



## OPAL Seasonal Enhancements Long Term Plan



### Intent

Our OPAL programme aims to provide high-quality, inclusive outdoor play that supports children's physical health, emotional wellbeing, creativity, and social development. We intend to:

- Promote **child-led, imaginative play** through open-ended resources
- Develop **resilience, independence, and risk management skills**
- Ensure all pupils have access to **engaging, varied outdoor experiences**
- Foster a connection with the **natural environment across seasons**
- Support the development of the **whole child**, including communication, collaboration, and problem-solving

### Implementation

We implement OPAL through a structured, seasonal approach that evolves across the academic year:

- **Progressive resource development** from simple loose parts to complex structures
- **Zoned outdoor environments** (e.g., active, creative, quiet, messy play areas)
- Staff trained to **facilitate rather than direct play**, encouraging independence



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- Regular **risk-benefit assessments** to enable safe but challenging play
- Seasonal planning to maximise opportunities for **nature-based learning**

Children are encouraged to:

- Build, create, and explore using loose parts
- Engage in social play, negotiation, and teamwork
- Experience managed risk in a supportive environment

### Impact

The impact of OPAL is evident through:

- Increased **physical activity levels** and improved coordination
- Enhanced **social skills**, including cooperation and conflict resolution
- Improved **wellbeing, confidence, and resilience**
- Greater **engagement and enjoyment** during playtimes
- Development of **creativity and problem-solving abilities**

Pupil voice, observations, and staff feedback demonstrate that children are:



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- More independent and engaged
- Better able to manage risks and challenges
- Showing sustained periods of purposeful play

### OPAL Long-Term Plan (Detailed Activities & Resources)

Term	Activity	What It Is (Description)	Resources Needed
Autumn	Leaf & Nature Play	Children collect, sort, and use natural materials to create art, patterns, and imaginative play scenarios	Leaves, pinecones, sticks, acorns, trays, baskets
	Mud Kitchen Play	Role play “cooking” using mud and natural items to develop creativity and communication	Mud kitchen setup, pots, pans, spoons, water access, natural materials
	Den Building (Intro)	Simple shelter building using basic materials to encourage teamwork and imagination	Tarpaulins, crates, pegs, ropes, sticks
	Loose Parts Play	Open-ended building and imaginative play using movable objects	Tyres, crates, planks, tubes



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	Balancing & Climbing	Developing physical skills through low-risk climbing and balancing	Logs, beams, tyres
<b>Spring</b>	Planting & Gardening	Children plant seeds and observe growth, learning about nature and responsibility	Seeds, soil, planters, watering cans, tools
	Water Play (Intro)	Exploration of water movement, pouring, and flow	Buckets, jugs, funnels, small pipes, gutters
	Construction Projects	Building larger structures collaboratively, such as dens and bridges	Pallets, crates, planks, cable reels
	Bug Hunts & Habitats	Exploring insects and creating simple habitats to support wildlife	Magnifying glasses, bug viewers, logs, leaves
	Problem-Solving Challenges	Tasks such as building bridges or moving water efficiently	Loose parts, planks, pipes, crates
<b>Summer</b>	Water Play Expansion	Large-scale water play encouraging teamwork and experimentation	Large containers, hoses, pumps, pipes
	Obstacle Courses	Physical challenges combining climbing, balancing, and movement	Tyres, ropes, planks, cones



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	Performance & Creative Play	Music, dance, and role play using outdoor spaces	Costumes, fabrics, props, simple instruments
	Outdoor Art	Creative expression using natural and water-based materials	Chalk, paintbrushes, water, natural items
	Enterprise Play (Shops/Cafés)	Role play real-life scenarios, encouraging communication and numeracy	Crates, containers, pretend money, loose parts