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Tuesday, 22nd July 2025

Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) Launch

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are about to launch our exciting new project to make our playtimes even better, in conjunction with Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) CIC. In 2018, OPAL won the best active schools' programme in Europe award and has been cited in two parliamentary reports as delivering outstanding practice. OPAL is working closely with Sport England to promote more active childhoods, which is one of the many reasons we are improving our playtime, as well as to improve opportunities for socialisation, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment for your child.



We strongly believe that: "Play is freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child. Play can be fun or serious. Through play children explore social, material and imaginary worlds and their relationship with them, elaborating all the while a flexible range of responses to the challenges they encounter. By playing, children learn and develop as individuals, and as members of the community." (Children's Play Council 2001).

The project will start in September, and our hopes are that it will change the way we think and how we play together. To facilitate this project, we will need to buy some new resources, move some things around on the playground and require some loose parts. We will also be asking children to have wellies at school if they wish to.

Loose parts are any materials that can be easily moved, combined, and incorporated into children's free play. The items we are looking for will enable us to enjoy a wider range of play experiences during playtime (see below for some examples):

- Anything on wheels/casters
- Plastic milk crates/supermarket delivery crates/plastic bread trays
- Road signs and cones
- Kitchen pots, pans, baking trays, work tables, wooden spoons, chopping boards
- Tools like small spades/shovels, trowels and brooms
- Tubes of various sizes and various materials
- Buckets
- Nets and thick ropes

- Keyboards/torches/laptops/calculators/mobile phones/desk phones/webcams/cameras that are no longer working
- Fabric (large sheets/brightly coloured fabric)
- Foam sheets/bodyboards/camping roll mats/yoga mats
- Cable drums
- Guttering
- Noodles (the type you use in the swimming pool!)
- Hats/scarves/jazzy shirts/elasticated skirts/waistcoats/wedding dresses/character costumes
- Small world (dinosaurs, animals, Barbies, dolls house, cars)

If you are able to donate any of the above resources, please bring them to the office and these can then be distributed on the playground.

There will be more information to follow at a parent's session later in the year when you will be invited to come and play with your children. We are really excited about this project and hope that you will support us in our efforts to improve playtime for all children.

Yours sincerely,



Miss. Katie South
Curricular Lead for Play



Mrs. Gemma Tong
Play Co-Ordinator