



St Thomas More
Catholic Primary School

We are the **first school in Berkhamsted** to begin the process of becoming an OPAL school.

We want amazing play, every day, for every child!

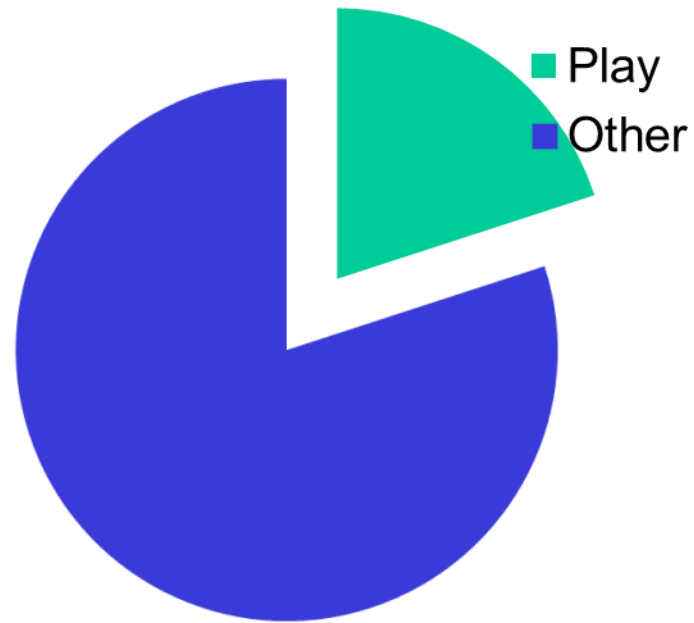


Outdoor Play And Learning

Why is this so important?



Play makes up 20% of school life



Per Year

231 hours

37 days

7.4 weeks

Primary Years

1.4 years

Childhood has changed... Children have not



UK Children screen time average 6 hours per day

Resilience and emotional regulation



Children build resilience by
overcoming challenges and
fear

Resilience isn't a
biological gift from
great parents

It is something we need to
gain through experience



Reminder....



What is play?

Play is a process that is...
Freely chosen

Intrinsically motivated

Self –directed by the child



Health benefits for all of the family



Exercise
Family Time
Fun
Improved
Mental Health
Fresh Air
Relaxation
Feel good factor



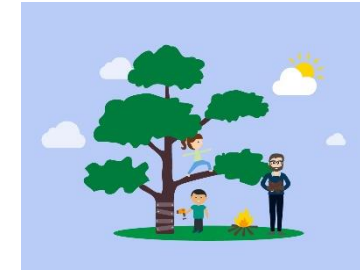
Parent's Resource Bookits free and full of great ideas!

We don't always get it right!



HINDERS

- Be careful
- You're going to hurt yourself
- That's too big for you
- Passes on own anxiety
- Distracts child from engaging in certain play types
- Adulterates play –gets over involved/excited
- Over competitive
- Allows child to always win



HELPFUL

- Supportive
- Models behavior
- Follows child's direction
- Provides resources
- Thinks about when to intervene
- Waits to be invited
- Observes
- Learns and Reflects

Awareness allows us to make the changes we need to support a child.

The importance of risk in children's play



RISK MEANS Going
beyond what is
already known or
easily accomplished



**CHILDREN'S PLAY AND LEISURE – PROMOTING A BALANCED APPROACH
SEPTEMBER 2012**

Key message:

'Play is great for children's well-being and development. When planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is not to eliminate risk, but to weigh up the risks and benefits. No child will learn about risk if they are wrapped in cotton wool.'

STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE MEANS

- ☐ Weighing up risks and benefits when designing and providing play opportunities and activities
- ☐ Focussing on and controlling the most serious risks, and those that are not beneficial to the play activity or foreseeable by the user
- ☐ Recognising that the introduction of risk might form part of play opportunities and activity
- ☐ Understanding that the purpose of risk control is not the elimination of all risk, and so accepting that the possibility of even serious or life-threatening injuries cannot be eliminated, though it should be managed
- ☐ Ensuring that the benefits of play are experienced to the full

OFSTED and OPAL



Resilience, Perseverance, Determination and Grit

Skills for life

Character building skills and opportunities

The impact of OPAL



More physically active more of the year



Developing life skills – resilience, competence



Risk management skills, Improved decision making



Social skills, team building, negotiation



Improved mental health and well-being



100% girls more active



Huge core skills improvement



Improved behaviour



Less accidents, incidents and winging



More inclusive
No child bored, or feeling left out



Increased learning time – More settled and ready to learn



Cost saving – SLT and Teachers time

Benefits of Play



- strength and endurance
- whole body co-ordination
- emotional attachment
- emotional and social skills
- hand-eye co-ordination
- thinking, reasoning, problem-solving and creativity
- early language development
- self-regulation – emotions, actions
- mental representation
- communication skills
- literacy
- numeracy
- artistic creativity
- narrative skills
- social and group work skills
- understanding rules
- social skills
- discussion skills
- resilience

Creating a playful environment – Outdoor loose parts.





Natural Loose Parts



Acorns



Grass



Leaves



Logs



Pine Cones



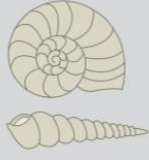
Rain & Water



Sand



Snow



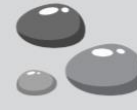
Shells



Soil



Sticks



Stones



Wild Flowers



Wood Cookies



We still need your help



Thank you...please keep sending in resources for playtime



The Essentials



A waterproof coat



A pair of welly boots



Tolerance of dirt and mud



Outdoor play is essential to your child's health and well-being





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We look forward to taking you on this journey with us as we improve our playtimes at St Thomas More.

If you haven't already, please take a few minutes to fill out our parent survey thinking about playtimes as they currently are. This will help form our baseline to measure improvement.



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