

Parents update March 2022

As you are aware we are working with Opal consultants to develop our playtime provision for children. We strongly believe that play has a vital role in children's health, happiness, and wellbeing. It creates children who are independent, confident, imaginative, adaptable, social, and able to assess risks. We are committed to ensuring that through our work with Opal that we will provide all children with high quality, accessible and inclusive play opportunities that foster their development.

We have already seen huge positive changes over the last two terms and we have many more plans going forward. The enthusiasm for lunchtime play is very apparent within school! The project will continue for at least the next 18 months in order to maximise the opportunities we can provide. We are involving the children as much as possible in helping us to make decisions around what we are providing for them.

As part of the project we are also working with the children on ways to deal with situations they may encounter at playtimes and giving them tools to build their resilience, and develop their ability to assess risks. The children are taught three simple principles to help them maintain happy playtimes;

- Only report things to adults if it is necessary (using our reporting or telling tales prompt).
- Say 'No thank you' if someone is doing something that you don't want them to or something you don't like.
- Always use good manners.

These principles are reinforced throughout all aspects of school life. When children are not successful in dealing with a situation themselves using these they ask for adult support. The prompts we use for the children can be seen on our [Opal Play](#) web page.

We have also developed our own Play and Risk Management Policy, which can be downloaded from our website by [clicking here](#).

In our next play assembly, which will be held next week, we will be helping the children to identify risks within their play and giving them strategies to deal with them. All of the play opportunities that we provide are risk assessed and our aim is to ensure any risks are as apparent as possible to children. Staff are trained to identify and manage any risks that may be less apparent to children. As we introduce more play opportunities we will continue to assess and manage risks and work with the children on managing these risks.

We have seen a significant drop in the number of accidents and incidents in the playground at lunchtime since we began our opal journey. We are also working on building children's resilience in dealing with minor incidents such as very small grazes.

This week we have also changed the way we report accidents and incidents to you. If a child has received first aid you will now receive a PING with an accident form attached. If a child has a minor cut, graze or bump that has not required first aid treatment (but may have been

treated with a sterile wipe) this will not be reported to you. The digital system will help us to monitor accidents and incidents more easily and put in place any necessary control measures.

As we continue our exciting journey we would appreciate a little feedback from you and your child/children. We would be very grateful if you could complete the very short questionnaire using the link below.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdJ7COxsP-CLRfEMawalsp7_eQ5Ltjam0g3r7JmMF13iysyDg/viewform?usp=sf_link

If you have any questions about our playground development please do not hesitate to contact us.