

# 'A Lunch in the Life' at Springfield Juniors!



Cody, Brianne and some other school council members recently took on the task of becoming OPAL Play Detectives. They decided to explore each play zone on offer at Springfield to write an article sharing what activities children can find at lunchtimes and what they would recommend others to try. At school we want different children to try new things, learn new skills and have lots of fun at school. We have four main play zones: the canopy, the playground, the walk way and the front garden. In each zone there are lots of activities, some are out everyday and some change daily.

## The Playground!



On the playground there are: wheeled toys, electric activity boards and a ping pong table. For those who like to run around a bit more, children can go to the sports zone where there are different activities each day run by the play team or they may use the running zone where they can play games like 'it' or 'stuck in the mud!' Loose parts is a very popular area where children can create anything from their imagination, using crates, planks, tyres and traffic cones! Lately pupils have enjoyed making go carts and rafts. Some days we have work out mats, fancy dress and playground toys like skipping ropes. Our playground is busy but there really is something for everyone!



## The Canopy!

The canopy also has plenty to offer. Here you can find a craft area where children can design and make their own crafts or get ideas that change weekly from staff. At Christmas we made pine cone tree decorations! There is a reading corner and, of course, our most recent addition: an arcade! Children play in small groups to challenge each other at table football, pool and air hockey. Outside the canopy, there are table top activities like picking up and sorting small objects with tweezers. These also change every day.



# The Walkway!

What once was just a walk way or alleyway has been transformed into a functioning play zone full of fun! Here children can create hide-aways in the den building area, sit quietly and chat with friends, tackle the traversing wall to build upper body strength and take on our army assault course. On different days there are different floor games out to play with here alongside tables topped with Lego and Magnetix for the builders, engineers and architects among us.



# The Front Garden!

Tucked away around the back of our site, we have reclaimed a small space that we call the front garden. It is usually peaceful here and a good place for pupils who find the playground a bit hectic. In the front garden, there is a mud kitchen where children can create all kinds of crazy concoctions. There is an area to play with water and another to dig and play with sand. There is a stage to perform on and there is music playing as well as a music wall for us to get creative ourselves! It can get messy in the front garden but there are plenty of wellies and overalls to wear for anyone who wants to try it out!



The brilliant play team are always on the look out for new things to introduce and try out at lunchtimes. As a school, we have very limited space but try to use every inch to make lunchtimes fun for all, every day. We are currently working with charity Greener Growth to develop ways to incorporate more of the natural world into our small and urban site.

**Thank you to our Play Detectives and their friends for their help writing this article.**

If you have any wheeled toys (scooters/skateboards/bikes), large loose parts (plastic pallets, cable reels, scaffold boards), or clothing that you would like to donate to OPAL, please contact the school office.