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& CHILDCARE CENTRE
Work, Play, Fun & Achieve

Headteacher: Anna Young

15th June 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are about to launch our exciting new project to make our playtimes even better, in conjunction with Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) CIC. In 2018, OPAL won the best active schools' programme in Europe award and has been cited in two parliamentary reports as delivering outstanding practice. OPAL is working closely with Sport England to promote more active childhoods, which is one of the many reasons we are improving our playtime, as well as to improve opportunities for socialisation, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment for your child.

We strongly believe that: **“Play is freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child. Play can be fun or serious. Through play children explore social, material and imaginary worlds and their relationship with them, elaborating all the while a flexible range of responses to the challenges they encounter. By playing, children learn and develop as individuals, and as members of the community.”** (Children's Play Council 2001).

The programme will start from **Monday 19th June** and you will start to see some small changes to the outdoor areas. Some of the activities will require wellies to be worn so if your child already has a pair can you please send them into school ASAP. The wellies will be stored in school for your child to access when they wish. Please ensure you write their name clearly on the inside. Wellies will be a part of our school uniform and a necessity for some wet/dirty activities so if your child does not have any currently could you please source some at your earliest convenience or by September.

We are also changing the uniform to ensure children are comfortable when they are playing so children will not have to be restricted to skirts and trousers we are going to allow them to wear black leggings and black jogging pants.

Our hopes are that it will change the way we think and how we play together. To facilitate this project, we will need to buy some new resources, move some things around on the playground and require some loose parts. Loose parts are any materials that can be easily moved, combined, and incorporated into children's free

play. The items we are looking for will enable us to enjoy a wider range of play experiences during playtime (see below for some examples):

- Suitcases of any size and type
- Anything on wheels/castors
- Plastic milk crates/supermarket delivery crates/plastic bread trays
- Briefcases, especially hard cased ones
- Road signs and cones
- Kitchen pots, pans, baking trays, work tables, wooden spoons, chopping boards
- Tools like small spades/shovels, trowels and brooms
- Tubes of various sizes and various materials
- Buckets
- Nets and thick ropes
- Keyboards/torches/laptops/calculators/mobile phones/desk phones/webcams/cameras that are no longer working
- Fabric (large sheets/brightly coloured fabric)
- Foam sheets/bodyboards/camping roll mats/yoga mats
- Wooden pallets
- Metal frames
- Cable drums
- Guttering
- Noodles (the type you use in the swimming pool!)
- Hats/scarves/jazzy shirts/elasticated skirts/waistcoats/wedding dresses/character costumes
- Pegs (to help to set up dens)

We will be holding a collection week beginning Monday 26th June. The sooner we do this, the sooner the children will be able to play with the items! Please do not bring your donations in before this date as we will have nowhere to store them. If objects are really large, such as wooden pallets, we will ensure that there is someone available to help you carry them into school.

There will be more information to follow at a parent's session later in the year when you will be invited to come and play with your children. We are really excited about this project and hope that you will support us in our efforts to improve playtime for all children.

In the meantime please have a look at some of the videos on the OPAL website <https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk>

Yours sincerely

Anna Young
Headteacher

