



## **PlayPods Case Study**

**Summerhill Junior School, Bristol**

**October 2011**

Summerhill Junior School has had a PlayPod in the playground since the start of July 2011.

Headteacher Mandy Milsom says:

The PlayPod has revolutionised lunchtimes. Before - lunch breaks were a nightmare ... children were getting bored, there were fights and squabbles and lots of issues to deal with. As soon as the PlayPod arrived suddenly the children were really engaged.

Because we're a junior school and many of children are that bit older – a lot of them haven't had access to this kind of imaginative, active play for years. It's really lit a spark.

The children have become incredibly creative, incredibly energised. They're actively looking for things that give them that adrenalin rush and they're having a whale of a time. And if we have to restrict play on the rare occasion things might look dangerous, they don't mind and find other ways to use the materials. They're building tents and making dens and shelters and all the time they're negotiating and sharing.

There are fewer fights, fewer arguments. We have a lot less children reporting minor injuries like scraped knees and elbows. They're just seeing this as part of play.

There's one child who is on the autistic spectrum, who rarely played with other children before. But now they're really engaged and playing with the others.

Other children who before might have been looking for trouble at lunchtime are getting on and playing with their classmates. And children who before only ever wanted to play football are starting to do other things too.

We also don't see children sitting by themselves and looking lonely anymore. The PlayPod is really helping inclusion. It's allowing children with social and emotional needs to find a way in.

There's been a clear transition in the school since the PlayPod arrived. The children are definitely becoming more creative in their thinking.

The end of lunchtime used to be a nightmare... there'd be endless moaning about things that had gone in the playground. Now after lunch they're more focussed because they've had fun playing.

They're also much more participative and engaged. We're seeing huge improvements in creative thinking. The children's problem solving skills are becoming much more refined. And of course teamwork is vastly improved. All the time we see children working together saying 'you get this and I'll get that...'

The eagerness to go outside and play is really refreshing ... it's fantastic!