



Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) update

Spring Term, March 2025



Goodbye winter and hello spring!! We are loving the sunshine as the ground is now much drier and we can start to have our 'fair weather' resources out again. This week, the music has gone down especially well. The children are loving being outside, no matter what the weather.

We'd like to begin with a big 'thank you' to Tom Axup at Europipes, Warwickshire, and James Kemsley at EKFB for donating and delivering at no cost our new 6m length of twin wall pipe. The excitement was palpable when the children saw it had arrived on the field! This provides another large, three dimensional object through which the children can crawl, climb, slide and explore.



Please can we remind all parents, that for health and safety, children and siblings **MUST NOT play on OPAL equipment or with the toys before school or at the end of the day.** Our children spend a long time tidying and ensuring things are put away appropriately for the next day.

A reminder of our zones:

Zone 1 – Small playground - 'traditional toys' e.g. action figures, duplo, toy cars, train track, small world figures and animals, lego, old electronics for role play, play food, mud kitchen (pans, trays and utensils), dolls and prams, hobby horses and rocking horses

Zone 2 – Big playground – zoned area for scooters and wheelchairs, stage for musical instruments, music area for dancing and singing, sand pit, trolleys of large vehicles and foam blocks

Zone 3 – Field – large loose parts e.g. planks of wood, bricks, cable reels, pipes, den making, large pipe, wheeled toys, tyres, plastic crates, pallets, barrels

Zone 4 – Nature area – tree climbing, tree swings and cargo net, tree platforms and walkway, roundhouse art area, bug hotels

Across our zones, OPAL offers a huge range of creative and exciting activities. **If you have any items from the list above which you no longer require, and wish to donate, please drop them off at the main school reception or speak to Mrs Glen. Mr Ryan may be able to collect large items.**



Wellies are being well managed by the children on a daily basis. FoTIS have very kindly bought us more storage racks for the corridors, so most classrooms now have a dedicated area for changing before and after play and lunch. Even though it is drying up, please ensure your child still has named wellies (which fit) in school for rainy days as its not summer just yet...

Our new OPAL storage sheds are in the process of being fitted out with shelving so resources can be taken out and put away easily and safely by the children. A big thank you to our Year 2 OPAL leaders who continue to do a fabulous job!



And a big thank you to parents who continue to support OPAL by:

- Sending your child into school with appropriate warm/waterproof clothing and wellies
- Donating to school unwanted or unused household items
- Supporting the OPAL ethos by asking your child about their play and accepting that they may get dirty
- Sending in spare clothes with their child for changing when wet or muddy

We will be sending home an OPAL survey in the summer term to ask for your thoughts and opinions on OPAL, which will go towards our accreditation.



All members of staff at Turnfurlong Infant School have a valid first aid certificate. We continue to see a reduced number of children coming in for first aid attention at break and lunch time compared to a year ago.

Please be reassured that any visible head marks, or bodily injuries deemed 'serious', will be phoned through to a contact with parental responsibility.

The children are visibly more resilient and confident in their ability to keep themselves and others safe whilst playing outside. Risk benefit is at the heart of OPAL, encouraging children to step out of their comfort zone and experiment with resources they may never have encountered during play with their friends.



Our Midday Meals Supervisor (MMS) team has increased. This will enable us to check more efficiently that the contents of lunch boxes are being eaten and children eating hot dinners are scraping their tray sensibly when finished.

Staff swap zones and duties weekly (inside or outside) to ensure a mix of interaction with all the children.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs Glen and Ms Moxham