



Rishton Methodist Primary School

"Rise up ... take courage and do it" Ezra 10:4

Headteacher: Mrs D Higgins

Newsletter 1 19th September

Welcome Back We have been back in school now for 13 school days and they have certainly been very busy days! It has been a great start to the school year with lots already taking place. Punctuality has been better than ever so thank you very much for being at school for 8:40am. Let's make this the most punctual year yet at Rishton!

Class Dojo Class Dojo is a brilliant and quick way for school to keep you updated with any news or events. The majority of our news is now shared this way, so that it saves paper, and is easily accessible from your phones. You can also message the office, myself and the class teachers. We do still have a few parents who are not yet signed up to class Dojo. It would be brilliant if we could get 100% of parents/carers connected as it really does help with communication and ensuring school life runs as smoothly as possible.

Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) As you will have spotted earlier this week on Dojo, we have a new initiative in school - OPAL. This will be worked on over the next 18 months/ 2 years and will transform playtime and lunch times at our school.

"OPAL is one of the most impactful transformations on children's lives that we've seen in the UK in the last 10 years- not just in schools, not just in education but just as a way of making a positive difference in children's lives...I'm in awe actually."

Tim Gill , former Director of Play England

The programme is used in countries all around the world including Australia, New Zealand, Canada, France, Spain and just some of the benefits are listed below:



***Behaviour** - Happy and busy children.

***Accidents** - OPAL schools have up to 80% less reported accidents.

***Self-regulation** - Children in OPAL schools learn to self-regulate through practice, trust and freedom.

***Physical activity** - all children, including girls and boys , SEN and non-sporty children are significantly more active.

***Mental well-being** - Research shows OPAL children are happier and self-reporting improved mental health

***Social and emotional development** - Good play in life is where relationships are practised.

***Links to formal learning** - Many OPAL schools report increased creativity, imagination and collaborative skills.

***Attendance** - children can't wait to come to OPAL schools because they have such fun.

***Parents** - Well informed parents at OPAL schools love it that their children are happier.

***Rights** - Play is a child's right as recognised by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

***OFSTED** - OPAL schools can easily provide evidence on their approach to wellbeing and inclusion

***Risk** - OPAL schools report significant improvements in children's ability to identify and manage risk

Your children's uniform may be a little dirtier than usual but I'm sure you will agree that it is worth it! We also have the preloved uniform area which is well-stocked should you need any spare. We will share more about OPAL as it's developed in school.

After School Club We have a very busy After School Club which has a waiting list on most days now. It has recently been transformed with new activities, new menus, new resources and it continues to evolve. Miss Baines and Mrs Floyd continue to work at the club, and the provision is currently led by Miss Bury and Mrs Dean. Should you have any feedback please ask to speak to Miss Bury or Mrs Dean, or contact them through the office.

Education Sunday

Last Sunday was Education Sunday at the Methodist church here in Rishton. Many of our teachers, and families, attended. Thank you for showing your support at this event. You are more than welcome at church every weekend at church.



Awards This year, we will continue to have our Star of the Week, and the winner of Value of the Week. The winners of these awards will continue to have a treat of afternoon tea with me each week and their rewards will be presented in worship each Friday.

Pre-School Update We have recently sent out Lancashire Council official questionnaires. Please call into the office to collect one if you are interested in a place at our pre-school now, or in the future. There are some out in the local community too. We need as many people as possible to show their interest in this provision to allow this to get to the next stage and up and running. Please spread the word!

Water Bottles

Previously the school provided small water bottles for every child so everyone had access to water whenever they wanted a drink. The water bottles were not of a very good quality and were difficult for us to keep clean. Therefore, this year, we would like to you send a labelled water bottle into school every day with your child please. If you forget this one day, please just let the class teacher know so we can make sure we provide a cup of water instead. If your child has a packed

lunch, then they can have a non-fizzy drink of choice in their lunch just as normal. Thanks for your support with this.

New Year - New Developments This year we have some new areas of focus throughout the school to continue to improve our school to ensure it is the best it can be!

1. New RE scheme of work and more chance for trips, visitors and wider experiences.
2. Work on metacognition with our children. Therefore, helping them to remember more knowledge, as well as learning strategies to boost learning.
3. Build a new culture of play for the whole school (OPAL)
4. Achieve an EYFS (Reception) outdoor area accreditation to demonstrate the high level of outside learning opportunities.

Coats

Please can all children come to school with a waterproof coat every day. This is so important especially as the weather begins to change. We do go outside, whatever the weather, and we want the children to keep warm and dry. Please feel free to send in wellies on rainy days, or a spare pair of socks in their bag. If it is easier for you, wellies can be kept in school.

Coffee Mornings Thank you to those of you who were able to come to our coffee mornings. I know these were very popular. Following some feedback, and going forward, we will record and/or provide a Zoom link for these events for those of you who can't make it due to work commitments. They obviously may not be of perfect quality, and some parts may need to be cut if there are discussions which take place and parents don't wish to be filmed. Lots to consider but we will trial it!

Curriculum All class teachers have sent out a letter and a curriculum map for this half term. This helps you to know what your child is learning in school and how you can help at home. If you didn't receive one, please just get in touch with your child's teacher. We have a Parents' Evening in October where you will be informed how your child is getting on in school with their learning, and in their new class.

Final Word

It was recently great to be informed that so many of you recommend our school on social media. The whole team work incredibly hard here so to know that you think so highly of the school is brilliant. If you would like to continue to spread the positive word, then a 5* Facebook review is really helpful. If there is anything that you think we could do to be even better, please let me know directly and, I will always help. Have a lovely weekend,

Mrs Higgins.

