

9th March 2023



Dear Parents,

We are about to launch our exciting new project to make our playtimes even better, in conjunction with Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) CIC. In 2018, OPAL won the best active schools' programme in Europe award and has been cited in two parliamentary reports as delivering outstanding practice. OPAL is working closely with Sport England to promote more active childhoods, which is one of the many reasons we are improving our playtime, as well as to improve opportunities for socialisation, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment for your child.

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).

The project will start in Term 5 and our hopes are that it will change the way we think and how we play together. To facilitate this project, we will need to buy some new resources, move some things around on the playground and require some loose parts. Loose parts are any materials that can be easily moved, combined, and incorporated into children's free play. We will be asking for donations throughout the year so if you think you may be throwing items out then just hold fire! The items we are looking for will enable us to enjoy a wider range of play experiences during playtime:

Items for our first wave:

- 1) Small world figures, these include cars, farm animals, people, characters, dinosaurs, mystical creatures and space world.
- 2) Wild flower seeds
- 3) Gardening hand tools for digging (no forks)

These items will enable us to begin using our small world zone and digging area. Plus commence planting our wilding zones!

We will be holding a collection week from **Tuesday 14th March until Friday 17th March.** The sooner we do this, the sooner the children will be able to play with the items! Please do not bring your donations in before this date, as we will have nowhere to store them. There will be donation boxes

on the **KS1 playground** and on the decking by the Y3/5 cloakroom for donations to be put in the mornings.

There will be more information to follow at a parent's session later in the year when you will be invited to come and play with your children. We are really excited about this project and hope that you will support us in our efforts to improve playtime for all children.

Yours sincerely

Mr Hogwood and the OPAL Team.