
7th July 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 and your family well.

First of all, apologies that I am a day late in getting my weekly newsletter to you all – it's such a busy time of year and there are still so many things to finalise. There are also so many things still going on in school over these last two weeks!

Next week I'll change my newsletter to be more of a summary newsletter with a round-up of the 25/26 academic year.

Have a great week ahead ☺

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 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

Tuesday 7th July
KS1 Sports Day

Friday 17th July pm
Y6 Leavers' Assembly

Friday 17th July
Break for Summer

Attendance to date:

YR – 94.2% ↑

Year 1 – 95.4% -

Year 2 – 95.5% -

Year 3 – 92.3% ↑

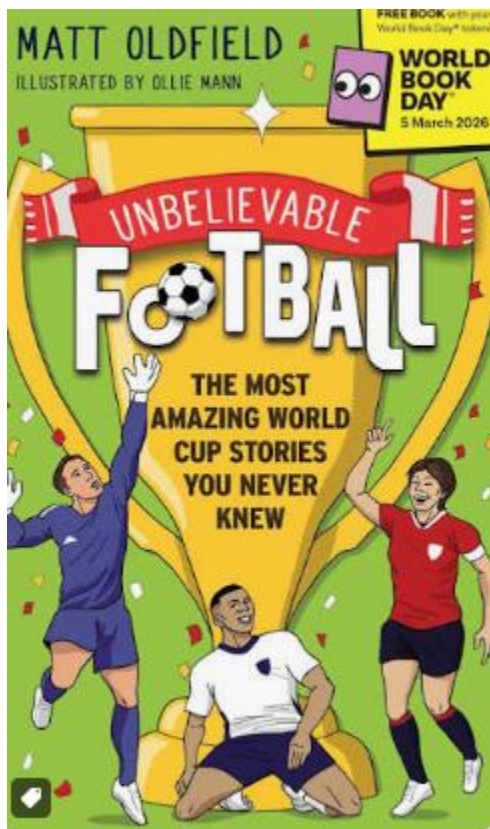
Year 4 – 91.1% -

Year 5 – 93.9% ↓

Year 6 – 95.% ↑ 👑

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

By Matt Oldfield



As we enter our penultimate week of the academic year, it feels only right to return to a football theme for my book recommendation! With World Cup fever well and truly gripping the nation following England's absolute heroics at the Azteca stadium, I know many of our children are feeling incredibly inspired by the beautiful game right now.

Since I have already championed the brilliant Tom Palmer this term, my pick for this week is *Unbelievable Football* by Matt Oldfield. Rather than a fictional story, this is a fantastic, fast-paced collection of true, mind-boggling, and inspiring tales from the history of football. From players who continued a match despite an earthquake, to teams overcoming seemingly impossible odds to lift major trophies, it is packed full of bizarre and brilliant facts that will keep even the most reluctant readers completely hooked.

The incredible true stories in this book perfectly showcase our school values of **Courage** and **Commitment**. It is a brilliant reminder to the children that behind every great sporting achievement—whether on the world stage or our own playground—lies a huge amount of resilience, hard

work, and dedication. It is a wonderfully entertaining and accessible read to kick off the summer holidays for any of our football-mad Key Stage 2 children!

A Heartfelt Thank You to Mrs Jackson

As we approach the end of the academic year, it is with a heavy heart but immense gratitude that we announce our wonderful Chair of Governors, Colleen Jackson, will be stepping down from her role. Colleen has been a truly fantastic Chair and a steadfast friend to Kirkstall Valley Primary School over the years.

Beyond her official duties, she has been a source of unwavering professional support to myself and the wider staff team, always offering a listening ear and wise advice. The sheer number of voluntary hours she has dedicated behind the scenes to ensure our school thrives is quite staggering, perfectly exemplifying our school value of **Commitment**.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the entire school community, to thank her from the bottom of our hearts for her incredible dedication and hard work. We wish her the very absolute best for the future and hope she knows she will always remain a cherished part of our school family!

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.

Important Dates

- **Tuesday 7th July:** Revised Y1, 2 and 3 Sports Day 1 – 2pm
- **Thursday 9th July:** Football Friendly Match vs Beecroft – Team TBC
- **Friday 10th July:** Kirkstall's Got Talent for families at school 1:30pm
- **Saturday 11th July:** Kirkstall Festival
- **Wednesday 15th July:** Year 5 – Production Oliver with a Twist 1:30
- **Thursday 16th July:** Reception fun afternoon in hall then tyre park
- **Thursday 16th July:** Nursery graduation from 1.30.
- **Friday 17th July:** 1:45pm – Leavers' Assembly for Y6 Families
- **Friday 17th July:** Break up for Summer

Swimming

As we begin looking ahead to the next academic year and planning our curriculum, I want to make you aware of an upcoming change to our school swimming provision. Historically, we have been very fortunate to offer swimming lessons for a full academic year. However, due to a combination of increasing timetable pressures across the wider curriculum and ongoing funding constraints, we will now be offering these sessions for half a year instead. Moving forward, all school swimming lessons will take place during the first half of Year 3. Please be assured that while the timeframe is shorter, our **Commitment** to ensuring the children receive high-quality, focused instruction to build their water confidence and safety skills remains as strong as ever.

Wraparound Care for September

As we finalise our preparations for the new academic year, we are currently organising our wraparound care provision for September. If your family requires a place in our before or after-school clubs for the upcoming term, please do get in touch with the school office as soon as possible. Spaces can fill up incredibly quickly, and we want to ensure we have everything in place and are completely **Ready** to support our families when the children return. You can reach the office team via email or a quick phone call to secure your spot or discuss your requirements for the year ahead!

Calling All Library Books!

As we rapidly approach the end of the summer term, it is time for us to start getting our wonderful school library organised and ready for September.

Please could I kindly ask all families to have a really good hunt around at home over the next few days—under beds, tucked on bookshelves, or hiding at the bottom of school bags—for any Kirkstall Valley library books. We need to collect them all back in so that we can take a full inventory, repair any tired copies, and prepare the shelves for the new academic year.

Please do not worry if a book has been kept at home a little longer than usual; there is absolutely no trouble at all! If you could just pop any school library books into your child's bag to be returned to their class teacher as soon as possible, we would be incredibly grateful. Thank you so much for your continued support!

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!

Staying Safe in the Sun: Another Hot Week Ahead next week...

As we look ahead to the forecast for next week, it seems like we might be facing more very hot weather! We are expecting some very hot and sunny days, so we need to work together to ensure all the children are prepared to safely enjoy their time outdoors.

Please could I kindly ask for your support with the following three summer essentials:

- **Water Bottles:** Please ensure your child comes to school with a clearly named, refillable water bottle. We will be reminding them to drink plenty of water and stay hydrated throughout the day.
- **Sun Hats:** A wide-brimmed hat or cap (named!) is vital for keeping the sun off their faces and necks during break times, lunchtimes, and outdoor PE lessons.
- **Sunscreen:** Please apply a high-factor, long-lasting sunscreen to your child *before* they leave the house in the morning.

We will, of course, be keeping a very close eye on the temperatures, ensuring the children make use of the (limited) shaded areas on the playground, and adapting our outdoor activities if it becomes too warm. Thank you so much for your help in keeping everyone cool, safe, and ready to learn!

Spotlight on Learning

Year 1



We have had a fantastic few weeks in Year 1. We have been exploring fruit smoothie making and thinking like food technicians. The children sampled a range of exotic fruit, exploring texture, taste and flavour. They then made executive decisions around what fruit they wanted to incorporate into their own personal smoothie. The children then had an opportunity to practise a range of food-related skills including peeling, juicing, chopping and grating. We discussed the importance of food safety and hygiene as well as the geographical component of where different fruits originate. The class will then be designing their own label and brand name, focusing on colour and target audience. This unit has embodied the 3 Ps of product design: product, purpose and person. We are looking forward to making our final product this week!

Did you know...?

Brain Training on the Pitch



With World Cup fever still very much in the air, this week's fact explores the incredible science of learning hidden within the beautiful game!

Did you know that professional football players do not just have highly trained muscles, but incredibly highly trained brains too? During a 90-minute World Cup match, a player can make up to 2,000 split-second decisions! Every time a player learns a new skill, like a tricky pass, a new tactical formation, or a perfect free-kick, they physically build new neural pathways in their brain.

This scientific fact is a brilliant real-world example of a "growth mindset" in action! It serves as a fantastic reminder to the children that our brains are like muscles; the more we enthusiastically practise and show **Commitment** to learning something new—whether that is your times tables, a complex spelling rule, or a brand new sport—the stronger those mental connections become. So, the next time you watch an England player make a brilliant, split-second pass under pressure, remember that it is the result of years of dedicated learning and brain training!

Looking Ahead: Staffing for 2026/2027

As we prepare for September, I have included an outline of our proposed staffing structure for the 2026/2027 academic year further down in this newsletter. Please do bear in mind that this comes with the usual caveat that school life is always dynamic, and occasionally things can still change over the summer break! We also currently have a couple of final gaps within the team that we are actively working to fill, but I wanted to share this initial overview with you now so that you and the children can start getting **Ready** for the exciting year ahead.

Saturday – Back on Two Wheels: The North Pennines!

As many of you know, I do enjoy a cycling challenge, and this coming weekend I will be getting firmly back in the saddle! I am taking on my first major ride since completing the Coast to Coast challenge: a rather daunting 110-mile route across the beautiful (but notoriously hilly!) North Pennines.

I am certainly going to need to dig deep and channel our school value of **Commitment** to conquer some of those inclines. I am just keeping my fingers crossed that I still have the same energy reserves that carried me through the Coast to Coast! I will be sure to let the children know how I get on next week—assuming I am still able to walk into assembly on Monday morning!

Focus on



As we approach the end of the year, I want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has attended our weekly Chess Club. It has been an absolutely fantastic year of strategic thinking, quiet concentration, and fierce (but friendly!) competition. I must confess, however, that my own win rate has taken a bit of a tumble recently; I now frequently find myself completely outmaneuvered and thoroughly beaten by children who have been attending the club for years! They have clearly been practising hard and mastering their tactics.

I want to give a very special mention to our wonderful Year 6 members who will be moving on to high school in September. Your dedication and enthusiasm have been a joy to see, and I will certainly miss our weekly matches (even the ones where you confidently checkmate me in record time!).

Learning to play chess is such an incredibly valuable skill for our children. Beyond simply being a wonderful game, it teaches immense patience, deep concentration, and crucial problem-solving abilities. It is a brilliant way to exercise the brain, requiring real **Commitment** to think several moves ahead, while always encouraging children to be **Respectful** to their opponents, regardless of whether they win or lose. I look forward to starting the club up again next year—I clearly need the summer holidays to brush up on my own strategy!

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.

Year 6 SATs: An Important Update on Results

I am writing to share a brief update with our Year 6 families regarding the recent SATs assessments. We know that many of you, along with the children, are eagerly awaiting these outcomes. Unfortunately, there has been a delay in the release of the data this year, and the school will now not receive the final results until Thursday, 16th July.

Please be assured that despite this incredibly tight turnaround before the end of term, we have made a firm **Commitment** to ensuring that every single family receives their child's results before we break up for the summer holidays. We will work as quickly as possible to process the information the moment it arrives, and we will keep you fully updated on exactly how and when these will be distributed next week. Thank you so much for your patience and understanding!

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!

SATs (Statutory Assessment Tests) If you have children in Year 2 or Year 6, you will have undoubtedly heard this term mentioned! SATs are national assessments taken by children at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They help us to understand how well your child is progressing in core subjects like reading, writing, and maths, and they ensure we are providing the right level of support as they move forward in their educational journey. While they are an important milestone, we always do our absolute best to keep the experience as low-pressure and supportive as possible for the children.

EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) You will often see this acronym used when we talk about our wonderful Nursery and Reception classes. The EYFS is the statutory framework that sets the standards for the learning, development, and care of children from birth to five years old. Rather than sitting at desks, this stage of education is all about learning through play, active exploration, and building a strong foundation of curiosity and confidence before the children formally move into Key Stage 1. If you hear us talking about the 'Early Years', this is exactly what we mean!

Every day, every single person:



Safe



Ready



Respectful



Courage



Compassion



Commitment

Staffing 2026-27

Headteacher	Mr Phil Robertson		
Deputy Headteacher	Mr Ashley Lund		
Senior Leaders	Ms Rebecca Hague (School Business Manager)	Mrs Angela May (SENDCO)	Miss Toni Otley
	<u>Class teachers:</u>	<u>Teaching assistants</u>	<u>Learning support:</u>
Nursery	Mrs Harriet Whiting	Miss Lynn White Mrs Hanane Okhaya	
Reception	Miss Toni Otley	Mrs Naheed Shafiq Miss Marcia Knowles Miss Siobhan Devanny	Miss Nicole Barlow
Year 1	Ms Clare Piscicelli	Miss Jane McCloy Mrs Angela Draper	Mrs Louise Crossland
Year 2	Mr Ashley Lund Mrs Louise Ellis	Mrs Sandra Tordoff	Miss Rachel Blackburn Miss Leanne Thackray
Year 3	Mrs Katherine Gautrey Mrs Hannah Mason	Mrs Jackie Patterson	Mrs Leanne Collins Miss Marcia Knowles
Year 4	Mr Jamie Davies	Mrs Karen Lander	TBC Mr Nicholas Babatunde
Year 5	Mrs Fiona Passey	Mr Adam Baldock	
Year 6	Mrs Charlotte Bampton Mrs Claire Bridges	Mrs Andrea Dilucia Ms Wanda Selby Mrs Sandra Tordoff	TBC
HLTA	Mrs Sandra Tordoff Mrs Lisa Long		
Learning Mentor	Miss Sarah Wigglesworth		
Inclusion Team	Mrs Angela May	Ms Wanda Selby EAL	
Site & Network Manager	Mr Alan Phillips		
<u>Office Staff:</u>			
School Business Manager	Ms Rebecca Hague		
Administrative assistant	Mrs Laura Gledhill Mrs Azra Ali		



Kirkstall Valley Primary School

Argie 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