



The Federation of the Church Schools of Shalfleet and Freshwater & Yarmouth

Together for a Brighter Future

20th March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are very excited to let you know that after the Easter break we will be launching OPAL Play (Outdoor Play and Learning) at our school. OPAL is a nationally recognised programme that supports schools to transform playtimes into richer, more imaginative, and more enjoyable experiences for all children.

What is OPAL Play?

OPAL encourages children to use a wide range of play opportunities, including natural materials, loose parts (such as crates, tyres, fabrics and pipes), creative spaces, and outdoor areas that promote exploration. The aim is to give children more freedom to play in ways that interest them, while helping them develop important life skills at the same time.

Why are we introducing OPAL?

Play is a key part of children's development. Through OPAL, we want to make playtimes more active, more inclusive, and more meaningful. You may see changes to the playground and the equipment available, and over time you will see children becoming more independent, imaginative and confident in the way they play.

Benefits for Children

OPAL Play brings a wide range of positive outcomes for children, including:

- Increased creativity and imagination through open-ended play opportunities
- Improved physical health with more active, energetic play
- Greater social skills, cooperation and teamwork
- Enhanced problem-solving and decision-making abilities
- Reduced playtime conflicts as children become more engaged and have more choice
- Improved resilience and confidence as they take appropriate risks in a safe environment
- More inclusive play, ensuring every child can find something enjoyable to do

Schools using OPAL often report calmer lunchtimes, better behaviour back in class, and happier children overall.

What will this mean for our school?

Over the coming months, you may see new equipment or materials appearing on the playground as we build up our OPAL resources. Children may come home talking about new activities or spaces they have discovered. We

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Grainger BEd English (Hons)

Shalfleet Church of England Primary School,
Station Road, Ningwood, Newport, Isle of Wight. PO30 4NN

Tel: (01983) 760269 Email: shalfleet@fosay.co.uk

Freshwater & Yarmouth Church of England Primary School,
79 School Green Road, Freshwater, Isle of Wight. PO40 9AX

Tel: (01983) 760345 Email: yarmouth@fosay.co.uk

Federation Website: www.fosay.co.uk

The Federation of the Church Schools of Shalfleet and Freshwater & Yarmouth purpose is to educate children in an atmosphere of Christian love where all achieve the very best they can, now and throughout their lives.



A University of Chichester
ITT Partner School





The Federation of the Church Schools of Shalfleet and Freshwater & Yarmouth

Together for a Brighter Future

will continue to assess and adapt our play environment to ensure it remains safe, stimulating and well supervised.

As OPAL encourages outdoor play in all weather, we may ask for your support in ensuring children have appropriate clothing (e.g., coats, waterproofs, wellies) so they can enjoy playtimes all year round.

Working Together

OPAL is a whole-school approach, and parent support helps make it a real success. We will keep you updated as the project develops and would again request any small world play, Lego or Duplo or mud kitchen resources as donated materials or items that the children can use as part of their play.

We are really looking forward to seeing the positive impact OPAL Play will have on our pupils. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Grainger

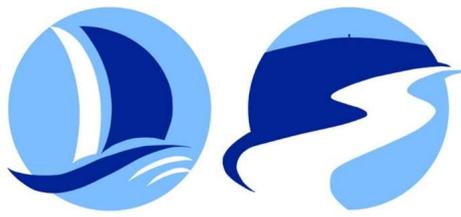
Headteacher

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Grainger BEd English (Hons)

Shalfleet Church of England Primary School,
Station Road, Ningwood, Newport, Isle of Wight. PO30 4NN
Tel: (01983) 760269 Email: shalfleet@fosay.co.uk
Freshwater & Yarmouth Church of England Primary School,
79 School Green Road, Freshwater, Isle of Wight. PO40 9AX
Tel: (01983) 760345 Email: yarmouth@fosay.co.uk
Federation Website: www.fosay.co.uk

The Federation of the Church Schools of Shalfleet and Freshwater & Yarmouth
purpose is to educate children in an atmosphere of Christian love where all achieve the very best
they can, now and throughout their lives.





The Federation of the Church Schools of
Shalfleet and Freshwater & Yarmouth
Together for a Brighter Future

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Grainger BEd English (Hons)

Shalfleet Church of England Primary School,
Station Road, Ningwood, Newport, Isle of Wight. PO30 4NN
Tel: (01983) 760269 Email: shalfleet@fosay.co.uk
Freshwater & Yarmouth Church of England Primary School,
79 School Green Road, Freshwater, Isle of Wight. PO40 9AX
Tel: (01983) 760345 Email: yarmouth@fosay.co.uk
Federation Website: www.fosay.co.uk

The Federation of the Church Schools of Shalfleet and Freshwater & Yarmouth
purpose is to educate children in an atmosphere of Christian love where all achieve the very best
they can, now and throughout their lives.



A University of Chichester
ITT Partner School

