



Thursday 22nd May 2025

EYFS and OPAL

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are excited to let you know that from next half term, your child will begin joining the rest of the school for outdoor OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) playtimes. This marks an exciting step in their school journey, and we are confident it will bring many benefits to their social and emotional development.

Since we launched OPAL in January 2024, we have seen a fantastic transformation in how our children use their playtime. Children have more space and freedom to move, which has led to increased imaginative play, collaborative games, and opportunities for children to mix with others across different year groups. The positive impact has been clear, with children becoming more engaged, creative, and confident during play.

As part of our ongoing work with OPAL, we have made significant enhancements to our outdoor play areas. The playground now features a range of zones, including den building, a mud kitchen, a dedicated sports area, and a sandpit. These additions have been carefully planned to offer rich, varied, and meaningful play experiences for all ages, supporting children's creativity, physical development, and social skills.

We understand that this change in routine may feel quite significant for our youngest children, and we want to reassure you that we have a thoughtful and supportive transition plan in place. Over the coming weeks, your child's class teacher will take time to explore the outdoor spaces with the class, introducing the different areas, explaining how the equipment is used, and helping children understand what to expect. There will be opportunities to use the new play areas in small groups, giving children time to build their confidence gradually. Teachers will closely monitor how each child is settling in and will provide additional support as needed to ensure that everyone feels comfortable and happy.

To further support this transition, each EYFS child will be paired with a Year 3 buddy. These older children will meet their buddy several times before full participation in OPAL begins. The aim is for each younger child to have a familiar and friendly face to look out for them on the playground. These relationships help our younger pupils feel reassured, while also giving older children the opportunity to take on a positive leadership role.

We're confident this will be a fun and rewarding experience for our EYFS children, helping them build key life skills and friendships across the school community through OPAL play.

If you have any questions or would like to talk through any part of this change, please don't hesitate to get in touch with your child's class teacher.

Thank you for your continued support.
Kind regards,
Mrs Webb-Breen
Assistant Headteacher & OPAL Lead