

Weekly Newsletter 14th September



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 and your family well.

We are well into the new routines and everyone is doing great! The children have settled so well and seem to be really enjoying the challenges of their new classes.

As always, if there's anything you're unsure of, would like to bring to my attention or just discuss, do make an appointment to see me or just catch me around school before and after school.

Have a great week!

Best wishes,

Phil Robertson - Headteacher



Diary Dates

Monday 28th September
Immunisations YN-Y6

Tuesday 6th October
Individual photos

Tuesday 13th October
Parents' Evening 1

Tuesday 20th October
Parents' Evening 2

Attendance:

YR – 96.8%

Year 1 – 92.8%

Year 2 – 98.4% 🏆

Year 3 – 97.3%

Year 4 – 94.8%

Year 5 – 93.5%

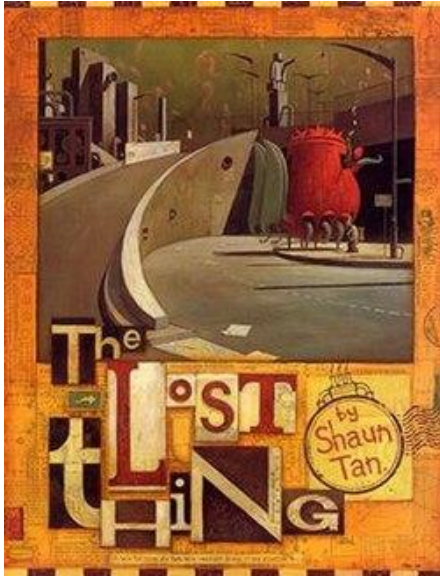
Year 6 – 96.3%

School = **95.4%** - (Target = 95%)

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: *The Lost Thing* by Shaun Tan



This is a book I shared with older children in an assembly last week:

The Story A young boy discovers a bizarre, tentacled, mechanical creature on the beach. While the rest of a busy, highly regimented city ignores it, the boy makes it his mission to find out where this unusual friend truly belongs.

The Artwork Shaun Tan's illustrations are mesmerising and surreal. The intricate, industrial landscapes captivate children's imaginations, inviting them to look closely and spot the hidden details woven into every single page.

The Lesson At its core, this is a beautiful story about noticing the unnoticed. It prompts the children to think about belonging and encourages them to maintain their curiosity. It is a gentle reminder to show compassion for those who might seem 'different' or out of place, rather than becoming too busy to care.

Important Update: Free School Meals are Changing

Great news for our school community! The government is expanding Free School Meals from September 2026.

- What is changing? The previous household income cap is being removed for families on Universal Credit. Every household receiving Universal Credit will now qualify for free meals, regardless of their working hours or earnings.
- Why apply? Even if your child currently gets automatic free meals in Reception, Year 1, or Year 2, formally applying through the new criteria unlocks crucial extra funding for our school. This money directly pays for extra staff, resources, and clubs.
- What you need to do: **A letter has now been sent** explaining exactly what you need to do to apply under the new rules.

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.

Would you be interested in becoming a school governor?

We currently have vacancies on our school Governing Body and are looking for enthusiastic parents or community members to join our dedicated team. Being a school governor is a highly rewarding way to contribute to the success of Kirkstall Valley and help shape the strategic direction of our children's education.

What the role involves:

- **Strategic Planning:** Working alongside the leadership team to set the school's vision, ethos, and strategic priorities.
- **Support and Challenge:** Acting as a 'critical friend' to the school, ensuring accountability for the educational performance of the pupils and staff wellbeing.
- **Financial Oversight:** Overseeing the financial performance of the school to ensure our budget is spent effectively.
- **Time Commitment:** Preparing for and attending approximately two evening meetings per term, alongside occasional daytime school visits to see our initiatives in action.

You do not need a background in education to apply. We actively welcome diverse skill sets—whether your experience lies in project management, finance, human resources, or simply a passionate commitment to our local community. If you are interested in making a tangible difference, please contact the school office to arrange an informal chat over a cup of tea with myself or our Chair of Governors.

Breakfast Club: Keeping Everyone Safe

As our breakfast club continues to be incredibly popular, I need to share a very important safeguarding reminder regarding morning drop-offs. Please could I kindly ask that all parents and carers physically accompany their children into the school building and hand them over directly to a member of the breakfast club team. We absolutely cannot have children walking into the school grounds or building by themselves in the morning. Our number one priority is ensuring that every single child is entirely **Safe** and accounted for from the very moment they arrive on site. Taking those few extra seconds to hand them over in person guarantees they are securely registered and ready for a great start to their day. Thank you so much for your complete cooperation and understanding with this vital procedure!



What a fantastic start to the year! Year 2 have settled in brilliantly and are already showing such enthusiasm, responsibility and pride in their learning. Winning the Golden Duster on Friday was a wonderful reflection of the children's care towards their learning environment and the positive start they have made. They have also taken on their new role as Fishkeepers very seriously, carefully looking after our aquarium which homes our cherry shrimp, platies, neon tetras and corydoras. It has been lovely to see how caring and responsible they are becoming already!

Brass Lessons: Re-register for this Academic Year



A quick reminder for parents of children who have previously taken brass lessons in school: please ensure you have re-signed them up for the current academic year. All registrations for these lessons need to be completed via the Arbor app. If you have any trouble accessing this, or if your child is interested in starting lessons for the first time, please let the school office know.

Cycling

Last weekend my cycling took an unexpected detour when I had a bit of a crash. I can confidently say it was nobody's fault but my own! While the mishap has caused me a fair bit of pain last week, it is somewhat reassuring to discover that I still bounce at the age of 53. More importantly, the incident served as a sharp reminder that cycling—especially out on the open roads—requires absolute, undivided attention at all times.

I am pleased to report that I got back out in the saddle this weekend. Although I must admit there has been a definite slight knock to my confidence, it felt genuinely great to be out riding again. We often talk to the children about resilience when things get tough, and this week was a perfect personal reminder that sometimes resilience literally means getting back on the bike.

Greek Learning: The Mathematics of Language



My course starts officially on September 2st. In the meantime I have been making sure I'm clear on Greek letters and numbers, revealing just how deeply intertwined it is with the vocabulary we use every day in school. While our modern written numerals (1, 2, 3) are Arabic in origin, the English language leans heavily on ancient Greek when describing quantities and shapes.

It was a brilliant 'penny-dropping' moment to realise that learning to count in Greek meant recognising word roots we already teach in our primary classrooms:

- **Geometry:** The Greek words for numbers directly give us the names of our 2D shapes. *Pente* (five) forms the pentagon, *hex* (six) creates the hexagon, and *okto* (eight) gives us the octagon.
- **Everyday Words:** A *decade* comes directly from the Greek word *deka* (ten), a *tripod* originates from *tria* (three), and an *octopus* is literally named for having eight (*okto*) feet (*pous*).
- **Sports and Events:** A *triathlon* involves three events, while a *decathlon* demands ten.

Discovering these hidden connections is one of the greatest joys of learning a new language. It also reinforces a crucial strategy we use in class: teaching children the etymology (the origin) of words. When pupils understand that the prefix *tri-* always points back to 'three', spelling and defining new maths vocabulary becomes a logical puzzle rather than a memory test. It is wonderful proof that knowledge is rarely isolated; it is all part of one giant, interconnected web.

🎵 **Assembly Music: The Chain**



The Chain has grown quickly! We have now listened to five pieces of music, all linked to the previous track. So far we have had:

Jolene by Dolly Parton > Cecilia by Simon and Garfunkel > We Will Rock You by Queen > Mercury by Gustav Holst > Star Wars by John Williams.

Can you work out the links?! The children are doing great with it!

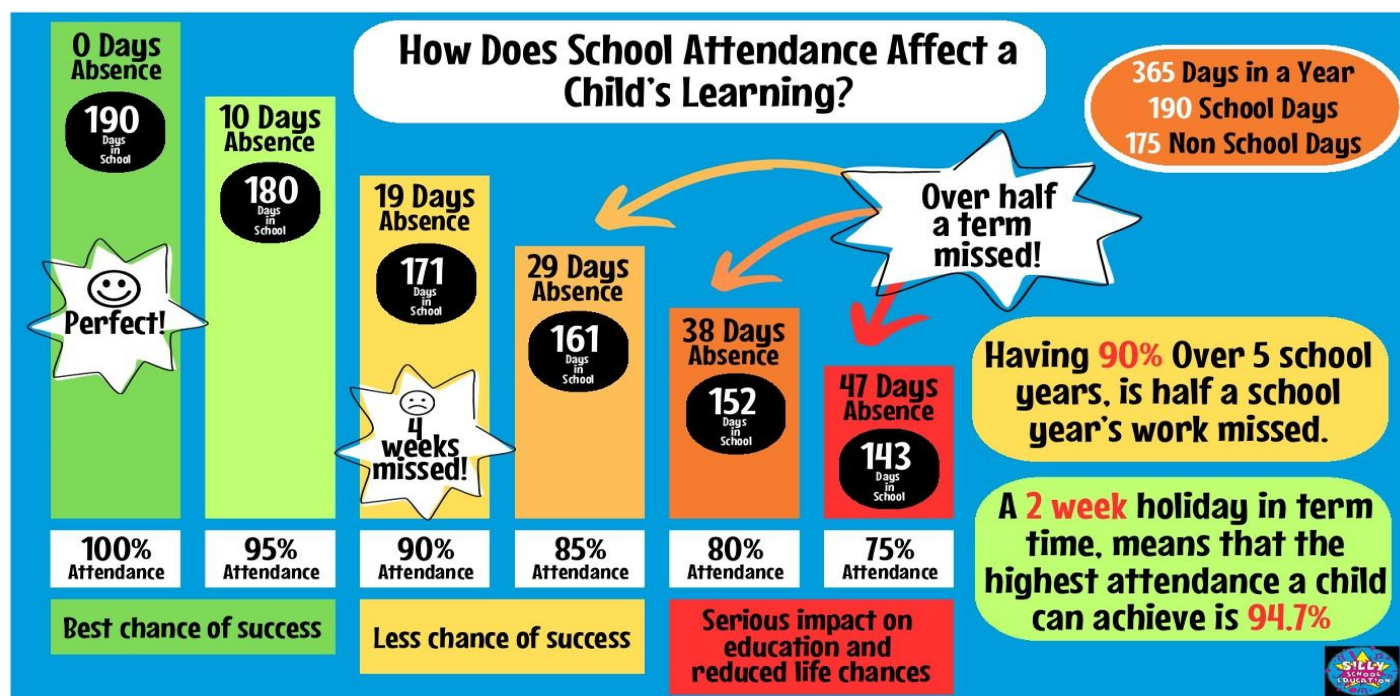
Focus on	 Arts Leaders
Our arts leaders believe that the arts are an important part of our school because they give everyone a chance to be creative, express themselves and discover new talents. Art, music, drama and dance can help us to become more confident, work as a team and share our ideas in different ways. The arts can also make us feel happy, help us to relax and give us opportunities to try something new. They can help us to understand other people and different cultures, while teaching us that it is okay to make mistakes and keep trying. Our arts leaders want to help make sure that the arts are a big part of school life and that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy, create and perform. They can't wait to see what KVPS can achieve together this year!	

Lost Property: Please Name Everything!

Please can we gently remind all parents to write their child's name in every piece of clothing they bring to school, particularly jumpers, cardigans, and coats. As the children take off their layers throughout the busy school day, our lost property box fills up remarkably quickly. Without a name inside, it is an almost impossible job for our staff to reunite identical items of uniform with their rightful owners. A quick scribble with a permanent marker on the care label or a stick-on name tag makes all the difference and helps us keep your child's belongings safe!

The Importance of Every School Day

Every single day in school counts towards your child's learning, social development, and those crucial "click" moments we want them to experience. Because consistent attendance is so vital to their overall progress, I must remind all families that **I am not permitted** to authorise any family holidays taken during term time. With 190 statutory school days in the year, this leaves 175 days for holidays, appointments, and family time outside of school hours. Any holidays taken during the academic term will be recorded as unauthorised absences. We greatly appreciate your ongoing support in ensuring your child is in school, on time, every day, ready to make the most of their education.





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!

EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage): This refers to the statutory curriculum framework used for children from birth to age five. In our school, this covers the children in our Nursery and Reception classes, focusing heavily on learning through play, physical development, and early communication skills.

Intervention: You might hear that your child is taking part in a brief 'intervention' group. This simply means a short, targeted burst of extra teaching—usually in a small group—outside of the main whole-class lesson. It is designed to help children grasp a specific concept they are finding difficult, or to stretch those who are ready for an extra challenge.

Every day, every single person:



Safe



Ready



Respectful



Courage



Compassion



Commitment



Kirkstall Valley Primary School

Argle Road
LEEDS
LS4 2QZ

Tel: 0113 8878982

Fax: 0113 2306186

Email: 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