

19<sup>th</sup> January 2026



# Kirkstall Valley Primary School

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Dear Kirkstall Valley Primary School Families,

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

A birthday for me today! 53 orbits of the sun! I feel very privileged for everything in my life and obviously there's nowhere I'd rather spend it than right here at KVPS!!

We are starting to plan International Week now (last week of this half-term) which will have lots of exciting events. Something we always like to do is to involve families where a second language is spoken by inviting them into school and sharing a story in a home language. If this is something you'd be interested in being part of, let me know!

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

Best wishes,

*Phil Robertson – Headteacher*

## 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



## Diary Dates

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January  
RIAT Stem Glider Challenge - Year 5

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January  
Chinese New Year

9<sup>th</sup> February  
International Week

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February  
Supper for Peace

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February  
Safer Internet Day

## Attendance to date:

YR	– 95.1%	↑
Year 1	– 94.9%	-
Year 2	– 95.9%	↓
Year 3	– 93.2%	-
Year 4	– 92.9%	↓
Year 5	– 95%	↓
Year 6	– 95.4%	↑

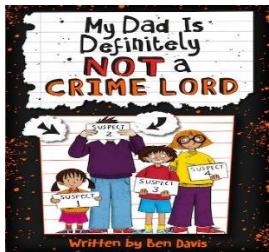
**School = 94.6% ↑ (Target = 96%)**

so easily through our website or by visiting

<https://www.anewchapterbooks.com/shop?Wishlists=Kirkstall+Valley+Primary+School>

Please note: In the New Year, we look forward to transitioning our wishlist to our local partner, Truman Books in Farsley.

### Robertson Recommends



**My Dad is Definitely Not a Crime Lord by Ben Davis** This week's recommendation is a laugh-out-loud mystery that perfectly balances comedy with genuine warmth. The story follows Damian, who is convinced that his incredibly boring father is actually a secret super-villain. While it is packed with hilarious misunderstandings, at its core, this is a touching story about the bond between father and son and the power of imagination. It is a fantastic choice for children in Years 3 to 6—especially those who enjoy fast-paced, funny storytelling with a real heart.

**Celebrating Our Community: Supper for Peace** As part of our upcoming International Week, we are delighted to invite you to one of the true highlights of our school calendar: the **Supper for Peace**.

Taking place after school on **Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> February**, this event is a wonderful opportunity for us to pause and come together through the universal language of food. We invite all staff and families to bring in and share a dish that is special to them. Each year, it is a privilege to see the true diversity of our school represented on these tables, with brilliant cuisine arriving from near and far.

Please do prioritise attending this event if you can; it is the presence of our families that makes it such a success. Furthermore, do look out for the variety of exciting projects your children will be undertaking throughout International Week—it promises to be a fantastic celebration of our global community.

### Coast to Coast



I am currently training very hard for an ultra-cycling event in June this year. I'll be (hopefully!) riding from Seascale on the West Coast via the Cumbrian hills of Hardknott and Wrynose across to Whitby on the East Coast. 154 miles of cycling, 10,500ft of elevation and somewhere in the region of 10 hours (again, hopefully!).

I'll be raising money for Parkinsons 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?utm\\_medium=FR&utm\\_source=CL](https://www.justgiving.com/page/phil-robertson-2?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL)

### Lifelong Learning



I have challenged myself to learn Greek this year, and I must admit, I am finding it incredibly tough! Being a complete beginner again has been a humbling reminder of what our children face every day in the classroom. It is a useful experience for me to remember that the feeling of 'struggle' is often just a sign that learning is taking place.

# Spotlight on Learning

Year 1



Year 1 have started an exciting new art unit during which the children have had the opportunity to explore the medium of watercolour. The children have taken inspiration from famous artist Emma Burleigh who strongly advocates that you cannot make a true mistake with water colour. She encourages you to be playful with the paint and to see beyond the strokes. An erroneous brush stroke could be transformed into a powerful dragon. Indeed, she explains that her best artwork has come from mistakes and through determination and creativity. The children have adopted this committed approach to their art, using imagination and resilience to create unique pieces of art. We have also looked closely at the use of colour and how you can utilise different tones to create different moods and atmospheres. We are excited to create more exciting and emotive pieces!

## Language of the Month - Ceud mìle fàilte!

Our language of the month this time round is Scottish Gaelic! Having grown up in the Highlands, it's a language I am a *little bit* familiar with but am certainly no expert! Listen out for children practising some of the phrases we have learned together in Tuesday's assembly.

## OFSTED

As you may be aware, schools operate within specific windows for Ofsted inspections, and we have now entered ours. Far from being a cause for apprehension, we view this as a welcome opportunity. We are incredibly proud of the courageous, compassionate, and committed community we have built at KVPS. We strive for excellence every day—not for the sake of inspectors, but for the benefit of your children. When the call eventually comes, we look forward to opening our doors and showing the inspection team exactly what makes our school such a special place to learn and grow.

## Assembly Music

**Piece:** Spring **Composer:** Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

I had a moment of unbridled optimism last week after Chess Club when I noticed it was STILL LIGHT so we listened to Vivaldi's Spring to celebrate the hope and promise of a new season.

## Did you know...?



Reading

If a child reads for just **20 minutes a day**, they will be exposed to approximately **1.8 million words** per school year. Research consistently shows that this single habit is one of the strongest predictors of academic success—not just in English, but across all subjects including Maths and Science. It isn't about hours of homework; it is about the consistency of a small, enjoyable daily habit.

**Jewellery Reminder** Please could we remind families of our school policy regarding jewellery. To ensure the safety and focus of all pupils, children are permitted to wear a simple analogue or digital wristwatch and one

pair of small stud earrings only. Please note that **smartwatches are not permitted**. Hoop earrings, necklaces, and bracelets are not part of our uniform and should be kept at home. Furthermore, earrings must be removed for PE lessons; if your child cannot do this independently, please ensure they are taped over before arriving at school. We appreciate your support in maintaining these high standards

## FOCUS ON

## Nature Club

Our Nature Club has been working hard to prepare our grounds for the changing seasons. The team has shown great commitment in clearing the last of the winter leaves and ensuring the pond area is ready for the arrival of spring. This Friday, the children will step into the role of citizen scientists as we participate in the **Great British Birdwatch**. They will dedicate a focused hour to observing and logging the different species that visit our school, contributing directly to this important national survey of wildlife health.

### 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	1 September	2025
Monday	3 November	2025
Monday	5 January	2026
Monday	20 July	2026
Tuesday	21 July	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