

Principals' Post

KEEPING YOU INFORMED FROM MR SPRINGETT-MCHUGH & MRS DRAPER

OPAL Platinum Award – Celebrating Excellence in Play Once Again!



Platinum Award

Dear Families

We are incredibly proud to share some fantastic news with you all: **Oxley Park Academy has once again been awarded OPAL Platinum Status — with an outstanding 100% score!** This exceptional achievement reflects the dedication, creativity, and commitment shown across our entire school community.

During the recent assessment on 23rd March 2026, OPAL Mentor Louise Taffe praised the Academy for the **“highly effective quality of OPAL play provision”** and celebrated the warm, cohesive feel of our split-site school, noting that Oxley Park **“very much feels like one cohesive setting... with a shared vision consistently reflected in practice.”**

The reaccreditation highlighted a number of exceptional strengths across the school’s play provision, including:

- **Outstanding pupil engagement** - children were described as **“engaged, happy, and confident in their play,”** showing strong independence, creativity, and curiosity.
- **Rich and varied play environments** - the outdoor spaces were praised for being **“well organised”** and offering a wide range of opportunities for physical, imaginative, and social play, ensuring every child can find something meaningful to engage with.
- **Exceptional behaviour and inclusivity** - playtimes were described as **“calm, purposeful, and enjoyable,”** with pupils showing respect, collaboration, and the ability to manage minor disagreements independently.



- **A strong, united play culture across both sites** - the report noted a “**strong sense of unity across a split-site school,**” reinforced by shared expectations and consistent practice.
- **A balanced approach to risk** - pupils are encouraged to challenge themselves within safe boundaries, using resources sensibly and confidently.
- **A positive impact on wellbeing and personal development** - play was recognised as a powerful contributor to pupils’ resilience, social confidence, and enjoyment of school life.
- **Strong Leadership** - “**The headteacher’s passion for OPAL and outdoor play is evident and has played an important role in shaping the school’s culture.**”
“**This strong leadership is reflected in the consistency and quality of provision across the school.**”

These findings truly reflect what we see every day: children who are thriving, staff who are committed, and environments that inspire imagination, collaboration, and joyful learning.

Experience OPAL for Yourself – Stay & Play Coming Soon!

We know how much our children benefit from the OPAL approach, and we’d love you to experience it too! During the summer term, families will be invited to join us for a special OPAL Stay & Play session.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to:

- Step onto the playground
- Explore our different play zones
- See the open-ended materials and loose parts in action
- Share in the joy of child-led play alongside your child

Dates and details will be shared with you soon — so please keep an eye out!

Thank you for helping us build a school where play brings joy, creativity, and connection to every day. Together, we’ll keep that magic growing by creating play spaces where imaginations spark, confidence grows, and every child feels excited to explore their world

Warm regards

Mr N Springett-McHugh
Executive Principal

Mrs K Draper
Associate Principal