



Welcome to OPAL

Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) CIC
Supporting school improvement through play
www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk



Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) CIC is the UK's leading, award-winning organisation providing school improvement through play.

OPAL has helped hundreds of schools improve play for thousands of children in schools in the UK, Canada, Australia, France, New Zealand, Czech Rep, Slovak Rep, Austria, Poland and Hungary.

Accessing the OPAL ePack

OPAL is a national not-for-profit company that has spent the past twenty years building up the skills, experience, knowledge and resources that make up the OPAL Primary Programme.

OPAL has developed many resources to support the safe and sustainable culture change necessary for great playtimes in OPAL schools, which are based on delivering the OPAL Primary Programme with hundreds of schools worldwide. You will find all of these documents in your OPAL ePack.

In the ePack, you will find a hyperlinked index and action plan so you can easily find all of the documents you need. The ePack will work best when used directly in Google Drive (G Drive) as the embedded hyperlinks will work. If you cannot use G Drive, it should be downloaded onto a shared drive that all working group members can access.

OPAL CIC updates the ePack annually and, whilst you retain your OPAL membership, your ePack will be automatically updated each year.

We suggest you print out the documents highlighted as 'key OPAL documents' and keep them in an OPAL folder.

Please do not share this material outside of your school.

As an OPAL school, you are entitled to use and share all of this within your school staff.

Please do not share any OPAL resources or detailed knowledge of the programme with other schools or put documents online. Our contract includes a clause that schools using any OPAL intellectual property without a licence may be subject to the cost of the entire programme.

Please share images or stories of the impact you are having on your children as you and your team develop your playwork skills, your understanding of risk-benefit and as you develop your outside spaces.

Best of luck in starting this exciting journey!

Read more about OPAL's technique in *Creating Excellence in Primary Schools* by Michael Follett. You can buy the book from the Outdoor People shop (<https://bit.ly/3QIdhLp>) and read the introduction here: <https://bit.ly/3wtqa4v>

Follow OPAL on Twitter: www.twitter.com/OPAL_CIC

See OPAL schools in action on YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/OPALPlaytime

Find out more about how OPAL can support you: www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk



Dear headteacher and OPAL working group members



Congratulations!

Your school is about to start a programme that has been called transformational by many headteachers, and 'the best initiative I have ever done in my school' by several heads.

At OPAL, we work with hundreds of schools a year, and we know just how much pressure there is on senior leadership, and how many demands there are. We greatly appreciate that you have decided to invest in OPAL and are committed to improving the quality of play for all of your children.

We ask you to carefully read the information in this booklet and ensure all senior leadership and members of your OPAL working group have read it too. This will ensure you get the best value from the many resources and meetings we have developed for you in the programme.

Your OPAL mentor is there to support and guide you and your school through a period of cultural transition over the next 18-24 months. If in doubt, please use their expertise, they are always available to you by email or feel free to contact me directly.

I hope that you are as excited as we are; whenever we start working with a new school our mission is to make sure that every child has an amazing playtime every day.

Best wishes

Michael Follett

BA Hons, PGCE
OPAL Founder and Director



Key considerations

These five considerations are the key steps to success. Putting them into practice may require changes to routines and resources or broader changes to school policy and the environment. This is the work of your 18 – 24 months OPAL programme.

Leadership

All schools need strategic leadership from two key roles: a curricular lead for play and operational leadership from the play coordinator. These leadership roles – working directly with the headteacher and governors – will ensure play provision is of sustained good quality.

Time

Providing excellent quality play will require staff time for planning and time for implementation. Please ensure that your curricular lead for play and your play coordinator have time to do a good job.

Children also need time – aim for at least one 45 minute session per day.

Space

Space is your single most valuable asset. Please be prepared to ensure that your children are able to access as much of your space as possible, for as much of the year as possible.

Resources

OPAL will help you to provide very cost-effective solutions to providing for play, but please be realistic in allocating some ongoing budget to play. Costs include: storage, consumables (e.g chalk), materials, sand, and transport of loose parts to school.

Permission

Children need to play in environments where experimentation and learning are valued and permitted by adults. Being allowed to figure things out for themselves, to collaborate with peers, take calculated risks and get a bit dirty, should all be allowed, encouraged and celebrated!

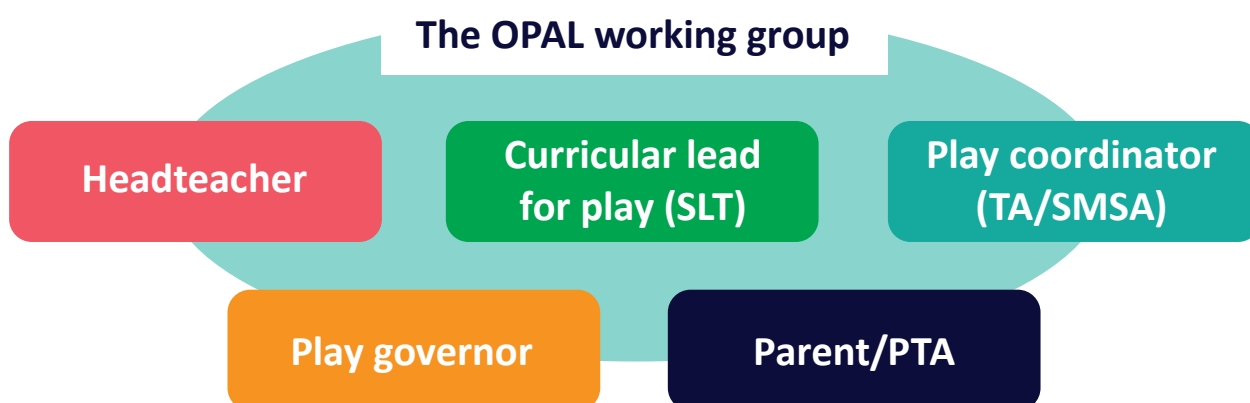
Consistency for all – genders, age, ability – is also important, and all staff from cleaners to governors should be clear on what is permitted.



Leadership

Play in schools needs to have leadership, both during the transition period of the OPAL programme and in the long term, otherwise the benefits of the programme will be lost.

From your first OPAL meeting you will need to have the core of the OPAL working group in place.



You may have more people than this, but we do not advise fewer. In small schools some roles might double up. In larger schools, there might be a team. You may need to have an interim play coordinator until one is appointed after development meeting one, but we advise putting one in place before the audit and development meeting one if possible.

This team will be required at all OPAL working group meetings and to be present for the whole meeting. An executive headteacher must be at the first two meetings at least, and should be reported to about every meeting.

Please reschedule meetings if all the core members (top row) are not able to attend on the day.

The OPAL working group will need to:

- ! Attend the 8 meetings in the OPAL programme;
- ! Attend the school's own OPAL action planning meetings every half term or more;
- ! Have the capacity and commitment to implement the actions in the OPAL action plan.

OPAL has spent many years putting together a host of resources to help you and your school provide effective and lasting change. Please ensure that all of your OPAL working group has access to the OPAL ePack and index, and that they all know where your play action plan is kept.

The ePack works best when accessed online from Google Drive as all links will be live.

From experience in many hundreds of primary schools, we would also offer the following advice:

- ! Try not to allocate the role of curricular lead to the headteacher;
- ! Even in a small school, it is essential to create a play coordinator role;
- ! Involve and communicate with the lunchtime staff right from the start;
- ! Think of play as an essential curricular area.
- ! Incorporate existing budgets such as pupil premium, PE and sport premium, SEN and behaviour support and school capital funding to support costs of play development.

The secret of creating permanent change

The curricular lead and play coordinator are essential and mirror your safeguarding or wellbeing planning roles. Without creating these two roles, the chances of ensuring lasting change in your school are very small.

The curricular lead for play (OPAL lead)

– leads on strategy, finance and planning.

Minimum hours: One per week plus at least 16 hours set up over the first few weeks.

School position: SLT (deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher or business manager).

Key roles:

- Holds responsibility for the play policy, play strategy, budget, action plan and evaluation;
- Manages the play coordinator and holds responsibility for the play team;
- Supports play coordinator and play team in delivery of the action plan;
- Reports to the headteacher and governors on play development;
- Supports communication on play to the whole school community;
- Supports development of the play environment;
- Supports effective risk management in play (RAPID);
- Supports development of effective playwork practice.

The play coordinator

– leads on operational delivery.

Minimum hours: Eleven per week. One per day in the playground, six in non-contact time.

School position: HLTA, senior supervisor, teaching assistant, SENCO, teacher.

Key roles:

- Reports to the curricular lead for play;
- Leads and supports the play team;
- Leads on delivery of the play action plan.
- Leads on provision and maintenance of loose parts and play resources;
- Supports communication on play to the whole school community;
- Supports development of the play environment;
- Supports effective risk management in play;
- Supports development of effective playwork practice within the play team;
- The curricular lead for play can delegate responsibility to the play coordinator, but they retain responsibility to report back to and involve SLT. Exactly what these roles look like will depend on each school's staff structure.





OPAL step-by-step checklist

This checklist will enable you to check exactly where you are in the programme, how to prepare for each meeting and what you should be doing following a meeting.

Please use it and check off your progress.

Preparation for OPAL

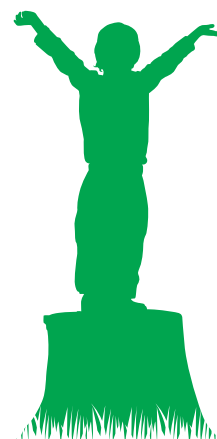
OPAL is a whole-school cultural change programme.

For the school to have the best chance of success, we recommend that you use this guidance to prepare for each stage of the programme and keep a record of your progress.

Key:

Head	Headteacher
OPAL WG	OPAL working group
CL	Curricular lead for play
PC	Play coordinator
SLT	Senior leadership team
Play team	The team responsible for children's play, including lunchtime supervisors, teaching assistants and 1:1 staff
RBA	Risk benefit assessment

Topic	When	People	Actions	Done
Finance	Before term 1	Head	If possible, secure a capital budget of £5000-£15,000 to support the implementation of improvement projects. This is desirable, not essential.	
Personnel	Before term 1	Head	Choose the OPAL working group members: The curricular lead for play (SLT member), the play coordinator, a play governor and parent representative plus headteacher. Commitment: The curricular lead for play (OPAL lead) – 1 hour a week The Play Coordinator – 11 hours per week. OPAL team – 8 mentor-led meetings of 2.5 hours, plus at least 12 school-led meetings over 24 months. Note: Executive headteachers must attend the INSET and audit. Headteachers must attend all meetings. If meetings are disrupted or key staff are not able to participate in full, the OPAL mentor may reschedule them.	
Storage	Before term 1	Head	Installing suitable loose parts storage and identifying locations for large all-weather loose parts before starting the programme will enable more rapid progress.	
Storage	Before term 1	Head	Identify potential locations and solutions for storage so every child has access to weather-proof storage for a pair of welly boots.	
Preparation	Before term 1	OPAL WG	The working party should read Michael Follett's book, <i>Creating Excellence in Primary School Playtimes</i> .	
Preparation	Before term 1	OPAL WG	The OPAL working group should prepare by watching videos from the OPAL video gallery: www.youtube.com/c/OPALPlaytime	



Topic	When	People	Actions	Done
Preparation	Before term 1	Head and OPAL WG	Carefully read this welcome book and talk the OPAL working group through key points.	
Dates	Before term 1	Head	Set dates with your mentor for the following meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation and audit; • Development 1; • INSET; • Grounds meeting. 	
Preparation	Before term 1	Head	Ensure play development is on the school development plan.	
Preparation	Before first meeting	Head	Request the link for the OPAL ePack from your mentor. Share a Google Drive link or download the ePack onto the schools' drive. Ensure all members of the OPAL working group have access to it.	
Resources	Before first meeting	Head	In the time you are waiting to start the programme you may want to begin to collect suitable 'loose parts', especially if you are having clear outs or refurbishments in school.	
Surveys and data	Before term 1	Head	Ask your mentor for the links to the surveys for children, staff and parents and ideally complete them before development meeting 1. Complete your schools baseline data, looking at current accident rates, behaviour incidents and absences. Carry out the surveys at the start and end of your programme and every couple of years prior to reaudit.	



INSET or twilight meeting (2 - 3 hours)

The INSET is essential for all school staff, especially lunchtime staff, SMSAs and TAs.
The whole school training should take place just before, or as early in the OPAL cycle as possible.

Time	When	People	Actions	Done
	Before	Head	Ensure playground staff have plenty of notice and, if required, are offered payment to attend.	
30 mins	Day of training	OPAL WG	Set out the room café-style with one sheet of A3 paper per table and large pens per person, projection and sound. Ideally three to five people per table. Ensure the tech works and load the INSET presentation from your OPAL G Drive or school OPAL ePack.	
2 - 2.5 hours	Day of training	All staff	The OPAL working group should introduce themselves. The headteacher should encourage staff to be in mixed groups. The headteacher should emphasise the value of play to the school and thank the play team for their important work.	
1 hour	After INSET	CL	Use the notes taken in the INSET to inform the school's new play policy.	

Observation and audit meeting (1 hour and 2.5 hours)

At this meeting, the OPAL Mentor will observe lunch playtimes and then work with the whole OPAL working group to audit current policies, staffing and provision.

Time	When	People	Actions	Done
	Before	Head	Ensure the core OPAL working group is notified and can attend. The headteacher must be present.	
	Before	Head	Alert children and staff to the presence of an OPAL mentor in the playground.	
1 - 1.5 hours	Observation - lunchtime in term 1	Head	Headteacher joins the mentor outside for the final 15 minutes.	
1.5 hours	Audit meeting - afternoon of observation	OPAL WG	Headteacher and core OPAL working group to be present for the whole meeting. The mentor will guide a discussion on each of the 18 points on the audit and agree on a baseline score.	
	After audit meeting	Head	Ensure the OPAL ePack is downloaded and accessible to the whole OPAL working group.	

Development meeting 1 (2.5 - 3 hours)

At this meeting, the action plan will be started, the underpinning policy and structures planned, and some quick wins agreed. **Attending:** OPAL working group.

Time	When	People	Actions	Done
45 mins	Before	Head	Consider the audit and survey results and be clear on what you are hoping to achieve through the OPAL Primary Programme. Give the OPAL curricular lead for play a school policy template to use. Be clear on your processes for ratifying policies and consider the dates you need to be prepared for and who will need to be involved.	
30 mins - 2 hours	Before	Head and OPAL CL	Review the action plan template and consider what your school's top priorities will be. Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget allocated or process to secure it; Staff changes that may need to be made and process; Space allocations for storage; Communication channels you use or that can be developed; We can go through all of this in the meeting but if these have been considered beforehand it will considerably speed up the process. 	
15 mins	Before	OPAL CL	Ensure a room or location with space for all to see the audit results and the action plan template headings.	
2.5 - 3 hours	Development meeting 1 - term 1 Within 1 week after observation audit	OPAL WG	Using <i>Doc 3.0 Action plan template</i> , your mentor will help you to populate your action plan. Afterwards, the mentor will give or transfer the action plan to your OPAL curricular lead for play. At this point, use the action plan as the main document for planning improvements to play in the school. If you need to transfer actions to your school's planning system, ensure you refer back to this OPAL action plan to check off necessary steps. Your OPAL mentor can support you in identifying school aims/objectives/outcomes needed to meet your school or federation's processes.	
	After	OPAL CL	Ensure that the action plan is stored in a place where the whole OPAL working group can access it.	
	After	OPAL CL	Set dates for the meetings of the OPAL working group to meet to ensure the actions on the action plan can start to be implemented. Some schools do this weekly.	
	After	OPAL PC	Ensure that the agreed quick wins are implemented.	
	After	OPAL CL	Draft the school's play policy, in consultation with the OPAL working group.	
	After	Head	Arrange to take your school's play policy to a governor's meeting to be ratified.	
	After	Head	Post the play policy on the school's website and ensure it is seen by parents signing up to the following school year.	



Development meeting 2 (risk-benefit focus, 1 hour)

At this meeting, progress on the action plan will be reviewed and gaps filled.

On the same day, there will be a one hour workshop session on your risk-benefit assessment using a real example of resources you are introducing and on starting play assemblies (see below).

Attending: OPAL working group.

Time	When	People	Actions	Done
30 mins	Before	OPAL CL	The OPAL lead will need to have reviewed progress on implementation of the action plan and have copies of the plan ready to review. They should have the plan ready on a laptop so it can be updated during the meeting.	
1 hour	Before	OPAL CL	The OPAL lead will need to have set up an RBA folder including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play policy; • RBA in a format appropriate for your school; • Play assembly log. The OPAL lead will need to have identified a set of play resources that will be offered to the children soon to use as a real worked example.	
1 hour	Development meeting 2	OPAL WG	The OPAL working group should be ready to discuss progress in implementing the action plan and any progress, opportunities, issues or problems. The action plan will be updated, and any gaps filled that have not yet been completed.	
45 mins	During	OPAL WG, play team and gov	The mentor will brief the group on essential legal, policy and planned knowledge underpinning OPAL's method of managing risk in play. The group will work through a real example to add to their RBA.	
	After	OPAL CL	Set up a play assembly timetable for the whole school with additional sessions for younger children.	
	After	OPAL PC	Plan and deliver revised action plan goals in the playground.	
	After	Head	Ensure information of the risk-benefit approach is disseminated to all staff not present at the meeting.	
	After	Head	Ensure a risk log is kept with other key information available for inspections.	

Training session on risk-benefit and health and safety (1 hour)

A workshop on managing risk in the playground, including developing confidence in dynamic risk management and a review of how the play team can support play assemblies.

This is held on the same day as development meeting two.

Attending: OPAL working group, health and safety governor, plus the play team (lunchtime staff and TAs). If possible, invite the health and safety lead from the MAT or local authority.

Purpose: To build consensus and confidence in your school's tolerance of risk, attitudes around challenge and agree the protocols.

Time	When	People	Actions	Done
	Before	Head	Ensure all of the lunchtime and playtime supervisors (TAs, MDSs) and before/after school club staff, the play team and the H&SE governor are notified, and if necessary, paid to attend the risk training (if required).	
	Before	Head	Either load the risk-benefit presentation from Google Drive or your school OPAL folder.	
1 hour	RAPID (risk-benefit) training	OPAL WG, play team & H&SE gov	Café style room layout. The room will need projection and sound. The mentor will facilitate a workshop to ensure all staff understand and develop confidence around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OPAL's RAPID approach to managing risk in your school; Dynamic risk assessment; Intervention styles and when to use them; The legal framework they need to be aware of; Their role in supporting play assemblies. 	
	After-ongoing	OPAL PC	Ensure the play team knows where the risk log is, and where to make notes of hazards and interventions.	
	After-ongoing	Head and OPAL CL	Ensure the play team has time for reflection and communication around interventions, and that they are all involved in contributing to play assemblies.	
	After-ongoing	OPAL CL	Ensure a play assemblies log is kept of risk discussions and agreements.	



Development meeting 3 (2.5 - 3 hours, including the playwork review)

At this meeting, progress on the action plan will be reviewed and updated and the OPAL working group will go through the final audit criteria, identifying what is missing.

The playwork meeting will take place on the same day.

Attending: OPAL working group.

When	People	Actions	Done
Before	OPAL CL	Ensure the OPAL working group and play team members are notified and can attend the meeting.	
Before	OPAL CL	Use <i>Doc 2.1 Final RAG checklist</i> , to RAG rate progress before the meeting.	
Before (on the day)	OPAL CL	Have the school's action plan ready on a laptop for review and updates.	
Development meeting 3 - at least 3 months after development meeting 2 and 3 months before proposed completion date	OPAL WG & all play team	Using <i>Doc 2.1 Final RAG checklist</i> , the mentor will review and update the action plan with the OPAL working group.	
After	OPAL CL	Implement the changes and action plan.	
After	OPAL PC	Review regularly whether your provision is moving towards the anticipated level of quality and discuss what is needed with the play team and OPAL curricular lead for play.	

Playwork review (1 hour)

A training session and review on playwork practice, building on the Playwork Essentials online training. This is held on the same day as development meeting two.

Attending: Play coordinator, plus the play team (supervisors and TAs).

Purpose: To review the playwork concepts and practices in your school.

Time	When	People	Actions	Done
	Before	OPAL CL	Ensure all of the play team have completed the Playwork Essentials online training before this workshop, which can be accessed on OPAL's College. Set up a café-style room with a projector and sound.	
1 hour	3 months after development meeting 2	OPAL WG, all play team and any other staff	Your mentor will meet with the play team to discuss their understanding of playwork essentials and practice. By the end of the workshop, all staff should be clear that their role is to supervise the environment to prevent serious harm and to facilitate and develop a play environment children want to play in.	
	After	Head and OPAL CL	Ensure the play team is clear on their roles and responsibilities, as are the rest of the school staff. Ensure the play team has time to reflect after sessions and a process is in place to record and implement suggested improvements to the play environment.	
	After	OPAL PC	Lead play team reflection sessions and use them to inform planning and delivery.	
	After	OPAL PC	Ensure that the play team has completed the three one-hour supported <i>Playwork Essentials</i> online training.	
	After	OPAL CL	Ensure all of the play team have copies of the Playwork Essentials booklet and plan further in-house training using the booklet and online course.	
	After	OPAL CL	Ensure the play coordinator and other key staff can access further training as appropriate.	
	After	Head	Ensure the play team, SLT and governor role descriptions include appropriate references to playwork roles (see ePack).	



Playday and parents meeting – public launch (2.5 hours)

This meeting is to enable parents to see the benefits of children playing with loose parts, to join in and to attend a talk about the school's approach to play. The meeting can be held anywhere in the cycle but is best after storage and safe use of loose parts has been sorted out. This should become an annual event covering an afternoon from 1 pm until 3:15 pm. This can be held at any point in the programme; discuss this with your mentor.

Attending: OPAL working group plus parents. You could invite other community members.

Time	When	People	Actions	Done
	Month before	OPAL WG	Use OPAL guidance to plan your playday.	
	Before	OPAL WG	Use multiple opportunities to inform parents and children.	
	Before	Children	You may want to include an input (PowerPoint, video or children speaking) about what better play means to them.	
	Before	CL	Ensure any donated loose parts are safety checked.	
	On the day	OPAL WG	Ensure projection and sound are set up and available for the mentor and refreshments for your parents.	
30 mins	On the day	OPAL mentor	Your OPAL mentor will talk about the need for play, children's rights, and the value of play. The headteacher should introduce the mentor and finish by talking about the impact of the programme.	
75 mins	Rest of the afternoon	Parents, children and staff	Everyone will spend the rest of the afternoon at free play, using the loose parts and additional play zones.	
	After	OPAL CL	Follow up communication in a play assembly on the value of play for the school.	

Grounds meeting (2.5 - 3 hours)

At this meeting the OPAL working group, plus other grounds stakeholders, learn the principles of designing a landscape for play, discuss where capital projects may be placed in the school grounds, discuss maintenance issues and begin a master plan for grounds development.

Attending: OPAL working group, plus the key people with responsibility for grounds (caretaker, local authority, MAT or governors responsible for the external environment).

Purpose: to have a clear set of immediate grounds changes you want to make, plus one or two planned that need funds raised for, plus a process to develop a master plan.

Time	When	People	Actions	Done
	Before	OPAL CL	Invite grounds stakeholders for part of the meeting. Tell all to bring appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear.	
	Before	OPAL CL	Print out an aerial or plan view of the school site on large paper. Provide five sheets of flip chart paper and coloured felt pens.	
2 - 3 hours	Grounds meeting	OPAL WG and grounds stakeholders	The meeting will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A site walkabout looking at assets, constraints and possibilities; • A discussion about maintenance; • A presentation on design theory, design ideas and the start of a grounds master plan; • A discussion about short, medium and long term possibilities. 	
	After	OPAL WG	Draw up a simple time-phased master plan of key zones and ideas for future development over the next five years.	
	After	OPAL WG	Use design skills to create detailed plans for play landscape development.	



Final observation and audit meeting (3 hours)

The purpose of this meeting is to observe the changes in play and use the original audit format to record progress. We will also develop a sign-off plan to support the continued development of play.

Attending: OPAL working group.

Time	When	People	Actions	Done
	Before	OPAL CL	Use <i>Doc 2.1 Final RAG checklist</i> to RAG rate and self-assess your progress ahead of the audit. Print copies and bring this to the meeting.	
	Before	OPAL CL	Notify playground staff and children that OPAL staff will be in the playground.	
1 hour	Observation	Head	The OPAL mentor will observe on their own for the first 30 minutes and then be joined by the OPAL curricular lead for play or headteacher for the second half of lunchtime.	
	Before	OPAL CL	Notify the whole OPAL working group of the time and date of the meeting.	
	Day of meeting	OPAL CL	The OPAL curricular lead for play should have a laptop with the action plan ready to update next steps.	
2 - 2.5 hours	Final audit meeting	OPAL WG	Your mentor will use their observations, their experience and your self-assessment to record progress in all 18 areas. Your OPAL curricular lead for play will record next steps onto the school's ongoing OPAL action plan.	
	Day of meeting	OPAL CL	Notify the play team of the award level.	
	After	OPAL CL	Communicate with parents and children about the award.	
	After	Head and OPAL CL	See if your OPAL mentor can come and present your OPAL award at a special assembly. Invite parents, local press and your MP.	
	1 week after	Head and OPAL CL	Register membership with OPAL on the website to continue to access Tea with OPAL, Slack, updates, newsletter and OPAL college ongoing training sessions.	
	18 months after	Head and OPAL CL	Contact your OPAL mentor if you would like to go for your two-year reaccreditation. Submit a RAG audit and agree on your reaccreditation plan.	
	24 months after		If you have chosen not to go through reaccreditation you will need to take down certificates and website publicity saying you are an OPAL school.	

Award presentation (1 hour)

Set up a celebration that is meaningful to your community, including an extended playtime. Invite parents, governors, local press and politicians, local secondary schools, and other primary schools you want to share your journey with.

Attending: OPAL working group plus all staff you want present.

Time	When	People	Actions	Done
	2 months before	OPAL CL	Do a final survey to show progress and community engagement.	
	Before	Head	Invite local press, politicians and education colleagues you would like to attend. Invite your OPAL mentor.	
	Before	OPAL CL	Plan the day itself.	
	Before	OPAL CL	Notify playground staff and children around what to expect.	
1 - 3 hours	On the day	Head	Receive award!	
	Within 1 week	OPAL CL	Share on social media and issue a press release.	

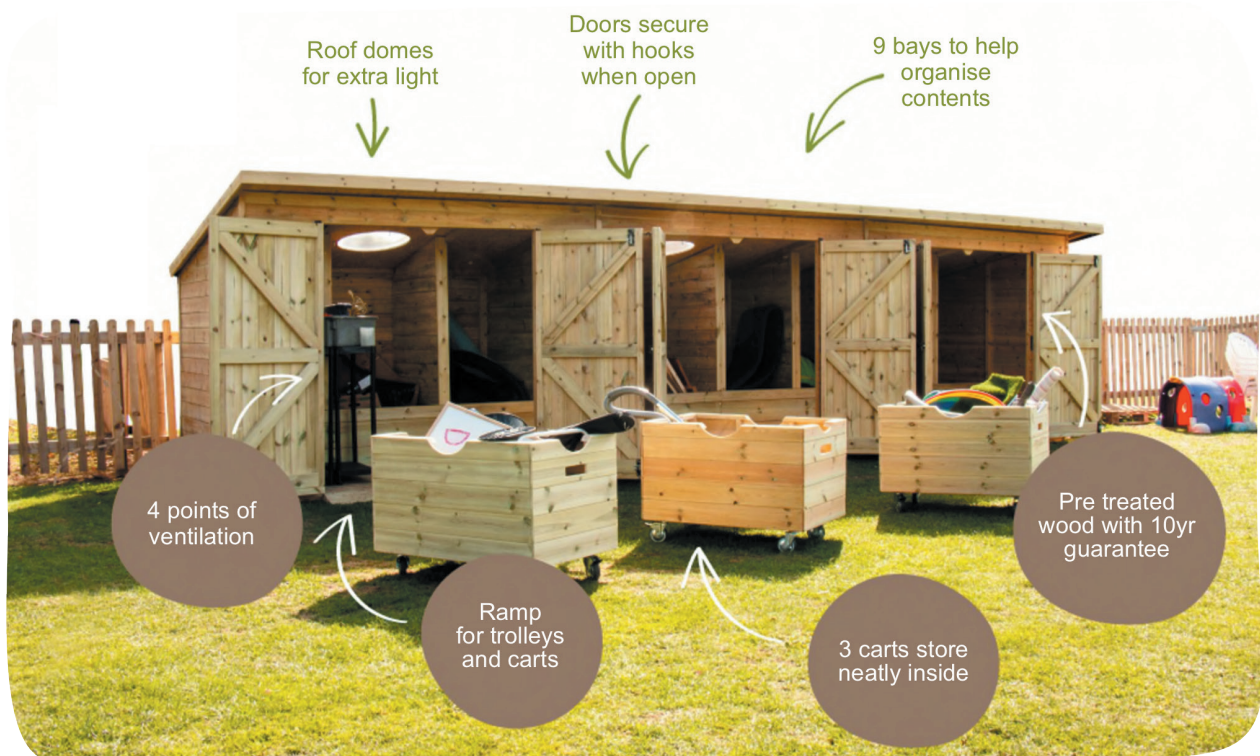


Getting your site ready for OPAL

OPAL is not about spending a lot of money on play equipment. We put great emphasis on using what you already have and using free and cheap resources. However, if you can plan for where you will keep 'loose parts,' this will enable the programme to progress faster and more smoothly. As soon as you have enrolled in the OPAL Primary Programme, it is a good idea to start discussions with your mentor about how to address suitable storage.

OPAL has designed the range below with the UK's leading school suppliers TTS.

Large Loose Parts Store



Medium Loose Parts Store



Mini Loose Parts Store





01623 279031

THE S-POD

- Designed with an emphasis on children's play and interaction.
- The S-Pod has minimal wasted space which results in a smaller footprint, therefore taking up far less of your precious playground space!
- More child sized but with a maximised storage capacity.
- The S-Pod is extremely versatile and can be placed back to back or side by side with extra additions like welly stores or bike shelters if needed.
- Supplied, as standard, with an extremely hard-wearing EDPM rubber roof.
- Individual S-Pod Dimensions:**
Height 1700mm (falling to 1540mm) | Depth 1000mm | Width 2000mm
- Supplied with trolleys and full depth shelf.

Single S-Pod
from
£2,750.00

Double S-Pod
from
£5,272.50

Triple S-Pod
from
£7,425.00

Shelter S-Pod
from
£5,725.00

Maxi S-Pod
from
£5,272.50

PRODUCT

DESCRIPTION

PRICE (EX VAT)

SINGLE S-POD

Storage pod – 2m wide x 1m deep (up to 4m² storage area – suitable for up to 100 children) with 1 trolley and a full depth shelf.

£2,750.00

DOUBLE S-POD (Side by Side)

2 x Storage pod – 2m wide x 1m deep (up to 8m² storage area – suitable for up to 200 children) linked side by side with no dividing wall – 2 trolleys and a full depth shelf.

£5,272.50

MAXI S-POD (Back to Back)

2 x Storage pod – 2m wide x 1m deep (up to 8m² storage area – suitable for up to 200 children) linked back to back with no dividing wall – 2 trolleys and a full depth shelf.

£5,272.50

SHELTER S-POD

2 x Storage pod – 2m wide x 1m deep (up to 8m² storage area – suitable for up to 200 children) back to back and linked by a joining roof – 2 trolleys and a full depth shelf.

£5,725.00

TRIPLE S-POD

3 x Storage pod – 2m wide x 1m deep (up to 12m² storage area – suitable for up to 300 children) linked with no dividing wall – 3 trolleys and a full depth shelf.

£7,425.00

ADDRESS

Unit 2, DJN Business Park,
Southwell Road West,
Mansfield NG21 0HW



✉ sales@theshedbrothers.co.uk

🌐 www.theshedbrothers.co.uk



**RECOMMENDED
SUPPLIER**



OPAL College

CPD and social networking hub

*Making the provision of amazing play
at your school easier and more sustainable*



OPAL College is where you will find:

- **Training courses** for all OPAL roles, RAPID risk and Playwork Essentials;
- **Resources** - The latest OPAL ePack with over 200 resources;
- **Live events** - Tea with OPAL, our monthly live support events. Plus special live events;
- **Support** - Hosted and moderated social network support forums for all OPAL roles;
- **New content** - Monthly themed new videos and discussions.



How to access OPAL College:

1. **Schools currently in the OPAL Primary Programme** will be sent a plan link by Nancy, our OPAL College host;
2. **Schools with an OPAL Award under 2 years old** may take out annual membership for £250 from the OPAL website. They will then be sent a plan link;
3. **Schools with an award over 2 years old** will need to hold a reaccreditation agreement with their mentor then they may take out membership via the website.

Your plan link will allow you to enrol as many staff learner accounts as you like and have unlimited access to the training. The site has clear instructional videos to help you find your way and your host, Nancy, is on hand to help and answer questions.

Please enrol your OPAL working party members in OPAL College before your Audit meeting.



Children's Play and Leisure Promoting A Balanced Approach

Risk and Challenge in OPAL schools

Health and Safety Executive

OPAL Strives to provide up-to-date and legally robust guidance to schools to help them provide the best balance of risks and benefits, as advocated by the HSE, DfE, OFSTED and ROSPA.

We have taken advice from the top experts in the country in order to support schools to provide suitable risk and challenge to their children.

The result is our **R.A.P.I.D** system:

- Risk-benefit assessments - Written, shared and used;
- Assemblies - Regular negotiated management with children;
- Policy - An agreed policy must precede practice;
- Inspection - A regularly inspected environment;
- Dynamic risk management - Staff active and observant.

We strongly suggest the following to all OPAL schools:

- ✓ Ensure all staff planning and supervising play are trained regularly in the RAPID approach;
- ✓ Use the training available on OPAL College to train all new staff;
- ✓ **Do not** continue to provide the full OPAL play offer unless you continue to use the full RAPID approach.





Preparing for OPAL

Now you have committed to the OPAL Primary Programme, the process of transforming your school into an outstanding provider of play can start.

Please tick off these actions to complete before the Audit Meeting:

- ☐ Agree on all members of your OPAL working group;
- ☐ Appoint your Play Curricular Lead with 1 hour p.w. non-contact time;
- ☐ Appoint your Play Coordinator with 6 hours p.w. non-contact time;
- ☐ Use your OPAL College plan link to open learner accounts for all OPAL working group members;
- ☐ Watch the introductory training videos for each key OPAL role on OPAL College;
- ☐ Download the OPAL ePack from OPAL College and place it in an OPAL folder shared with your working group;
- ☐ Discuss with your mentor what kind of loose parts storage to order and where to place it.

Preparation for OPAL meetings

We would like to share these tips from the schools that have done best:

- ✓ Ensure all of your working group are notified well in advance of each meeting and that they can attend;
- ✓ Do everything possible to avoid interruptions during the meeting or members of the group leaving for parts of the meetings;
- ✓ Provide a meeting space with a screen and without too much noise;
- ✓ Reschedule the meeting if any of the key school staff members cannot attend.

Getting ready for all-weather play

We have designed two products to help schools ensure that all of their children can play out in all weathers. Please check the TTS website for details. Product codes are shown.



FF47408 Outdoor Double Sided Wellie Store



FF47409 Outdoor Clothing Store

Next steps

OPAL membership and reaccreditation

The process of maintaining and improving a high-quality play offer in your school will be ongoing.

As an OPAL school we hope that you:

1. Continually strive to improve the quality of play for all your children;
2. Embed play in all aspects of your planning, self-evaluation and delivery;
3. Acknowledge the seriousness of play as a human right and regard play as a necessity for children's mental and physical wellbeing;
4. Update your staff training and ensure informed transition of OPAL key roles.

Your OPAL award status lasts for two years before becoming due for reaccreditation. To enable your school to continue to access the benefits of being part of the community of OPAL schools, we have developed the OPAL membership offer.


OPAL honours

Schools that achieve three successive platinum awards will automatically achieve our OPAL honours award.

They will receive a special honours plaque and OPAL will promote these schools as national exemplars of sustained outstanding practice.



OPAL membership

- ✓ Free access to regional support meetings at Platinum schools;
- ✓ OPAL working group access to the OPAL College community offering questions and answers and discussion forums;
- ✓ Tea with OPAL online support sessions;
- ✓ Annually updated OPAL ePack;
- ✓ Member resources on the OPAL website, presentations and conference sessions;
- ✓ The OPAL schools version of the OPAL newsletter;
- ✓ 10 copies of Playwork Essentials;
- ✓ Free access to OPAL college sessions on RAPID risk training and induction to the play team sessions;
- ✓ Paid access to OPAL college sessions for new headteachers, curricular leads, play coordinators and play team members;
-  Paid access to specialist training sessions with guest speakers on issues ranging from rope swings to supporting special needs in mainstream playgrounds.

Register at www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk

**Annual cost of OPAL membership =
£250 per school (from 1.1.24)**

Reaccreditation

Your award status lasts for two years. If you wish to continue to display and promote your OPAL status after this you will need to gain reaccreditation.

After 18 months, you should submit a RAG rating to your mentor and they will agree the level of support needed to be reaccredited.

**Cost of basic reaccreditation =
£500**



Meetings in the OPAL Primary Programme

All meetings require the OPAL working group. The presence of the school-based roles is essential, the presence of non-school based roles is desirable.

Most meetings last 2.5 to 3 hours. They can be run as morning, afternoon or twilight sessions. Development meeting two requires the OPAL working group plus the whole play team for the one-hour risk training element. Development meeting three requires the whole play team for the one-hour play training element.

The inset, audit, development one and grounds meetings should take place quite close together, the rest are generally three to six months apart.

