



OPAL Stay and Play Afternoons March 2026 Parental Feedback Summary

The OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) Stay and Play afternoons were held to provide parents with an opportunity to experience the school's play provision alongside their children. A total of 26 responses were received, representing a wide range of year groups from Reception to Year 5.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with the vast majority of parents rating the experience 5 out of 5, and all responses rating it either 4 or 5.

Strengths Identified

1. Highly Engaging and Enjoyable Experience

Parents consistently described the sessions as:

- "Lots of fun"
- "Fantastic offering"
- "Inspirational"
- "A great atmosphere"

The opportunity to **play alongside their children** and observe them in a natural, social environment was particularly valued.

2. Strong Understanding and Support for OPAL Ethos

Many parents highlighted how the introductory talk helped them understand:

- The intentional and evidence-informed nature of OPAL
- The importance of play, creativity and positive risk-taking
- The school's commitment to inclusive and child-led play

Parents commented that the experience:

- "Opened our eyes to the full benefits of OPAL"
- Gave them confidence in the school's approach

3. Wide Range of High-Quality Play Opportunities

A significant strength identified was the breadth and diversity of activities, including:

- Sand play, sports, creative construction, performance and imaginative play
- Use of loose parts and open-ended resources
- Access to different areas such as field and forest school

Parents noted:

- "The range of play available was amazing"
- "Excellent use of outdoor space"
- "Not just sports – lots of different things to do"

4. Positive Behaviour and Social Development

Parents were impressed by:

- Children's collaboration and negotiation skills
- Cross-age interaction and support (e.g. older pupils supporting younger children)
- A lack of conflict during play

Comments included:

- "I didn't see a single argument"
- "Children negotiated objects and spaces so nicely"

5. Pupil Wellbeing and Pride

A consistent theme was how:

- Children were happy, engaged and fully immersed
- Pupils showed pride in their play environment
- Children were excited to share their experiences with parents

Areas for Development

While feedback was overwhelmingly positive, some constructive suggestions were made:

1. Time and Frequency

- Requests for longer sessions
- Interest in more frequent opportunities for parents to attend

2. Communication and Inclusion

- Share more photos or updates for parents unable to attend
- Consider ways to support:
 - Less confident children to engage in play
 - Mixing across classes and year groups

3. Play Provision Enhancements

Suggestions included:

- Additional resources (e.g. sand pits, large materials, outdoor art)
- Quiet/indoor spaces for children needing downtime
- Rotating activities (e.g. sports) to encourage broader participation
- Further development of outdoor learning opportunities

4. Event Organisation

- A small number of parents suggested:
 - Shorter introductory talk
 - Alternative timing (not on a Friday)

Parental Support and Engagement

A very strong theme was parents' willingness to support OPAL moving forward:

Offers of Support Included:

- Donations of:
 - Toys, materials, loose parts and household items
- Financial contributions
- Volunteering time in school
- Supporting via wish lists

Many parents expressed enthusiasm but requested clearer guidance on how to help, suggesting an opportunity to further harness this support.