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# 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026

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## Kirkstall Valley Primary School

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Dear Kirkstall Valley Primary School Families,

How are you? I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful weekend.

Welcome to the final newsletter of what has been an incredibly busy, yet deeply rewarding, half-term. We have a brilliant final week ahead of us, not least because it is officially Sports Week! I am thoroughly looking forward to seeing the children demonstrate their courage, compassion, and commitment on the field, and it will be fantastic to welcome so many of you to the sidelines to cheer them on.

The week then culminates on Friday when I will have the absolute privilege of accompanying our Year 6 children on their much-anticipated residential trip. Looking at the forecast, it seems we have struck gold, as the weather is set to be absolutely amazing! It is the perfect way for them to celebrate their hard work over the past few weeks and for us to mark the transition into the final stretch of the academic year. When we return after the half-term break, we will be stepping into the final half-term of the school year—a time always filled with a renewed sense of optimism, celebration, and purpose.

As always, if you have anything you'd like to discuss, you are most welcome to come and talk with me.

Best wishes,

*Phil Robertson - Headteacher*

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### Diary Dates

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May  
Nursery Sports Day at 1:45pm

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May  
Y 1/2/3 Sports Day 1pm

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May  
Y 4/5/6 Sports Day 1pm

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May  
Reception Sports Day 1:45pm

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May  
Year 6 depart for residential

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May  
Non-uniform day (all) – please bring sweets for summer fayre if you can!

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May  
Break for Half Term

### Attendance to date:

YR – 94.3% ↓

Year 1 – 95.1% ↑

Year 2 – 95.5% ↑

Year 3 – 92.5% -

Year 4 – 91.4% -

Year 5 – 94.2% ↓

Year 6 – 95.7% ↑ 👑

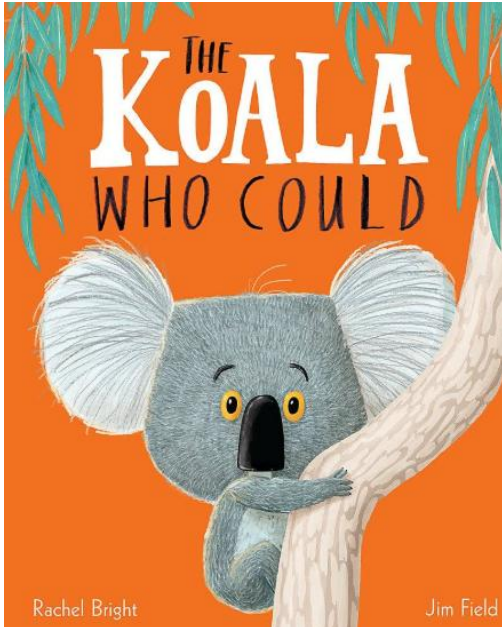
School = **94%** - (Target = 96%)

## 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: The Koala who Could

By Rachel Bright and Jim Field



As we head towards the final half-term of the academic year, it is completely natural for children (and parents!) to start thinking about 'transitions'—whether that means stepping up into a new year group, moving to a new classroom, or, for our Year 6s, making the leap to high school. To tie in with this, my recommendation this week is the wonderful picture book, *The Koala Who Could*.

The story follows Kevin, a koala who likes things to stay exactly the same. He feels safe clinging to his tree and is quite reluctant to come down and try anything new, despite the encouragement of the other animals. However, when circumstances force him to finally let go, Kevin discovers that stepping into the unknown and embracing change is actually a rather wonderful adventure.

It is a beautifully illustrated, gentle, and funny story that speaks directly to our school value of courage. It provides a brilliant starting point for conversations at home if your child is feeling a little anxious or resistant to the upcoming changes next term. While it is perfect for our younger children in EYFS and Key Stage 1, the underlying message of being

brave enough to let go of the familiar is a timely reminder for us all!

## Non-Uniform Day!

We have a second non-uniform day coming up for the entire school on the final Friday of the half-term (22nd May). For this whole-school non-uniform day, all we ask is that, if you are able to, children bring in a small donation of sweets to help us prepare for the highly anticipated KVPS Summer Fayre later this year.



## Coast to Coast: Trusting the Taper

I am pleased to report that I completed a brilliant 100-mile ride out to Pocklington in East Yorkshire on Saturday. It was a solid six valuable hours in the saddle, and I am incredibly pleased to say it marks the final long ride of my training programme before

the main event on the 6th of June.

I felt very strong throughout the entire journey. While I must admit it was a flatter route than the one I will be facing in June, it was hugely reassuring to finish feeling as though I still had a few miles left in my legs!

Now comes the slightly nerve-wracking part: I must step back and trust the taper, allowing my body to rest and recover fully in preparation for the big day. All that is left to do now is cross my fingers and hope for some good weather on the day itself!

Thank you once again to everyone who has so generously supported my fundraising for Parkinson's UK. Hitting the £1,000 milestone has been a massive boost to my motivation during these final long hours on the road. If you would still like to contribute, my page is here: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/phil-robertson-2>.



### Lifelong Learning: A Taste of Greece

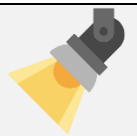
As our family holiday to Crete edges ever closer, my Greek language studies have taken a decidedly delicious turn this week! I have now moved on to concentrating specifically on food and how to confidently order in a restaurant or local taverna.

Anyone who knows me well will understand that I absolutely love my food, so mastering this particular vocabulary feels like an absolutely essential aspect of my learning! There is something incredibly motivating about studying when the end goal is being able to order a traditional meal entirely in the local language.

It is a wonderful reminder of how finding a personal 'hook'—something we are genuinely passionate about—can make the process of learning so much more engaging and enjoyable. Whether it is a reluctant reader finding a book about their favourite sport, or a headteacher dreaming of a summer dinner, finding that internal motivation is key. I am certainly finding my vocabulary is sticking much better now that my stomach is involved!

## Spotlight on Learning

Year 2



Year 2 have been working incredibly hard this term, showing fantastic focus and determination in all areas of their learning. In maths, the children have been tackling the challenge of telling the time to 5 minutes and have shown great resilience, refusing to give up and continuing to practise with enthusiasm. In history, we have been enthralled by our topic on the Great Fire of London, where the children have demonstrated curiosity and engagement as they explored this significant event. In English, they have enjoyed a creative writing project inspired by *The Day the Crayons Quit*, writing imaginative letters as Duncan to a crayon. Alongside their classroom learning, the children have also made excellent progress in their skipping skills, showing improved coordination and perseverance as we prepare for our upcoming festival in July. We are very proud of how well they have concentrated and applied themselves throughout their learning.

### Upcoming Sports Days

We are absolutely delighted to invite all parents and carers to join us for our upcoming Sports Days. It is always a wonderful highlight of the summer term, and the children would be absolutely thrilled to see as many of you there as possible cheering them on from the sidelines!

Please make a note of the specific dates, times, and locations for your child's year group:

- Nursery: Monday 18th May at 1:45 pm (Location: At school)
- Years 1, 2, and 3: Tuesday 19th May at 1:00 pm (Location: GOALS Soccer Centre, Redcote Lane, Leeds, LS4 2AW)

- Years 4, 5, and 6: Wednesday 20th May at 1:00 pm (Location: GOALS Soccer Centre, Redcote Lane, Leeds, LS4 2AW)
- Reception: Thursday 21st May at 1:45 pm (Location: At school)

### Assembly Music

#### Music of the Week: Space Man by Sam Ryder

With the Eurovision Song Contest taking place over the weekend, it seemed only right to bring a touch of that infectious energy into our Friday assembly! Our Music of the Week simply had to be Sam Ryder's towering pop anthem, *Space Man*.

For the children, it was simply a brilliantly uplifting and energetic track to finish the week on. Sam Ryder's incredible vocal gymnastics and the soaring chorus provided a wonderfully positive atmosphere in the hall, sending everyone back to their classrooms with a spring in their step ahead of the weekend.

### Online Safety Newsletter

Please find attached to this week's communication our latest Online Safety Newsletter for June 2026. As the digital landscape evolves so rapidly, it is crucial that we remain vigilant and equipped with the right tools to support our children online. I strongly encourage you to take five minutes to read through the attachment, as it contains essential updates and practical advice.

Key topics covered this month include:

- **WhatsApp Auto-saving:** Guidance on how to disable features that automatically download unwanted images or videos directly to your child's camera roll.
- **Platform Awareness:** Important safeguarding updates regarding Pinterest, the photo-sharing app 'Retro', and a highly concerning adult-only site called Omoggle.
- **Digital Footprints & Scams:** Advice on helping children understand their online footprint and how to spot potential online scams.
- **Emoji Meanings:** A useful reminder that the meanings behind emojis are changeable, with some being used to represent something completely different.

### MindMate Support Team

We are really pleased that we are engaging the services of this team for some of our children currently. The team will also be spending some time in school next week as part of Mental Health Awareness Week. Here is some more information about this team:

*The MindMate Support Team is a Mental Health Support Team (MHST), part of a nationwide programme that brings mental health practitioners into education settings to support the emotional wellbeing of children and young people.*

We work alongside existing services, as well as school staff and parents or caregivers, to provide evidence-based interventions for children experiencing mild to moderate mental health difficulties, such as worry, anxiety, and low mood.

We also offer workshops for staff, young people, and parents or caregivers to help support children with a range of challenges, including worry, exam stress, managing emotions, coping with transitions, and building resilience.

Our practitioners can support you in identifying and accessing additional services where needed, and we provide resources to help school staff support children and young people within their education setting.

We value the views of parents and caregivers and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to share more information about our service.

## Focus on

School Council



On Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May, the school councillors met with their class suggestion boxes to feedback ideas from their respective classes. It was a highly productive meeting and the children had a plethora of brilliant suggestions. Reoccurring themes included more opportunities for a greater range of sports including basketball, dodgeball and tennis as well as other extracurricular activities such as origami and baking club. The children were also very keen, now the weather should hopefully be brighter, to maximise outside learning opportunities and we are hoping to be able to utilise Mrs Whiting's forest school skills to encourage more outdoor learning and exploration of our natural environment. The school council also decided that they would like to set themselves a challenge of fundraising for outdoor sports equipment to be used at playtimes and we have been generating some exciting ways to fundraise which will share very soon once we have finalised dates and logistics. Watch this space!

## Did you know...?

### A Strict Eurovision Rule!



In keeping with our Sam Ryder assembly music and the excitement of the Eurovision Song Contest over the weekend, here is a fun fact about the world's biggest music competition!

Did you know that despite all the wild, wonderful, and wacky performances we see at Eurovision every year, there is one very strict rule that all countries must follow?

Absolutely no live animals are allowed on stage! Over the years, viewers have seen some incredible props and costumes—including giant hamster wheels, dancing wolves, and even ice skaters—but every single one of them was a human in disguise. The rule was introduced to ensure that no animals are ever frightened by the loud music, bright flashing lights, and cheering crowds in the arena.

So, no matter how catchy the song is, you definitely won't be seeing a singing dog or a dancing parrot lifting the famous glass microphone trophy anytime soon!

### 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).

### 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.

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!

### **INSET (In-Service Education and Training – Training Days)**

You will see these days dotted throughout our school calendar (and quite possibly circled in red on your own calendars at home!). While they are days when the school is closed to pupils, they are certainly not days off for the staff. INSET days provide vital, ring-fenced time for our entire team to undertake essential training, update our statutory safeguarding knowledge, and meticulously plan our curriculum to ensure we are delivering the absolute best education for your children.

### **EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage)**

This is the official, overarching term we use to describe our Nursery and Reception classes. It is a distinct and incredibly important phase of education that focuses heavily on the fundamental building blocks of a child's development—from their personal, social, and emotional growth to their early language and physical coordination. When you hear us talk about EYFS, we are referring to the crucial groundwork that sets the children up for a confident, successful journey through the rest of the school.

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**

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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