



OPAL NEWS



Lent 2025

Since the start of our OPAL journey at St Patrick's last summer, we have introduced many new activities to enhance outdoor play for our children including small world play, pushchairs, den building, messy café, painting and a music stage with a radio. This has been a huge success and the feedback from the children has been extremely positive. We have lots of exciting plans to provide more engaging and imaginative activities and over the next few weeks we are hoping to introduce a slack line, tree swings, digging area, music wall and gravel pit. None of this would be possible without the help of our amazing parents, our fabulous PFA who provided our DAB radios and generosity of local businesses. Huge thanks to Wickes for the £100 grant, B&Q for wallpaper rolls and fabric, Dulux for tins of paint, A Elliotts for tractor tyres and the many residents who have brought items to school after seeing our Facebook requests.

Fundraising:

Thank you to everyone who supported the sale of our Santa Sacks during December. We raised a fabulous £250 which has paid for slack lines, tree swings and gravel for the gravel pit.

Over the next year we will be raising funds to build a giant sandpit on our school field. The estimated cost of the 8m square sandpit will be around £2000 for materials. We are looking for donations of decking, railway sleepers or scaffold planks to create the sandpit frame. Please let us know if you can help or if you know a business that would be able to support us in our big build.

We have a limited number of wellies in our welly library. Children who need to borrow wellies will keep them in school and exchange them for the next size when needed or hand them back when no longer needed. If you have any wellies that you no longer need, please donate them to our welly library.

OPAL takes place in all weathers therefore it is important that children have the correct outdoor wear including wellies and where possible waterproofs. It is advised that children do not wear expensive or designer coats as they are likely to get dirt or paint on them during play. In wet weather children are not permitted on the field without wellies.

This term we are looking for donations of:

- toy diggers/trucks and dinosaurs for use in our gravel pit.
- Decking boards, scaffold planks and planks of wood for den building, seating and balance beams.
- Pans, oven trays, colanders and utensils for our music wall.

We are always looking for pushchairs, crates, large cable drums, plastic pipes and rope.

Each week our play leaders choose two winners for our 'Golden Welly Award'. These are children who have been engaged in play, shown kindness to others and have negotiated and risk assessed their own play. Last term we had winners of the 'Golden Welly Award' from year 6, year 5, year 2 and year 1!

Parents its time to find your inner child! We are planning on welcoming you to an OPAL session with your child where you too can make mud pies or become an artist or dancer! Date to be confirmed so watch this space!