

Dear Parents,

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).

Our project has started and our hopes are that it will change the way we think and how the children play together. Our first change has been to our morning break. Children have been playing in any playground with other children of any age. This has been a great success and we are now ready to start the next phase of our journey.

To facilitate this project, we will need to buy some new resources, move some things around on the playground and require some loose parts. 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):

- Kitchen pots, pans, baking trays, chopping boards, kitchen utensils (no knives or forks)
- Fancy dress clothes – Hats, scarves, jazzy shirts, elasticated skirts, waistcoats, wedding dresses, character costumes, wigs – all sizes and ages welcome
- Small/medium world toys - cars, building blocks, farmyard, animals, doll's houses, racing tracks, trains etc
- Outdoor beanbags

We will be welcoming donations from the week beginning **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023**. We aim for the children to be playing with these items from January. Please do not bring your donations in before this date as we will have nowhere to store them. When you bring your donations to school, please leave them at the front of the school, this will be clearly signposted and a member of staff will be there.

We are really excited about this project and hope that you will support us in our efforts to improve playtime for all of your children.

Yours sincerely,

The Opal Team (Mrs Tottle-Nugent, Miss Bowling, Lindsey Monaghan and Robert Wilks)