



# OPAL Newsletter

## Autumn 2024 Week 1



**“Every child has the right to rest and leisure,  
to engage in play and recreational  
activities appropriate to the age of the child and  
to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.” Article 31**

### OUR VISION

Opal's vision is that every child in every school has an amazing hour of high quality play every day – with no exceptions. We completely endorse this vision - our aim is to ensure that our children experience at least an hour of high quality play every day. Over the coming weeks and months we will continue to expand and develop our playtimes. We will include spaces and resources to enable our children to immerse themselves in all 16 play types, we will explain these in more detail in our upcoming newsletters. In order for us to not overwhelm the children, and to be able to teach them the skills they require to manage their own risks, we need to take small steps. The resources we provide will grow week on week. We are being guided by our fantastic Opal Mentor, Sam Fletcher, who will work closely with us over the next 18 months.

### Play Assemblies

Our new Play Assemblies take place weekly and this is where each new item or area of play will be introduced to the children. We will ask them; *How could we play with this? What risks could there be? Is this something you would enjoy to play with?* We will then let the children know when these items, or this area, will be available for them to use. This gives the children an opportunity to process the change, absorb this information, and self-evaluate any potential risks for themselves.

The children will no longer have separate playgrounds and fields to play on, but will be able to play and explore together. It has been a positive start this week and it's been wonderful to observe children of all ages playing together.

## Transforming our grounds

Over the summer we have transformed our grounds. We now have a mud kitchen and cafe area, two sandpits, a construction area and a newly tidied solardome area, which will become a creative space. A massive thank you to all members of staff and families from our community that supported us with this transformation.



## Here comes the rain

So that your child can still access all areas, as well as stay warm and dry, please make sure they have a waterproof coat and a change of shoes/wellies with them everyday.

Waterproof trousers are fantastic to have in this weather and can be found at reasonable prices in local supermarkets. The children can also leave a spare pair of clothes in their lockers/on their pegs (these do not need to be school uniform) just incase they need to change after playtime.