

Walter Halls Primary School.

OPAL LONG-TERM STRATEGY

Supported by the Opal Play Programme

Last reviewed: December 2024

Reviewed termly



1. Commitment

Our school undertakes to refer to this play strategy in all decisions that affect children's play. Our school is committed to providing the strategic and operational leadership needed to provide and maintain quality play provision for all of our children.

2. Rationale

Our school believes that all children need opportunities to play that allow them to explore, manipulate, experience and affect their environment. We believe play provision should be welcoming and accessible to every child, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, economic or social circumstances, ethnic or cultural background or origin, or individual abilities.

The OPAL Primary Programme rationale is that "*... better, more active and creative playtimes can mean happier and healthier children, and having happier, healthier, more active children usually results in a more positive attitude to learning in school, with more effective classroom lessons, less staff time spent resolving unnecessary behavioural problems, fewer playtime accidents, happier staff and a healthier attitude to life.*"

Our school motto is 'Be your best' and Walter Halls believes that better play will help all of our children learn, achieve and thrive. Our school values of: Respect, Kindness & Empathy, Aspiration, Curiosity, Collaboration & Perseverance are all supported by the Opal Primary rationale.

It is because of this commitment and rationale that we set out a long-term strategy for ensuring OPAL continues to be at the heart of school improvement at Walter Halls Primary School

WHEN	WHAT	WHY
3-YEAR PLAN 2025-2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish annual patterns of play days for children and for families • Establish annual patterns of staff training for play leaders, teaching assistants, site team, teachers and leaders • Establish annual patterns of OPAL ambassador elections and reviewing of OPAL charter • Embed weekly assemblies for OPAL ensuring a range of leaders from the play team lead on these each week • Establish staff induction processes for OPAL • Embed staffing structure for the play team with clear roles, responsibilities and job descriptions. Ensure 5 INSET days include play leader roles • Embed bi-weekly communications with families for loose parts, introducing of new play zones and regular information sharing of play types • Ensure an OPAL governor is established each year, is active and visits at least twice a year for the purposes of play provision review • Establish annual pupil and family feedback about OPAL and increase the power of pupil voice to build on range of play types being catered for • Improve the profile of OPAL on our website. Create videos of OPAL to share on website and with our community • Establish bi-annual review of site improvement with play team, site managers and school business manager • Improve the offer of play-based clubs and after-school activities • Include other key leaders in play-based teaching and learning improvements – for example PE leader, Early Years Assistant Head • Introduce weekly lessons taking place outdoors in every year group – begin to build regular training and resource bank for this 	<p>Every child at Walter Halls Primary will show excellent play literacy.</p> <p>All staff who work at Walter Halls will be well-trained in the fundamental principles of play.</p> <p>Families of Walter Halls Primary will understand the value of play and its place in primary education as a whole.</p>
5-YEAR PLAN 2028-2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build annual staff training relating to effective play so that teaching assistants become play experts • Embed collaborative training between Early Years leaders, all teaching assistants and play leaders. • Extend other key leaders in play-based curriculum teaching and learning improvements • Embed weekly lessons taking place outdoors in every year group – continue to build regular training and resource bank • Establish bi-annual play-based community event • Open site before and after school for regular community access 	<p>OPAL will have influenced broader areas of the curriculum and overall pedagogy for teaching approaches in every year group.</p> <p>Walter Halls Primary School site will be accessed by the wider community for play and nature experiences</p>