

George Street Primary School

"Believing in Every Child"

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Dear Parents and Carers,

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 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 November and we hope it will change the way we think and how we play together.

To ensure this is a success and has a positive impact for the children, we will be launching OPAL in specific phases. The first phase will introduce specific areas to the outdoor areas which require specific resources. Please see the list on the reverse of this letter for the resources we are requesting for this first phase. We will then support the children in using the areas and ensure they are using them with the intended purpose, scaffolding their play and experiences. Once these areas have been embedded and are being used more independently, we will launch phase 2 and the next areas for the children to use.

We request that any donations made are of items which are in good, safe working order. These resources will be used by the children on a daily basis and we need to ensure the children are kept safe when using them.



To support this project, we will need to buy new resources, move some things around on the playground, and add some loose parts. Loose parts are any materials that can be easily moved, combined, and incorporated into children's free play. The items we are looking for will enable us to enjoy a wider range of play experiences during playtime (see below for some examples):

- Small world resources (plastic animals, dinosaurs, play people etc.)
- Road signs and cones
- Kitchen pots, pans, baking trays, work tables, wooden spoons, chopping boards
- Tubes of various sizes and various materials
- Buckets
- Nets and thick ropes
- Fabric (large sheets/brightly coloured fabric, ribbons)
- Foam sheets/bodyboards/camping roll mats/yoga mats
- Cable drums
- Guttering
- Noodles (the type you use in the swimming pool!)
- Hats/scarves/jazzy shirts/elasticated skirts/waistcoats/wedding dresses/character costumes
- Pegs (to help to set up dens)

Please do not send anything in which is not on the list. We will request further items in due course. We will be holding a collection week beginning Monday 2nd November. The sooner we do this, the sooner the children can play with the items! Please do not bring your donations in before this date as we will have nowhere to store them.

More information will 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 Steve Brown

Assistant Headteacher (Maternity Cover) & OPAL Curricular Lead

