



OPAL NEWSLETTER



Autumn Term



OPAL stands for **OUTDOOR PLAY AND LEARNING** and is a programme endorsed by Sport England



Aim

“To ensure that every child has an amazing playtime, every day with no exceptions.” OPAL

Dear Parents,

We are nearly a year into our OPAL journey now, so we wanted to provide you with an update regarding what has been happening so far and what plans we have for the future!

What has happened already...



Playtimes have changed forever! The children have been loving the introductions of many different activities, made doable because of your generous donations. The children absolutely love making great dens, using pallets, tyres and tarpaulins. As well as den-building, they get all creative with the resources provided and have made their own Pizza Café, Bug Hotels and Pirate Ships!!

The OPAL Play Team – We have 2 essential groups responsible for OPAL Play, here at Monkton.

1. The OPAL Working Group – this is a collaboration of Senior Leaders, Teachers, Tas, parents and governors who meet 6 times during the year with the aim of making playtimes better for everyone.
2. Play Leaders – these are our amazing Tas who supervise play. They support children with play but will never interrupt them whilst they are in the role of pirate on a ship or baker in the mud kitchen!

Thank you to everyone for all of your help so far. We can't do it without you!

Mini-Mudder!! Wow! What a fantastic fundraising event this turned out to be. As well as raising £1200, the children loved getting muddy! Thank you to everyone for your very kind donations and please pass on our appreciation to your friends and family who donated. £1200 means we can crack on with our plans for the future!



Plans for the future...

Sandpit!! Thanks to your donations, we can purchase many tonnes of sand required to make our giant sandpit! We are also going to be introducing scooters very soon as well as large cable drums to enhance the cafes and dens!

Loose Parts Shed We are also going to be storing loose parts in the large shed, so children can wheel a trolley in, collect what they need for their play session, play with it and then return when finished.

Play Assemblies We'll also be holding Play Assemblies, where children are given the opportunity to celebrate playtime with one lucky winner being awarded 'THE GOLDEN WELLY' for going above and beyond during a play session that week.

Play Rangers We will be appointing some children to become Play Rangers!!!

How can you help?

A digger!! In order to start creating our giant sandpit, we really need someone who has access to a digger and would kindly donate some of their time to make our PIT. If you have the ability to do this and would like to help, please send Mr Marston or Mrs Osgood an email (cmarston@mandm.school or aosgood@mandm.school).

A Play Tunnel The idea is that with the turf and soil that has been dug out to create the sandpit, we can then cover a play tunnel and re-turf it to create a grassy mound and crawl through tunnel. We've no idea where to get the tunnel from though, so if you've any suggestions, then please just drop us an email and we can go from there.



Donations



If you could donate any of the following, then please let us know. We always need a constant drip of equipment to keep playtimes as fun and as exciting and fresh as possible.

- Pipes for water play/dens
- Planks of wood/scaffold boards
- Crates/pallets
- Tyres
- Saucepans/plates/spoons etc

Wet Playtimes

From the start of Term 2, we will be re-starting our wet playtimes. After discussions with staff, children and parents, we have made the decision that children will only go outside when there is light or moderate rain and when the wind isn't too blowy. Mr Marston will be the weatherperson making the decision whether it is too rainy or not. Our aim is to get children out in all weathers but we do understand how this can cause issues at home, especially if you have a child who loves getting muddy and wet!

Being outside in the rain is fun for many children and so we need to make sure your child is kitted out properly with appropriate clothing. We've seen so many happy children when they are allowed to splash in puddles, play in the sippy mud kitchen and just dance around with a smile on their dripping faces.

By the end of Term 1 (week beginning 21st October), we ask that all children have wet weather clothing in school.

This should consist of:

- **Waterproof jacket**
- **Waterproof trousers**
- **Welly boots**
- **Change of socks**

The waterproofs opposite can be purchased from Asda for approx. £10 depending on size

The waterproofs DO NOT need to be red.

Please speak to a member of staff if you need help with this.

