



**St James' Church of England Infant and
Nursery School
11th October 2024**





Welcome to our weekly newsletter.

At the beginning of the week we had a visit from Anna from OPAL play. The purpose of the visit was to create an action plan for developing our playtimes to make sure that every child has an amazing play time everyday! In the afternoon, Anna walked the school grounds with our curriculum leader Miss Sapsed and our play leader, Mrs Irwin, to map out where all our new play zones will be best placed. We now have a clear action plan ready to launch the OPAL play principles in the following weeks.

Nursery have had a busy week trying new harvest foods, discussing different types of feelings and singing number songs.

Reception have moved into their final week of their focus text '*Kapiti Plain*', looking at life in Kenya. The children have worked as a group to write a leaflet to round off the unit. Yesterday afternoon they investigated textures by exploring different materials and they generated adjectives to describe how the different textures felt.

Year 1 and 2 have been building up to writing versions of '*The Journey Home*'. In their science lessons they have been learning about seasonal change, particularly the change in the weather this week and the differences between the seasons. In music they have started their new unit 'Under the Sea' exploring tempo. They have also been demonstrating their creativity in design technology, cutting, sticking and weaving to create slider mechanisms.

Looking ahead to next week we have our parent teacher meetings. These will be an opportunity to find out how your child has settled into their new year group and to find out how they are performing so far this year.

Have a lovely weekend,

Mrs Moore





OPAL- a rich landscape for play



Our school is about to start a programme to improve opportunities for physical activity, socialisation, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment through improved play.

In what ways, if any, do you think you benefited from playtime? Thinking about your own childhood, what did you like playing at school or at home? Children today don't have the same freedoms we once did, so we want to give children back time to really enjoy and learn from play. After all, it's a child's basic human right.

The Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) Primary Programme is the result of over 20 years of testing and development in over 800 schools and has been used in Spain, Canada, France and New Zealand. The programme has also been adapted and used in schools in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Austria under the Play Friendly Schools project. In 2018, OPAL won first prize in an EU-funded award for the best active school's programme in Europe and two UK national play work awards. In 2019, OPAL was awarded a quarter of a million pounds by Sport England to bring the programme to many more schools.

OPAL is based on the idea that, as well as learning through good teaching, your children also learn when they play. 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 needs met out of school.

- Average screen time per day is six hours.
- Average outdoor play time per week is five hours.
- Percentage of UK children who only play outdoors with other children at school is 56%.

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

Play is not messing about. It is the process evolution has come up with to enable children to learn all of the things that cannot be taught, while also having so much fun. There are certain things children must have in order to be able to play. These include:

- Having clothes that they can play in.
- Having things to play with.
- Having a certain amount of freedom.

As the school improves play opportunities for your children, you may find that we start asking for resources and we will be making 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 wellbeing and are in line with all current good practice advice on health and safety, wellbeing and development.

The school will be supported by OPAL for 18 months and there will be an opportunity to come and talk to the OPAL mentor at school. If you would like to learn more about the OPAL Primary Programme, please have a look at the OPAL website (www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk), where you will find lots of useful information and several videos about the programme.

In the coming 18 months you will be invited to events where you can come and see for yourselves what is happening and have the opportunity to join in too.

We are really excited about this project and hope that you will support us in our efforts to improve playtime for all children.

Please watch the short video below to give you a flavour of what OPAL playtimes look like once they are fully established:

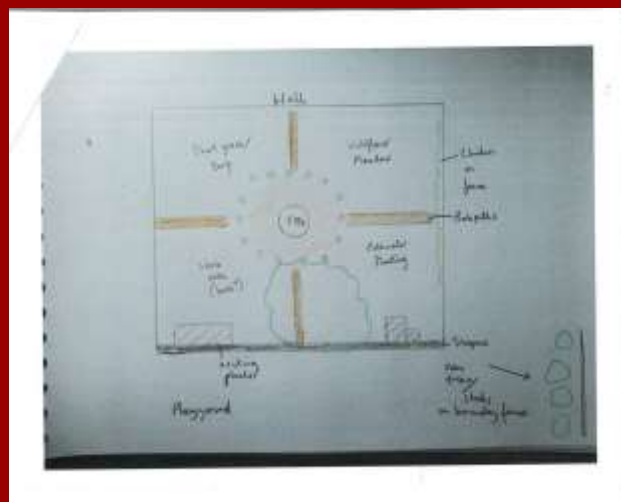
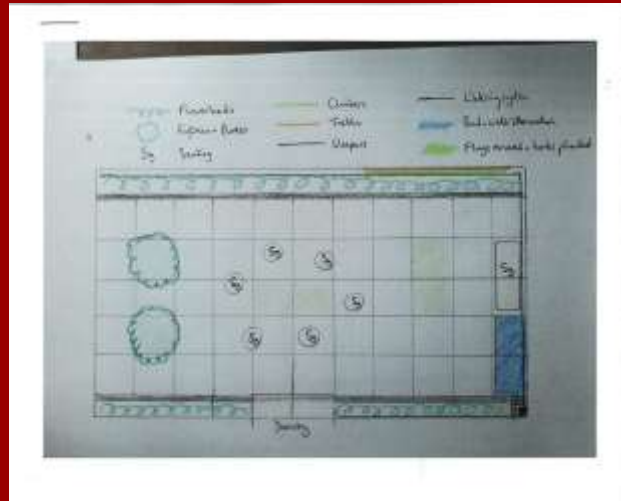
[Amazing Primary Playtime at St Michael's OPAL Platinum School \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

As the first step of our OPAL launch, we are looking for welly donations for both early years and Key Stage One. If your child has outgrown a pair of wellies we would be grateful of any donations.

Plans for Outdoor Areas



As we have been awarded the RHS Nature Grant we will have the opportunity to develop two outdoor areas to benefit the children. One of the areas is the courtyard which we are hoping to develop into a sensory garden and the other area is adjacent to the community centre. We are aiming to develop the area into a outdoor classroom space suitable for forest school activities. Please see the sketches below which show our plans. The work is due to be carried out later this term.



School Council Meeting

Mrs King has met with our school councillors for their first meeting of the academic year. They discussed two agenda items- spreading kindness in the community and potential fundraising ideas to enhance our outdoor provision. Next time they meet they will have the job of helping to write a play charter and they will be evaluating playtimes, finding out what is working well and what their suggestions could be for making them even better.

Update on land lease



Yesterday we were granted the long term lease of the land next to our nursery which is brilliant news. This will mean that we can move the existing perimeter fence to incorporate some valuable green space. We will gain approximately 10 metres squared which will increase our school grounds. Our school councillors will help to decide how the children want to use the new space. Work will begin as soon as the paperwork is finalised.

Tesco Blue Tokens Community Grant Award



We were delighted to welcome Sam Mciver the Community Champion from Tesco Whitehaven into school this week to present the school with a cheque for £1,500 following our success earlier this year with the blue token appeal. We will be using the money to develop our forest school areas around the school grounds. Work on this will be starting very soon.



Parents Evenings



Parents evening have been arranged for Monday 14th October and Tuesday 15th October. If you have not received a link to book an appointment please let the school office know.

School Photographs

The school photographer will be in school on the morning of Tuesday 15th October. All children in school will get the opportunity to have their photographs taken in school time. We will also try to ensure that siblings in school get taken together as well. If you would like a photograph with an older or younger sibling that does not attend our school then please bring them in from 8.15am.

Our weekly celebrations



Headteacher Award- Olivia L

Learners of the week

Great Gable- Florrie

Melbreak- Georgie

Catbells- Zack

Scafell- Lucas

Skiddaw- Sofia

Handwriters of the week

Lowe, Cora, Finley and Sam

Well done to Hope, Olivia, Zack and Charlotte for achievements outside of school this week.



Fancy Dress Party



We are holding two fancy dress parties on Thursday 24th October. The Early Years children (Nursery and Reception) can attend 4pm-5pm and Key Stage 1 children can attend 5pm-6pm. Tickets are virtual and are priced at £3.00, these are available to buy on School Money. There will be hot dogs and cakes available as well as the usual games and dancing.

Cauliflower Cards



Each year we offer parents the chance to buy Christmas cards, gift labels, mugs etc designed by your own child. Although you may feel it's a little too early for any talk of Christmas, we do have to be prepared in schools! Design forms are being sent home today there is guidance for doing the best sort of designs on the forms. Have a look on cauliflowercards.co.uk for inspiration!

- Place your orders online at shop.cauliflowergroup.co.uk using the unique number on your artwork form.
- Return your Design form to the school by **Monday 14th October 2024**
- Your cards, labels etc will be delivered to school and sent home with your child.

Please note you do not have to complete the forms and submit artwork if you do not want to - this is an entirely optional service. Prices range from £2.50 for 16 gift labels to £5.95 for a pack of 6 A5 cards and £6.95 for a mug. School earns a little commission from each sale so this is a fundraising activity for school.

If you would like an additional form for a sibling please call at the school office as we will have some in stock. Each form has a unique number. All cards are designed with your child's name and class on the back.

Attendance and punctuality



Melbreak were our attendance winners for the second week running with **98%** .

Attendance %	Days present in a school year	Average number of days missed per term	Days missed in a school year
100%	190	0	0
90%	171	6.33	19
80%	152	12.66	38
70%	133	19	57
60%	114	25.33	76
50%	95	31.66	95

- 5 minutes late each day = 3 days lost per year
- 10 minutes lost per day = 6 days lost per year
- 15 minutes late each day = 10 days lost per year
- 20 minutes late every day = 13 days lost per year
- 30 minutes late every day = 19 days lost per year

Breakfast club/ After school club



Breakfast and After School Club Bookings are to be made in advance via our online system School Money. Please note that you cannot book via School Money on the day, all bookings must be made by midnight the day before. For emergency bookings at short notice you can still ring the school office. Feel free to book in for any odd sessions that your child would like to attend. Sessions run from 3.15pm-5.15pm. The cost is £5.50 for the session, and pick up can be anytime up until 5.15pm from the side entrance of the school on the top yard.

Activities

Feel free to book any session as a one-off if your child would like to attend that activity.

Please see below for the overview of available activities for after school club.

After School Club Activities 2024 - 2025 Autumn 1					
M/W	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2nd Sept	INSET DAY	INSET DAY	Small World Animals	Mindful Colouring & Reading	Emoing Up & Role Play
9th Sept	Lego Club	Cars & Trains	Small World	Arts & Crafts	Emoing Night
16th Sept	Dressing Up and Role Play	Mindful Colouring & Reading	Games & Puzzles	Small World Cards & Crafts	Music Night
23rd Sept	Emoing Night	Small World Role Play	Lego Club	Construction, Cars & Trains	Tummy Bump Flora
30th Sept	Arts & Crafts	Music Night	Emoing Up & Role Play	Small World Animals	Emoing Model Making
7th Oct	Construction, Cars & Trains	Games & Puzzles	Small World Cards & Crafts	Emo Building	Lego Club
14th Oct	Mindful Colouring & Reading	Dressing Up & Role Play	Small World Reading	Arts & Crafts	Music Night
21st Oct	Lego Club	Small World Animals	Emoing	Games & Puzzles	Arts & Crafts

Please refer to book on the website or contact sessions if your child would like to attend.
Sessions cost £5.50 and run from 3.15pm - 5.15pm pick up at any point in between these times.
All bookings should be made via SchoolMoney.

Lunch Orders



School lunches need to be ordered through the School Money system. They can be ordered in advance for the rest of the half term but they must be ordered by the day before at the latest. If your child is bringing in a packed lunch from home, please ensure you select that option on School Money so that the office are aware. Packed lunches must not contain fizzy drinks or (as stated above) any items that contain or may contain nuts.

St James' C of E Infant and Nursery School
Menu Autumn 2020/21

Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Break	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate
Lunch	Chicken Curry with Rice	Beef & Potato with Peas	Chicken & Pasta	Beef & Potato with Peas	Chicken Curry with Rice
Drinks	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water
Snacks	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple
Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt
Desert	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple

Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Break	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate
Lunch	Chicken Curry with Rice	Beef & Potato with Peas	Chicken & Pasta	Beef & Potato with Peas	Chicken Curry with Rice
Drinks	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water
Snacks	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple
Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt
Desert	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple

Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Break	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate	Hot Chocolate
Lunch	Chicken Curry with Rice	Beef & Potato with Peas	Chicken & Pasta	Beef & Potato with Peas	Chicken Curry with Rice
Drinks	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water
Snacks	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple
Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Yoghurt
Desert	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple

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Upcoming diary dates



Monday 14th October- Parent teacher meetings

Tuesday 15th October- Individual school photos
Parent teacher meetings

Monday 21st October- Full Governors meeting

Tuesday 22nd October (am)- m Whitehaven cluster STEM event for Year 2

Thursday 24th October Fancy Dress Parties (4pm-5pm Early years children, 5pm-6pm Key Stage 1 children)

***** OCTOBER HALF TERM (Monday 28th October to Friday 1st November)

Monday 4th November- KS1 Great Fire of London workshops and Bonfire safety talk from Cumbria Fire Service

Friday 15th November- Children In Need

Monday 18th November- Road Safety week

Friday 22nd November- Non uniform day in exchange for item donations for Christmas hampers

Friday 6th December- Christmas fayre (pm)

Monday 9th December- Early Years nativities

Tuesday 10th December- Year 1 and 2 nativities

Wednesday 18th December- Christmas dinner and party afternoon

Friday 20th December 12.15pm- Christmas service at church (joint with our Juniors)

Break up for the Christmas holidays after the service in church.

**Further dates will be added throughout the term in bold*

Contact Us



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