



OPAL Autumn Term Newsletter





We are now into the second year of our OPAL journey and back in the winter months. Over the last couple of months, we have had several visitors to see our play in action and they have all commented on what amazing provision we have to offer our children and that play is really valued at Braiswick. It has also been lovely when old friends have visited and commented upon all of the changes that have been made to improve lunchtimes.

As staff, we are really noticing the children's imaginations and creativity in their play develop. What was once just a crate to drag around for instance, is now a palace, a shop or even jump street!

This term has seen the opening of our wonderful reading shed. I would like to say a massive thank you to Mrs Kennedy and the School Council for all of their efforts to raise the funds for this and the Friends of Braiswick (FOBP) for their support. The children asked for a quiet social area and we are so lucky that they now get to enjoy this.

Another thank you to the FOBP who have funded our lovely new welly sheds. These are so helpful to enable the children to store their wellies tidily and have easy access to them so that their play isn't interrupted.

We have also appointed lots of play leaders from years 5 and 6 who have been wonderful in their roles of supporting and celebrating play. They surveyed the school and have created a playlist to add music to our playtimes. The children have been really enjoying this and we have seen some very impressive dance moves!







Plans for the term ahead....





Mrs Philips and I were very lucky to visit an OPAL school in Kent earlier in the term who have achieved Platinum play status. We came back full of energy and lots of ideas to develop our playtimes even further.

In the Spring term, we would like to begin developing new areas so that we are enabling more play types within our provision. We would like to develop a performance area on the main playground so that the children can put on shows. We also plan to extend our mud kitchen area so that it is much bigger and the children have spaces to sit and serve their creations and finally we would like to introduce water play.

We also have aspirations to design larger play areas such as tyre mountains and a sensory garden.

How can you help...



Our children are really reaping the benefits of OPAL and are developing so many important skills. However, one of the main challenges of this project, is the constant supply of resources that are needed. Obviously, when things get played with by so many children they get broken, so ensuring that we maintain a large supply of play equipment can be difficult.

We really do appreciate all of the donations from parents so far and the items really are being put to good use. If you are having a clear out over Christmas please do think about us. We are particularly looking for items such as:

*Pots, pans, kitchen utensils, muffin trays

*Watering cans, buckets, brooms, dustpan and brushes, paint rollers and trays

*Wheels: scooters, trikes, pushchairs, suitcases

*Large loose parts: guttering, cable reels, drums, den building parts, decking, planks

*Small world toys: vehicles, animals, dolls, sandpit toys

Finally, if you work for a company, or are in a position to support us in some of our larger projects, such as providing gravel so that we can build a tyre mountain or can help us to build things such as a decked stage area then please do get in touch!

We hope that you have a wonderful Christmas of play and look forward to sharing more with you next year. Look out for some further opportunities to come and play with your children at school.