



'A happy and holy place of learning  
and the centre of a thriving community'

St Benet's RC Primary School  
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Telephone: 0191 4105857

Head teacher: Miss C Harper  
Deputy Head Teacher: Mrs C Canham

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019

## OPAL Launch



Dear Parents,

As mentioned in the newsletter back in September, we are about to launch an exciting new project to make our play times even better, in conjunction with OPAL. (<http://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/>)

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"*** (Play Council 2001).

The project will start soon and our hopes are that this project 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 we will also 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/casters
- Plastic milk crates
- Briefcases, especially hard cased ones
- Road signs and cones
- kitchen pots, pans, baking trays, work tables, wooden spoons, chopping boards





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- Tools like spades, trowels and brooms
- Tubes of various sizes and various materials
- Buckets
- Nets and ropes
- Keyboards
- Fabric (large sheets/brightly coloured fabric)
- Foam sheets / body boards
- Wooden pallets
- Metal frames
- Cable drums
- Guttering
- Noodles (the type you use in the swimming pool!)
- Pegs (to help to set up dens)

We will be holding a collection week during the week commencing **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November** so if anyone thinks they can help with any of the above, we would really appreciate it. 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.

On Monday and Tuesday next week, there shall be an opportunity for parents to complete a questionnaire about their views about playtimes. We would really appreciate your feedback and all parents who do participate, shall have their names entered into a prize draw where a bottle of wine is up for grabs! We are really excited about this project and hope that you will support us in our efforts to improve playtime for all children.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Harper  
Head teacher

