



Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) East Midlands Ltd.

To the Headteacher, Staff, Governors and Pupils of Banks Road Infant and Nursery School,

It gives me enormous pleasure to offer my warmest congratulations to everyone at **Banks Road Infant and Nursery School** on achieving **OPAL Platinum Accreditation** – the highest and most prestigious level of recognition within the OPAL programme.

This is an exceptional accomplishment and one that reflects years of vision, commitment, and determination to place high-quality play at the very heart of school life. Platinum Accreditation is reserved for schools that demonstrate truly outstanding practice, where play is not simply provided but is embedded within the culture, values, and everyday experiences of every child. It is a remarkable achievement of which your entire school community should be immensely proud.

Throughout your OPAL journey, you have created an outdoor environment where children are free to explore, imagine, create, and discover. Your school has embraced the belief that play is fundamental to children's happiness, wellbeing, and development, and this philosophy is evident in every aspect of your provision.

There are many aspects of your provision that make Banks Road truly exceptional. The sheer volume of affordances across your site creates a genuine sense of magic and wonder wherever you look. Every area offers children exciting opportunities to invent, build, explore, collaborate, and immerse themselves in rich, child-led play. The environment is abundant with possibility and reflects a deep understanding of what children need to thrive.

Equally impressive is the incorporation of the nursery children and nursery space into the wider play environment. This visionary development has not only effectively doubled the size of the play site but has also significantly increased opportunities for inter-age play. Watching younger and older




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 OpalOutdoorplay

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children learn from one another, develop friendships, and play together creates a truly inclusive community where every child benefits from shared experiences and a strong sense of belonging.

Another defining feature of your Platinum provision is the exceptionally high level of risky play that takes place across the school, underpinned by outstanding risk management. Rather than eliminating challenge, your staff have created a culture where children are trusted to assess risk, solve problems, test their capabilities, and develop resilience within a carefully considered framework of support. This balance between freedom and responsibility is exemplary and equips children with invaluable life skills that extend far beyond the playground.

Achievements of this calibre are never accidental. They are the result of inspirational leadership and a shared commitment across the entire school community. I would like to recognise the vision and determination of your Headteacher, whose unwavering support has enabled play to flourish so successfully. My sincere thanks also go to your dedicated OPAL working party, play team, and every member of staff, whose enthusiasm, creativity, and belief in the importance of play have brought this vision to life each and every day. Above all, I congratulate your wonderful pupils, whose imagination, kindness, confidence, and enthusiasm demonstrate the extraordinary culture you have created together.

The impact of your work is clear to see. Your children are developing resilience through challenge, creativity through exploration, confidence through independence, and empathy through collaboration. They are growing up in a school where joyful play is recognised not as a reward, but as an essential part of childhood and learning. They are confident decision-makers, imaginative thinkers, and caring friends because they have been given the freedom, trust, and opportunities to flourish through play.

Banks Road Infant and Nursery School now stands as a beacon of best practice for schools seeking to transform their approach to play. Your willingness to embrace innovation, trust children, and



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champion their right to play is an inspiration to others across the region and beyond. Your Platinum Accreditation recognises not only what you have achieved, but the values you live every day, and I have no doubt that your school will continue to inspire many others on their own OPAL journeys.

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations on this magnificent achievement. It has been a privilege to witness your journey and to recognise the exceptional play culture you have created. I wish you every continued success as you build upon this remarkable legacy and continue to inspire children, families, and schools for many years to come.

With warmest congratulations and very best wishes,

Dr Bobby Beaumont
Director, OPAL East Midlands



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