

---

30<sup>th</sup> March 2026

---



# Kirkstall Valley Primary School



Argie Road, Leeds LS4 2QZ

www.kirkstallvalley.org.uk T: 0113 887 8982

---

Dear Kirkstall Valley Primary School Families,

How are you? I hope this newsletter finds you well.

It is genuinely hard to believe that we have already reached the end of the spring term. When I reflect on the past few months, there is an extraordinary amount to be proud of within our school walls. From navigating external inspections with characteristic calm to witnessing the daily acts of quiet leadership from our pupils, our shared values of courage, compassion, and commitment have been wonderfully evident. On a personal level, I am certainly ready for a period of rest. It has been a particularly challenging term for me, but as we close the doors for the holidays, my overriding feeling is one of immense pride in everything we have achieved together as a community. I hope you all manage to enjoy a deeply restorative and peaceful Easter break.

Please note, I have added the 26/27 academic calendar to the bottom of this newsletter for your information.

Best wishes,

*Phil Robertson - Headteacher*

---

## Diary Dates

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March  
Telephone parents' evening

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April  
Break up for Easter

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April  
Start of Summer 1 term

## Attendance to date:

YR – 94.4% -

Year 1 – 94.9% ↑

Year 2 – 96% ↑👑

Year 3 – 92.6% -

Year 4 – 91.3% -

Year 5 – 94.6% -

Year 6 – 95.5% -

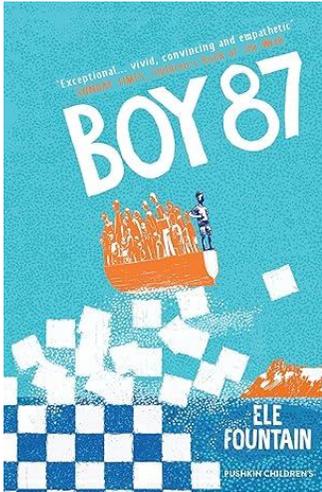
**School = 94.1% - (Target = 96%)**

## Donate a book!

Our library is a wonderful place but it takes a lot of time and money to keep it looking so good. If ever you felt like donating a book, you can do so via our local partner, Truman Books in Farsley. The new wishlist link is up and running: <https://trumanbooks.co.uk/recommended-reads-for-kirkstall-valley>

## Robertson Recommends: Boy 87

### By Ele Fountain



This week, I am recommending a deeply moving and eye-opening novel that has stayed with me long after I turned the final page. *Boy 87* is an incredibly powerful story about survival, friendship, and the unimaginable choices forced upon those seeking safety.

The narrative follows Shif, an ordinary boy who enjoys school, thinks about his future, and loves nothing more than a quiet, tactical game of chess with his best friend. However, his world is entirely upended when he is forced to flee his home to avoid dangerous military conscription. Shif's journey thrusts him into a perilous and uncertain reality, transforming him from a typical schoolboy into a refugee, stripped of his identity and known only as 'Boy 87'.

For our older pupils in Upper Key Stage 2, this book provides a vital, empathetic window into the experiences of displaced people around the world. It looks past the news headlines and focuses entirely on the human element. Shif's journey is a profound exploration of our core school values; his story demonstrates immense courage in the face of overwhelming adversity, and it challenges the reader to respond to the plight of others with genuine, open-hearted compassion.

It is a gripping, sometimes challenging, but ultimately hopeful read that is guaranteed to spark important and meaningful conversations at home.

## **! Important Health Notice: Measles, Chickenpox, and Shingles**

Later this week, you will receive a separate, highly important letter regarding a pupil in our school who is currently receiving chemotherapy. As this treatment significantly suppresses their immune system, they are at serious risk if exposed to measles, chickenpox, or shingles. We are asking for your full cooperation in notifying the school office immediately if you suspect your child, or anyone in your household, has contracted or been exposed to any of these illnesses. Please read the forthcoming letter carefully when it arrives. We rely heavily on the compassion and commitment of our entire school community to help protect this child, and we thank you in advance for your vigilance and support.

## Parents' Evening Consultations

It was wonderful to welcome so many of you into school last Tuesday for our in-person parents' evening consultations. Thank you for taking the time to attend and for engaging so positively with our teaching staff; these shared conversations are an absolute cornerstone of your child's success. For those families who opted for a remote catch-up, please accept this as a quick reminder that our telephone parents' evening will be taking place tomorrow, Tuesday 31st March. Teachers will be calling at your allocated times, so please do keep your phones close to hand.

## Coast to Coast: A Bridge Weekend and the Joy of Shared Miles

After the punishing elevations of the North York Moors last week, this weekend's training schedule called for a slightly gentler 'bridge' ride—a necessary tactical step to allow the legs to recover while maintaining forward momentum.

I had the absolute privilege of sharing this particular ride with a good friend. While the route itself was less demanding on the climbing front, the British weather certainly made up for it with some incredibly fierce headwinds! However, battling the elements is always infinitely easier when you have a friend alongside you to share the physical effort and the conversation.

Endurance training can so often be a quiet, solitary pursuit, so taking a few hours to simply ride, talk, and connect was wonderfully restorative and genuinely good for the soul. It was a timely reminder that while I am ultimately building towards a demanding 154-mile challenge in June, the journey itself is also about the simple, rich joy of movement and the connection of friendship.

Thank you, as always, to everyone supporting my fundraising for Parkinson's UK. If you would like to contribute as we move closer to the main event, my page is here: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/phil-robertson-2>.



### Lifelong Learning: The Expanding Horizon

As I continue to chip away at my Greek studies, I have been struck this week by a profound, if slightly daunting, realisation: the moment you begin to truly learn something, you suddenly become acutely aware of just how much more there is to discover!

When I first started, the language felt like a small, self-contained puzzle. Now, having grasped a few of the foundational rules, the whole landscape has opened up, revealing complex grammar, nuanced vocabulary, and a depth of history I had barely anticipated. Rather than feeling overwhelmed, however, I am finding this incredibly humbling. It is a brilliant reminder that true mastery is not a destination you simply arrive at, but a continuous, lifelong process.

This is exactly the mindset we strive to cultivate in our classrooms. When our children encounter a difficult concept or realise a topic is vaster than they first thought, we want them to feel that same spark of curiosity rather than a sense of defeat. Learning is an endless horizon, and acknowledging just how much we still have to learn is the very best place to start.

## Active Travel

As we end the term, it is wonderful to see so many families choosing to walk, wheel, scoot, or cycle to school. Active travel not only gives children a refreshing start to their day, but it also drastically reduces congestion at the school gates. By choosing to travel actively, or by using a 'park and stride' approach if you live further afield, you are directly helping us keep the roads immediately surrounding the school clear. Crucially, this ensures that the limited parking spaces closest to the gates remain available for those families and children who have mobility needs or disabilities and genuinely rely on them. Thank you for your ongoing compassion and commitment to keeping our school environment safe, accessible, and calm for everyone.

## Spotlight on Learning

## Nursery



We've had a busy and exciting time in Nursery this term. Our transport theme has inspired lots of imaginative play, including building long train tracks, which the children worked on together, connecting pieces, making and adding their own homemade slopes and tunnels and testing out their engines. We've been out looking for signs of spring, noticing the seasonal changes around us and identifying minibeasts and spring flowers. We also discovered how to make bubbles, experimenting with different types of bubble wands to create huge bubbles which we enjoyed chasing and popping. We're finishing the term on a high with a special visit from a pilot, giving the children the chance to ask questions and learn more about air travel and finally we have planned an Easter Egg Hunt for the children to enjoy.

## Assembly Music

### Music of the Week: Viva La Vida by Coldplay

Our Music of the Week has been the sweeping, triumphant track *Viva La Vida* by Coldplay. The title translates to 'Long Live Life', and it felt like the perfect, uplifting anthem to close what was a very busy and at times challenging week.

## Special Assemblies

If your child is up for an award at one of our special assemblies, I will send an invite by email on a Thursday. Please do check your emails (including junk folders).

### Did you know...?

I'm Bored!



I know I've mentioned this before but as we head into the two-week Easter break, it is almost inevitable that at some point, you will hear the familiar refrain: "I'm bored!" As parents and carers, our immediate instinct is often to step in, solve the problem, and provide an activity or a screen to keep them entertained.

However, psychologists increasingly suggest that allowing children to experience genuine boredom is actually crucial for their cognitive development. When the brain is no longer being passively fed with external stimulation, it shifts into what neuroscientists call the 'Default Mode Network'.

This state is essentially the brain's incubator for creativity. In the absence of structured, ready-made entertainment, children are forced to look inward. They have to rely on their own imagination, sequence their own ideas, and figure out how to entertain themselves. Navigating that initial frustration of having 'nothing to do' builds incredible independence, problem-solving skills, and resilience.

So, over the holidays, instead of feeling the pressure to fill every quiet moment with an exciting activity, try embracing the lull. Confidently letting them sit with their boredom might just be the exact spark they need to build a den, rediscover an old book, or invent an entirely new game.

### Focus on

Sustainability Leaders



I must issue a sincere apology to the enthusiastic members of our student Sustainability Group. Over the past few weeks, I have had several children stopping me in the corridors, absolutely buzzing with new ideas and asking when our next meeting will take place.

Unfortunately, with the intense pace of this half term, we simply haven't managed to get the group together. I am incredibly sorry for this delay, as I know exactly how eager they are to get started on their latest projects to improve our school environment.

However, I want to reassure our young eco-warriors that reconvening the Sustainability Group is a firm priority for the very start of the summer term. Please keep holding onto those brilliant ideas over the Easter break; I am genuinely looking forward to hearing all about them as soon as we return!

## Residential Trip Payment Reminder

- Please could we remind parents of children in Year 6 that the £50 deposit for the residential trip should already have been paid, as this was due at the end of September. The next instalment of £65 was due in November and then one was due by February half term.
- The final payment is due by the end of April.

Thank you for your support in helping us keep payments on track.

## Payments

A reminder that we no longer use ParentPay. All payments should be made through the Arbor app. Any issues with this please let the office know.

Jargon Buster

We know that education is one of the worst institutions for using technical jargon and acronyms. In this section over the next term, I'll try and explain a few!

**SPaG: Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar** You will often hear this term used when we talk about your child's writing or upcoming assessments. Rather than just making children memorise rules in isolation, we weave SPaG into our daily English lessons. This ensures they learn how to actively apply these skills to make their own stories, reports, and letters clearer and more engaging.

**SEND: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities** This refers to the tailored provision we put in place for children who might require additional support with their learning, communication, social, or physical requirements. Identifying and supporting SEND is central to our commitment to ensuring every single child in our school is given the specific tools and environment they need to thrive.

Every day, every single person:



Safe



Ready



Respectful



Courage



Compassion



Commitment

## School calendar academic year 2025-2026

Holiday	Schools close	Schools open
Summer break		Tuesday 2 September 2025
Autumn mid-term	Friday 24 October 2025	Tuesday 4 November 2025
Christmas break	Friday 19 December 2025	Tuesday 6 January 2026
Spring mid-term	Friday 13 February 2026	Monday 23 February 2026
Easter break	Thursday 2 April 2026	Monday 20 April 2026
May Bank Holiday	Friday 1 May 2026	Tuesday 5 May 2026
Summer mid-term	Friday 22 May 2026	Monday 1 June 2026
Summer break	Friday 17 July 2026	

### Bank Holidays include

Christmas	25 & 26	December	2025
New Year's Day	1	January	2026
Good Friday	3	April	2026
Easter Monday	6	April	2026
May Day	4	May	2026
Spring Bank	25	May	2026
August	31	August	2026

### Teacher Training Days - School Closed

Monday	<u>1 September</u>	2025
Monday	<u>3 November</u>	2025
Monday	<u>5 January</u>	2026
Monday	<u>20 July</u>	2026
Tuesday	<u>21 July</u>	2026



**Kirkstall Valley Primary School**

Argie Road  
LEEDS  
LS4 2QZ

Tel: 0113 8878982

Fax: 0113 2306186

Email: [info@kirkstallvalley.org.uk](mailto:info@kirkstallvalley.org.uk)

Head Teacher: Mr Phil Robertson  
Chair of Governors: Mrs Colleen Jackson

**School calendar academic year 2026-2027**

Holiday	Schools close	Schools open
Summer break		Wednesday 2 September 2026
Autumn mid-term	Friday 23 October 2026	Tuesday 3 November 2026
Christmas break	Friday 18 December 2026	Tuesday 5 January 2027
Spring mid-term	Friday 12 February 2027	Monday 22 February 2027
Easter break	Friday 2 April 2027	Monday 19 April 2027
May Bank Holiday	Friday 30 April 2027	Tuesday 4 May 2027
Summer mid-term	Thursday 27 May 2027	Monday 7 June 2027
Summer break	Thursday 22 July 2027	

**Bank Holidays include**

Christmas	25 & 28	December	2026
New Year's Day	1	January	2027
Good Friday	26	March	2027
Easter Monday	29	March	2027
May Day	3	May	2027
Spring Bank	31	May	2027
August	30	August	2027

**Teacher Training Days - School Closed**

Tuesday	1	September	2026
Monday	2	November	2026
Monday	4	January	2027
Friday	28	May	2027
Friday	25	June	2027



School uniform:



You can buy a new school jumper or a school cardigan at the office.



Or you can buy pre-used uniform that other families have given to school.



Pre-used uniform



A small book bag: £5.00



A large book bag: £7.00



Children come to school in PE clothes on days they have PE