



Parents OPAL Introduction Letter

English Martyrs' RC Primary School



Loving Jesus, Loving Learning, Loving Life.

Dear Parents

We are about to start a programme to improve opportunities for physical activity, socialisation, co-operation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment through improved play.

OPAL is based on the idea that as well as learning through good teaching, your children also learn when they play, and as 20% of their time in school is playtime, we want to make sure that this amount of time (equivalent to 1.4 years of primary school) is as good as possible.

One reason the school is carrying out this programme is that childhood has changed and many children no longer get their play need met out of school.

- Average screen time per day 5 hours
- Average outdoor play time per week 5 hours
- Percentage of UK children who only play outdoor with other children at school 56%

There are many proven benefits for school which carry out the OPAL Programme. They usually include: more enjoyment of school, less teaching time lost to disputes between children, less accidents and greatly improved behaviour.

As the school improves play opportunities for your children, you may find that we begin asking you for resources, known as 'spare parts'. We will look to make changes about how the children use the school grounds. They may use more of the grounds, for more of the year. Your children may get a bit messier, be exposed to more challenges and have greater freedoms to play where, with whom and how they like. The experiences the school is fostering are essential for children's physical and mental well-being and healthy and in line with all current good practice advice on health safety, well-being and development.

If you would like to learn more about the OPAL Primary Programme please have a look at the OPAL website.

<https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/>

Yours sincerely,

Mr Kennedy and the OPAL team.

