JOHN RANKIN SCHOOLS
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Friday 16th October 2026

Dear Families,

We wanted to let you know about some exciting developments as part of our OPAL journey. As you know, the children will soon be benefiting from the addition of a mud kitchen and sandpit, which will provide many opportunities for imaginative, creative and exploratory play.

Over the next few days, while our Year 6 pupils are away on their residential trip, children in Years 1 and 2 will have the opportunity to play in the Upper Key Stage 2 area. This is an important step in helping them become familiar with the wider play environment, understand the different play zones available to them, and build confidence in exploring different areas of the school.

To ensure this transition is carefully managed, the children will be fully supported throughout. They will be introduced to the routes and different play zones gradually, with staff guiding them as they move around the site and helping them understand the expectations and routines that keep everyone safe. Additional staff will be positioned along the route and within the play spaces to support children, answer questions and help them navigate confidently.

It has been wonderful to see the younger children mixing with the older pupils and playing collaboratively together. The Year 5 children have been fantastic role models, helping the younger pupils become familiar with the new areas and supporting them as they explore.

We are sure you will agree that these are positive steps in helping all children feel comfortable, confident and safe when accessing different areas of our school. By introducing the spaces gradually and with significant adult support, we are ensuring that children develop a good understanding of the playground layout, the different zones available to them, and the routines that help everyone enjoy playtimes safely.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support as we continue with the OPAL relaunch. We are incredibly grateful for the enthusiasm, encouragement and donations received from our school community, and we look forward to sharing further developments with you soon.

Kind regards,
Maria Curtis

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Year 5 Teacher and OPAL Lead

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