

OPAL Newsletter

Summer 2025

We are well and truly in the swing of OPAL now, and it has been fantastic to see the children enjoying the freedom to explore and play across the site. Their creativity, teamwork, and imagination are shining through as they make the most of the different play opportunities.

The children now have access to more of the school site during OPAL, including the field and our Forest School area. Since September, we have increased the range of activities available, with highlights including our very own mud kitchens—handmade by Mr. Wheatcroft—music on the playground (which the children absolutely love!), and an outdoor classroom dedicated to arts and crafts.

We are thrilled with how OPAL is growing and look forward to continuing to expand the opportunities on offer. We already have some exciting plans in place for the next academic year and can't wait to see the children's play experiences continue to flourish!

How does OPAL work at Heath?

Our children are at the heart of everything we do at Heath, and they play a key role in shaping our OPAL journey. Each week, we hold OPAL play assemblies where we celebrate play by sharing photos, discuss and agree on important aspects of play such as safety and rules, and carry out risk-benefit analysis assessments for our exciting risky play adventures. By involving the children in this process, we empower them to take ownership of their play while learning how to manage risks safely and responsibly.

Our OPAL sheds are getting low! We would be grateful for any donations of loose parts, fancy dress, old toys, craft item, sand toys and digging equipment. Thank you.



We are excited to invite you to our OPAL Parent Playday on 24th September! Come along and join your child as they embark on their play adventure—exploring, creating, and having fun together. It's a wonderful opportunity to see OPAL in action and experience the joy of play first-hand. More details will follow closer to the date—we hope to see you there!



The new academic year is full of excitement and promises even more OPAL fun! As we head into the winter months, children will continue to explore the site in all weathers, embracing the outdoors come rain or shine. To help us keep OPAL running smoothly, please ensure your child comes to school with a waterproof coat, wellies, and a change of clothes—they may come back a little messy, but that's all part of the adventure!



We hope your children have been sharing their OPAL play adventures with you at home!

Recently, we gathered pupil voice to find out how the children feel about their OPAL experiences, and the results were fantastic:

- 80% of children said that before OPAL, they either did not enjoy or only sometimes enjoyed lunchtimes.
- 85% of children now say that lunchtimes are more fun since OPAL was introduced.
- 70% of children feel they have more choice in their play.

It's wonderful to see the positive impact OPAL is having, and we are committed to continuing to develop play opportunities for all our children.

Digging area and sandpit fun!

We are very lucky to have such a supportive school community, and we want to say a huge thank you to all the parents who helped make our sandpit and digging area a reality.

We are so grateful for your kindness and community spirit. We can't wait to fill it up and start playing in September!



Our OPAL wish list



Upcycled Loose Parts							
Baking Pans	Cake Moulds	Ice Cube Trays	Kitchen Tools	Measuring Spoons	Pots & Pans	Strainers	
Baskets	Cable Spools	Cardboard Items	Cones	Containers	Corrugated Pipes	Dress-Up Items	
Fabric	Funnels	Milk Crates	Nets	Old Electronics	Pool Noodles	PVC Pipes	
Rolling Carriers	Ropes	Shovels & Spades	Sinks & Tubs	Tarps	Tires & Wheels	Wooden Planks	

Best wishes,

Mr. Lynch and Miss Bradley