

Congratulations to Tewkesbury CofE Primary School

Double Platinum OPAL Award – June 2025

Huge congratulations to Tewkesbury CofE Primary School on achieving your second OPAL Award – you are now officially a Double Platinum OPAL School! This places Tewkesbury among the very best primary schools in the country for the quality of outdoor play provision.

Under the leadership of Head Teacher Tim Rylatt and Curricular Lead for Play, Robert Stagg, the OPAL team has worked tirelessly over the past two years to not only maintain but continue to improve both the outdoor spaces and the play practice across the school.

The school's expansive outdoor environment has been transformed into a rich and varied landscape for play. During the final audit, there was a surprise around every corner – from clamber stacks of hay bales and a caterpillar car to slack lines, monkey bars, a vast sandpit with a boat and kayak, a stage for dancing, a scooter park, sports areas, a wildflower meadow, a mud kitchen, and more. Pupils have access to a wealth of natural and fabricated loose parts which they use with growing confidence and skill.

This remarkable site development has been made possible thanks to the creativity and dedication of the resourceful site team Mr Hoare and Mr James, who have designed and built many bespoke pieces for the school. Meanwhile, the lunchtime play team are consistently skilled and supportive – opening the full site in all weathers, enabling children to explore risky and adventurous play while embedding the school's core values throughout the playground experience.

The parent community has also played a vital role, supporting with wellies, waterproofs, and fundraising through wonderful initiatives such as the Scoot-athon.

A Double Platinum OPAL Award is an exceptional achievement. It reflects a whole-school commitment to children's right to play, as enshrined in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was a joy to witness the school community immersed in meaningful, joyful play – from tree climbing and den building to dance routines, goal scoring, and marvellous mud kitchen creations. The sense of fun, freedom, and shared delight was palpable.

What an incredible accomplishment!

Special congratulations and heartfelt thanks go to Headteacher Tim Rylatt, Curricular Lead Robert Stagg, Play Coordinators Mrs Buchanan, Mrs Lockwood and Mr James, and the entire dedicated play team who make the ordinary extraordinary every single day.

Rachel Murray, OPAL Mentor

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