17th July 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

OPAL

For the last few months, we have been in discussions with OPAL (outdoor play and learning) about working with them to enhance our playtimes and lunchtimes. We have also been to visit schools where this is already in place and we have been amazed at the impact that it has had in these schools! We are pleased to share that in October 2023, we will begin a period of support from OPAL with Rob Franksen, who is the Educational Consultant for OPAL in our area. OPAL have won the award for the best active schools programme in Europe. They have also been referenced in two Parliamentary Reports as outstanding practice and they work with Sport England to promote more active childhoods.

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This programme is based on the idea that, as well as learning through good teaching, children also learn when they play. 20% of their time in school is playtime and this is equivalent to 1.4 years of primary school over a child's primary school experience. Therefore, we want to make sure that this amount of time is outstanding in its offer. The experiences the school will foster are essential for children's physical and mental well-being and health and in line with all current good practice advice on health, safety, well-being and development.

The school will be supported by OPAL for 18 months and there will be an opportunity for parents to come and talk to a representative from OPAL, see for yourself what is happening and join in too! We will be looking for parent representatives to be a part of the play leadership group and we will contact you about this again in the new academic year. In the meantime, if you would like to learn more about the OPAL Primary Programme, please have a look at the OPAL website. You will be able to learn all about the programme and watch several videos on their website: https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/

Yours sincerely,

Miss Doherty
Head of School

Mrs Newstead
Assistant Headteacher & Curricular Lead for Play