



“Children need the freedom and time to play. Play is not a luxury. Play is a necessity.” - Kay Redfield Jamison



Intent

20% of children’s time in school is playtime – OPAL at Lapford Community Primary School encourages children to learn in a variety of ways through play. We aim for pupils to have the opportunity to explore the sixteen play types that OPAL have to offer through a large range of engaging equipment that we have in school. The aim is for pupils to play safely and create their own play in their own way, thus developing responsibility, resilience, risk management and improving social skills.

Implementation

At Lapford Primary School, pupils have access to the whole play space and are free to choose from a wide variety of equipment and activities, including wheeled toys, guttering and tubes, mud kitchen, dressing up, colouring, small world and traditional games like football and tennis. They have various zones that the children can use as they wish – Squirrels Hide, Badgers Seek, AstroTurf area, Main playground, and Field area. The equipment we have to offer encourages the children to think imaginatively and problem solve together when required. They can continue with the educational learning at playtime as well through the provision of writing and mark making equipment, alongside books to enjoy quietly. Children will be able to express themselves as they want to, with adults only stepping in to supervise or encourage when required.

There will be weekly OPAL assemblies where we will celebrate things that are going well, inform the children about new equipment that may become accessible, negotiate areas of concern that have become apparent over the week and innovate listening to where the children are taking their play and making decisions about provision that needs to be made to support this direction.

The important part of implementing the OPAL approach is that it is promoting our value of teamwork. With adults and children at Lapford Primary School working together to make play safe, fun and fair whilst becoming responsible members of the school community.

Impact

OPAL has many proven benefits and at Lapford we hope that it will include more enjoyment at school, improved relationships between pupils and staff, fewer accidents, less teaching time lost to disputes between children and greatly improved behaviour. We strive for our pupils to be

- Highly independent and resilient
- Responsible for their own actions
- Creative and imaginative thinkers
- Enthusiastic builders, engineers, explorers and designers
- More active both physically and mentally

Through the OPAL approach we believe that our values of Compassion, Ambition and Teamwork can be truly modelled and promoted to ensure the best possible outcome for everyone.