



St. John's CE Primary School

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Head Teacher: Sarah Stone



23rd January 2025

OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning)

Dear parent/carer,

We are beginning our journey to enhance the culture of play during our lunchtimes by becoming an OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) school. Below is a link that will provide you with some insight as to what OPAL is all about. There are also videos from other schools which detail how it has benefitted them and enhanced lunchtime play.

www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk

<https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/research-and-evidence/videos/>

We strongly believe that: "Play is freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child. Play can be fun or serious. Through play children explore social, material and imaginary worlds and their relationship with them, elaborating all the while a flexible range of responses to the challenges they encounter. By playing, children learn and develop as individuals, and as members of the community." (Children's Play Council 2001).

On the 12th February @ 3.30pm and 5pm we will be holding a parent open evening in the hall to explain the process and what playtimes will eventually look like at St John's. We will also be explaining the first stage in our action plan and asking for any support that the St John's community can provide us with. In order to help us with the first stage of this process, we would really appreciate any donations of the following items that **are in good working order**:

- Plastic sandpits with lids.
- Sand toys (buckets, spades etc)
- Water toys
- Plastic milk crates / supermarket delivery crates/plastic bread trays
- Briefcases, especially hard cased ones
- Road signs and cones
- Kitchen pots, pans, baking trays, worktables, wooden spoons, chopping boards
- Buckets
- Thick ropes
- Cable drums
- Hats/scarves/jazzy shirts/elasticated skirts/waistcoats/wedding dresses. We are not looking for character costumes but real-life clothes that the children could use their imagination with and become different people.
- Plastic coat hangers and clothes rails.

Finally, do you know builders or companies who would be willing to help our school? We dream of having a giant sand pit, permanent welly storage and other large structures such as a stage for the children to perform on. If you have a contact who may be willing to help us out, please speak to Mrs. Poynton or Mr. Redfern. Our staff are really excited for the upcoming changes and seeing the joy on the children's faces as they play in new ways!

Thank you for your continued support.

The St. John's Team

"SHINE like the star you are."