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# 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026

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# Kirkstall Valley Primary School

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Dear Kirkstall Valley Primary School Families,

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

Welcome to Spring 2 half-term! Now that it is March, it is officially Spring (meteorologically speaking!). Although, I imagine we still have some colder, unsettled days to come before we reach the equinox (astronomical Spring!). I am looking forward to this half-term and all of the things we have in store.

If ever you want to get in touch about anything at all, please don't hesitate to do so – my door is always open.

Best wishes,

*Phil Robertson - Headteacher*

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## 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>



## Diary Dates

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March  
KVPS World Book Day

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March  
In-person parents' evening

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March  
Book Fair

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March  
Book Fair

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March  
Book Fair

## Attendance to date:

YR – 94.9% ↓

Year 1 – 95.2% -

Year 2 – 95.9% ↑ 👑

Year 3 – 93.1% ↑

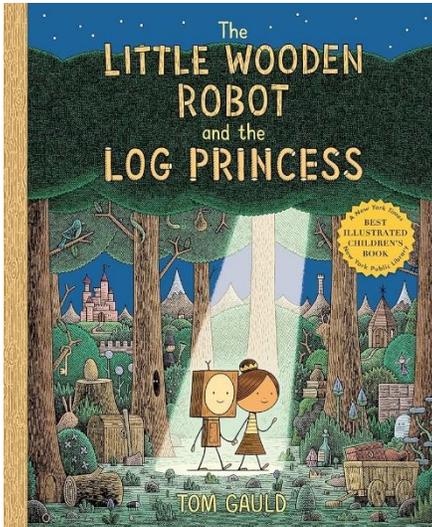
Year 4 – 91.7% -

Year 5 – 95.2% -

Year 6 – 95.6% ↑

**School = 94.5% - (Target = 96%)**

## Robertson Recommends



### ***The Little Wooden Robot and the Log Princess***

**By Tom Gauld**

I've chosen this book this week because it is a modern classic that celebrates the quiet power of looking out for one another.

The story follows a wooden robot and his sister, a log princess. Every night, the princess turns back into a log, and every morning, her brother faithfully wakes her up with a magic word. It is a simple, beautiful routine of care—until an accident sends them on a huge adventure across frozen lands and through dark forests.

For us as parents and carers, this is a wonderful story about loyalty and persistence. The robot doesn't have superpowers; he just has a deep commitment to his sister. He keeps going, step by step, even when things get difficult. It's a gentle reminder to our children (and ourselves) that being

a hero often just means being reliable and kind.

The illustrations are clear and charming, filled with tiny details that children love to spot. It's a story that feels both old and new, teaching us that no matter how big the world feels, we are never truly lost if we have someone looking out for us.

In a busy week, this book is a lovely invitation to slow down and appreciate the simple bonds that keep our own families moving forward - ***It's in our library, of course!***

### **A Reminder: Appropriate PE Kit**

We have recently seen a decline in the standard of uniform worn on designated Physical Education days. Please accept this as a reminder that adherence to the school's PE kit policy is mandatory.

Having the right tools for the job is a fundamental part of preparation and readiness to learn, whether in the classroom or outside for PE. The required, acceptable PE kit is strictly limited to the following:

- **Shorts/leggings:** Plain blue or plain black
- **T-shirt:** Plain white or plain blue
- **Tracksuit:** Plain blue or plain black (for colder weather)

Football shirts, brightly coloured activewear, and heavily branded items are not permitted. Arriving in the correct kit ensures equality, safety, and a focused mindset for the lesson. I appreciate your co-operation in ensuring your child is correctly equipped for their PE days.

### **International Week**

#### **What a wonderful week it was!**

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to its success—especially our fantastic dual-language readers who brought the sounds of the world into our classrooms. Congratulations to our children for embracing the week and throwing themselves so wholeheartedly into their learning and projects.

Beyond the flags and the food, this week carries a deeper significance. In an increasingly complex world, the ability to listen to voices different from our own is a vital skill. By hearing stories from other cultures, our children are learning that "different" is not something to be feared, but something to be understood.

When we pause to truly listen to someone with a different background or perspective, we build the bridges of compassion and courage that our community needs. It is through these quiet moments of curiosity that we find our shared humanity.

## Year 6 High School Offers

With National Offer Day upon us, I know many of our Year 6 families will have been eagerly awaiting news of secondary school placements. I sincerely hope that you and your children are happy with the offers received and are beginning to look forward to this exciting next chapter.

Seeing our oldest pupils reach this milestone is always a proud but bittersweet moment. We will miss this wonderful cohort immensely when the time comes for them to move on. However, I am incredibly glad that July is still a good way off! We are certainly not ready to say goodbye just yet. There is still a great deal of learning, growing, and memory-making to fit in over the coming months before we send them off to their new high schools. Let's focus on making this final stretch truly count.

## Coast to Coast

### Trusting the Process: The Art of the Taper

As many of you know, I am currently preparing for a 110-mile cycling event this coming Saturday in training for the 154 mile sponsored event in June. This week, however, my training looks a little different. I am in what athletes call a 'taper' week.

After months of high mileage and intense effort, the goal now is to dial everything back for a while. It feels entirely counter-intuitive; every instinct tells me I should be doing more, pushing harder, and 'cramming' in those final miles. Yet, I know deep down that the work is already done. The taper is about recovery, finding stillness, and trusting that the system I've built will hold strong when the pressure is on. It is a lesson in patience and the belief that sometimes, the most productive thing you can do is allow yourself the space to be ready.

I'll be raising money for Parkinson's UK, a charity I have a personal connection with. If you felt able to support this charity, my fundraising page can be found at: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/phil-robertson-2>. I have been blown away with the support of friends, family, and community members alike. I am currently at £962 and am hoping to reach £1000 or more before June

## Lifelong Learning



### The Discipline of Consistency

Following the high of last week's "click" moment, this week has been a grounding reminder of the reality of long-term learning. If last week was the view from the summit, this week has been the steady, sometimes heavy, trek through the valley.

I'll be honest: I am finding the going tough. The early momentum and the "newness" of the challenge have started to fade, replaced by the sheer demand of staying disciplined. When life gets busy—as it invariably does in a vibrant school community—extra learning is often the first thing that feels easy to push aside. It is tempting to tell ourselves we'll "catch up tomorrow," but we all know how that story ends.

I am trying to resist that urge. I am learning that mastery isn't just about the moments of breakthrough; it is about the quiet, unglamorous days in between where you simply show up. It is about choosing consistency over intensity.

This is a lesson I hope to model for our pupils: that being a learner isn't always about rapid progress. Sometimes, it is about the grit required to keep the flame flickering when the wind is blowing. It's not always easy, but I am staying the course.

## Spotlight on Learning

Year 6



Year 6 have made a fantastic start to 2026. We are very much enjoying this term's topics, including the Amazon in geography, light in science and decimals and percentages in maths. In art, we explored our identities through the disciplines of collage and drawing. We learnt about the artists Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Yinka Shonibare and Thandiwe Muriu and how they embrace the things that make them who they are, such as their culture, background and passions, to create work which others can relate to. Here are just some of the amazing self-portraits that were created.

### OFSTED

As we continue to wait for our OFSTED inspection, I'd like to invite you to add any comments you may have to the Parent View section of the OFSTED portal. While many of you share your thoughts with us at the school gate or during parent evenings, it would be lovely to get some of these wonderful comments (and of course anything we can do to improve) ready for when we are inspected. You can do this by visiting:

<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/how-to-use>

### Assembly Music

#### Music of the Week: Celebration

Our Music of the Week has been the joyful, unmistakable anthem *Celebration* by Kool & the Gang. Following the brilliant success of International Week, it felt only right to fill the school with a track universally recognised as a call to come together.

### 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).

### Hot Choc Fridays!



We will be continuing with Hot Choc Fridays this half-term – one of my favourite weekly moments! I meet with the top Dojo winners from each class on a Friday morning and we share a hot chocolate together. I always ask them what they'd change if they were Headteacher for the day. I typically get answers like "add a swimming pool", or "have unlimited playtimes". This week I asked what they'd *keep the same* and fiercely guard. The unanimous answer? "The grown-ups!". A really lovely moment.

Did you know...?

Hydration



**A Quick Reminder: Staying Ahead of the Heat**

As we finally begin to see glimpses of warmer weather, I want to share a brief reminder about the importance of hydration. In any demanding physical or mental endeavour, waiting until you actually feel thirsty means you are already playing catch-up. Mild dehydration quietly impacts a child's concentration, mood, and energy levels in the classroom long before any obvious physical symptoms appear. Encouraging our children to build a simple, consistent habit of drinking water throughout the day ensures their biological systems are primed and ready for learning. Please ensure they come to school with a named, refillable water bottle; good preparation is half the battle when it comes to keeping their minds sharp and bodies resilient for the day ahead

Focus on

Mindmate Ambassadors  
and Digital Leaders!



Our MindMate Assembly today has focused on Zero Discrimination Day. Today and every day, we aim to celebrate inclusion, respect, and equality for all. At our school, we live by our values of Courage, Compassion, and Commitment. It takes Courage to speak up when we see unfairness. It takes Compassion to support one another, regardless of our differences. And, it takes Commitment to ensure everyone feels safe and valued. We recognise and respect all members of our community, including those protected by the law through the Protected Characteristics because everyone deserves dignity, fairness, and belonging. Together, we create a school where discrimination has no place and kindness leads the way.

Our Digital Leaders are excited to get back into action this half term with the return of Computing lessons for all classes. This group of trustworthy older children will be spending time in lessons with Years 1, 2, and 3 to assist the younger pupils with tasks such as logging on, troubleshooting common computer issues, and learning how to use features of various programs. Digital Leaders have been tasked with encouraging the children to think logically, problem-solve with gentle guidance, and use key computing vocabulary. We are also hopeful that, very soon, the Digital Leaders will be able to assist with the organisation and implementation of a very exciting Lego League project!

## 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.

There are two remaining instalments of £65:

- one due by February half term
- and the final payment 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.



## Your PTA: Fueling the Extras

While the school budget covers the essentials of learning, it is our Parent Teacher Association (PTA) that funds the magic in the margins. From subsidising school trips and purchasing new playground equipment to funding visiting authors and STEM workshops, the PTA pays for the "extras" that turn a good education into a memorable one. But they cannot do it without your voice and your hands. Getting involved does not require a seat on a committee or hours of meetings; it simply needs parents willing to offer a small slice of time to help us build a richer experience for every child.

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



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