

**Principal's Newsletter 9th May 2025**

Dear Parents and Carers,

**VE Day Celebrations**



Yesterday we marked the historic **80th anniversary of VE Day** with our school community to unite and celebrate 80 years of peace since the end of World War II in Europe that so many millions paid the ultimate sacrifice to achieve it.

VE Day 80 is not only a tribute to those who fought for the freedom we all enjoy today, but also a powerful reminder of the resilience and unity that has defined our country ever since.

We thank all our families who contributed £1 for day - where children could wear clothes in red, white and blue - that will be donated to the RBLI (Royal British Legion Industries) who provide life-long support to serving and ex-serving members of the British Armed Forces, their families and dependents through hardships, injuries and bereavements.

The whole school marked a two minutes silence at 12 noon to remember the end of the Second World War in Europe and to mark the 80th anniversary of VE day.

In the afternoon the children also used their writing skills to reply to a letter that was sent by a 100 year old veteran Mervyn Kersh. Thank you to the children who read out this letter yesterday in our VE Celebration assembly. We attach the Veteran's letter to share with our wider community.

Children loved the special 'VE day lunch' with a red, white and blue theme, incorporating a wartime-inspired menu, decorated cakes and ice cream to celebrate this significant historical moment.

**A message for our year 6 children – all the very best for next week, you have got this!**



**Let's get reading - BOOM Reader**



*"If you are going to get anywhere in life you have to read a lot of books." - Roald Dahl*




Well done to all the children and families who have logged onto Boom reader. We are pleased to announce the most home reading logs recorded on Boom reader this week.

*Alexandra Park Junior School, Brook Lane, Oldham, OL8 2BE  
Principal : Mrs J.L. Seabright BEd NPQH PgCert*

Position	Name	Reads at home
First Place	Noah Robin Class 5	44 parent reads
Second Place	Farhaan Mohammad Class 1	22 parent reads
Third Place	Aryaan Ahmed Class 5	5 parent reads

### Spelling Shed Winners

#### Top Spelling Shed Pupils

#	Avatar	Pupil	Groups	Score
1.		Raja AHMED	Class 11 24/25,6b - Miss Nolan	8,191,936
2.		Aleena Ahmed	Class 8 24/25,5b - Miss Mahmood	2,713,737
3.		Muhammad Ayaz HUSSAIN	Class 4 24/25, Mrs Mellor - phonics Y4	2,585,734



### TT Rockstars – CELEBRATIONS!

The most accurate Class	Class 12
The most active Class	Class 4
The most improved speed	Zakariyya Bin Jahid Class 12
The most active player	Aizah Younis Class 7

### Word Aware

This week's word is 'tranquil.'

Please encourage your child to use this word when out and about.



### Attendance

Well done to the below classes for achieving 95% or above last week.

1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11 and 12.

Class 3 will receive their waffle treat as they had the highest attendance in school – WELL DONE!



### **Food Vouchers to cover the May Half Term Holiday 2025.**

You may have read in the local media that Oldham Council has been allocated Government through the Household Support Fund. Some of this funding will be used to cover food voucher support for children eligible for means tested Free School Meals over school holidays to prevent holiday hunger.



**We want to ensure that those eligible for free school meals on the grounds of low income receive a food voucher to cover May half term at a rate of £15 per eligible child.**

The most effective way of ensuring vulnerable families receive the vouchers that can be used in the Oldham supermarket of their choice is via a third-party online hub – known as Evouchers. Evouchers is a data integration company already used by many schools in Oldham who offer a free school meal voucher system. This voucher system has a live link to your school's data therefore automatically recognises the students who are eligible for Free School Meals. The system should be quick and easy to use and produces the vouchers that can be used in most Oldham supermarkets.

If your child is entitled to income based free school meals, please look out for an email and/or text confirming that your voucher has been issued.

For more information go to: <https://help.evouchers.com/hc/en-gb>

This includes a step-by-step guide of how to access the vouchers (once your school has issued them to you).

If you have any questions, please contact the school in the first instance.

For any families needing support with food and essential supplies over the school holiday, please visit the Oldham Council website [www.oldham.gov.uk/wecanhelp](http://www.oldham.gov.uk/wecanhelp) which lists financial support and benefits that are available for residents.

If you need any support with this please contact Miss Booth or Mrs North in the school office.

### **A healthier and happier school run**

Did you know that children who walk or cycle to school experience an **8% boost** in concentration levels after just four hours, compared to those who are driven?

Walking the whole way — or parents parking just five minutes away and walking the rest — can make a big difference.

Benefits include better focus and memory, healthier body weight, less traffic congestion, cleaner air for everyone.

Let's work together to make the school run calmer, safer, and healthier for our community.



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Pupils of Alexandra Park Jr School  
Alexandra Park Jr School  
Brook Lane  
Oldham  
OL8 2BE



Return your VE Mail letters to:  
Mervyn Kersh  
VE Mail  
PO Box 1615  
PETERBOROUGH  
PE2 2BH

Dear Pupils of Alexandra Park Jr School

I was just 14 years old when war was declared. I was evacuated from London to the South-West of England away from the German Bombers, but I returned home not long after as the bombing hadn't yet begun. My father converted our coal cellar into an air-raid shelter with bunks and a food store and we spent a lot of time there over those months.

Just eight days after I left college - I received a letter calling me for training in Lanarkshire, Scotland. A long way from London! After our initial training, we were gathered and assigned to units. We were never called by name, only by number. Ask any veteran, and I bet they'll remember theirs.

In June 1944, aged 19, I landed in France as part of the D-Day invasion of Normandy. I was terrified. It took 14 hours to cross the channel, and after I landed on the beach, I made my way inland to search for a suitable place to build up a stock of 1,000 vehicles of all kinds to supply the forward units. At first we occupied a Chateau, a beautiful French castle, but it was full of German booby traps. There were explosives hidden in books, the piano and even in the toilets.

Life was tough. I slept under vehicles and in makeshift shelters. Because of my Jewish faith, I couldn't eat regular army rations and survived mostly on tinned peaches and what I could cobble together.

In spring 1945, I arrived near Bergen-Belsen concentration camp just after its liberation. I met many of the survivors - Jewish people still in striped uniforms, starving and frail. They were walking to the nearby station hoping to meet someone who had news of their home or their family. I gathered chocolate rations from my fellow soldiers to give away.





I missed VE Day. I was on a sealed train for 36 hours with dimmed lights and boarded up windows. I had no idea what was happening in the world outside that carriage. When we arrived in Bruges on 9 May, there was music and people were dancing in the streets. A local told me the war was over. I joined in for a quick dance—and then began my journey home.

I arrived back in London earlier than expected. I rang the doorbell and my mother answered. She looked at me and said, "Can I help you?"—she didn't recognise me after my time at war. The war in Europe was over, but we weren't released from the army. I was told I'd be sent to invade the beaches of Japan, but the day before I was due to travel, Japan surrendered. Instead, I was posted to Egypt, where it was very hot and I fell ill with dysentery.

When I was finally home for good, adjusting to everyday life was not easy. I tried to find a job that matched the skills I'd developed during my service, but it was difficult. There were so many young men like me, all looking for work at the same time.

During the war, I served alongside people from different classes, religions, ages and parts of the country, indeed the world. Together we learned about resilience, responsibility and how to stay strong. It takes a lot of strength to achieve peace and we shouldn't romanticise war and violence.

I turned 100 last year and I still visit schools to share my story with young people like you. Now more than ever, it is important that we don't let the lessons of war fade away.

With warmest wishes,  
Mervyn

**D-Day Veteran, Mervyn Kersh, aged 100**