable half term. Welcome to June's edition of First Friday which contains information about upcoming events.

Showtime and Arts Week

Before half term, school was buzzing with excitement as preparations began for our end of year production. During arts week children throughout school were involved in various activities, demonstrating their creative flair and talents. Those directly involved in the show have been rehearsing hard and these rehearsals will continue through to July. The stage and set is starting to take shape, as are the costumes. We are lucky to have such talented children in our school and cannot wait for showtime!

Paws, Claws, Tales and Roars Art Competition

Our after school arts club recently entered a competition, organized by the Cooper Gallery. Unfortunately, on this occasion, we didn't have any winning entries BUT all children received a certificate of achievement and their work is now on a digital display in the Cooper Gallery and on the Cooper Gallery webpage <https://www.cooper-gallery.com/whats-on/paws-claws-tales-roars-the-next-generation> Well done to everyone.

Y6 SATS

Our Y6 children completed their SATs before the holiday and we are very proud of the mature manner in which they approached the tests and conducted themselves throughout the week.

Phonics Screening Check

This month, all our Y1 children will participate in a phonics screening check. This is a national assessment that monitors understanding and application of phonics. Good luck to all our children.

Y4 Multiplication Check

Our Y4 children have been working extremely hard to prepare for their national multiplication check. It is designed to determine whether pupils can recall their times tables fluently and is undertaken by all Y4 children. It is quite tricky with the expectation to answer all 25 questions accurately. We wish our Y4 children all the very best of luck.

Car Parking – School and Hammertons

This is a polite reminder that the school car park is for the use of staff and blue badge holders **ONLY**. The owner of the blue badge must be present and leaving their car to collect a pupil. This restriction is in place for the safety of ALL site users and it is disappointing that some people continue to ignore this rule. Can we also ask that you do NOT use Hammertons car park as it is private land. Cars should be parked at New Lodge

Working Men's Club. We appreciate everyone's co-operation as safety is paramount.

Class Assemblies

Last half term a number of class assemblies were held. We look forward to welcoming more Parents and Carers in this half term so you can see the amazing learning that has been taking place in school since September. Below is a reminder of the remaining class assemblies and the dates of these.

Friday 14 th June 2024	Class 2
Friday 21 st June 2024	Class 8
Friday 28 th June 2024	Class 9

Who should I speak to?

We very much hope that 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 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. Wheelwright, LKS2 – Mrs. Belfield 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.

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 – 12.25-3.25 FS2 8:45am – 3:15pm KS1 8:45am – 3:15pm and KS2 8:50am – 3:20pm. If your child cannot attend school, please contact the office on (01226) 284223 before 9.30am. Mrs. Smith will contact families if an absence has not been reported. This is because we have a statutory duty to ensure all children are safe. Mr. Scarth continues to be our EWO this year and 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. Smith may contact you by phone or you may be invited to attend an internal school panel with Mrs Smith 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.

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. Scarth, 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. Smith 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. Smith 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.