

Monday 18th October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Did you know that playtime is about 20% of every child's day at school? That's 1.4 years of every child's life while they are at primary school. It is also, for many children, the only time they have to play outside regularly.

Playing outdoors in rich play environments is one of the best ways for children to develop social skills, build resilience, make more friends, be more creative and care more about the planet. Right now, this is more important than ever.

I am very excited to tell you that your school is now starting to participate in the **Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) primary programme**, which is endorsed and supported by Sport England and runs in hundreds of schools across the UK and worldwide. You can watch a video of how the OPAL programme has helped transform school playtimes here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7UCex3K_0j4&t=4s and read more on the OPAL website: <https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/>.

Your executive head, head of school, a Governor and a small team of key staff will be supported by me as an OPAL Mentor to create a plan for changes over the next 18 months. Your school will be looking for parent play champions, volunteers who can collect stuff to play with and possibly help making things to play with. We will also be discussing the best ways to keep you all updated on the changes happening.

First though we need to know what you think about playtimes now.

Please can you complete this survey by Friday 5th November 2021:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GF6XFCW>

By completing it you will not only help your school, **you'll have a chance to win a pair of gorgeous thick socks (worth £13.50) for yourself or for your child.**

This data will help us 'baseline' where you are now, and plan for and measure the changes across the school over the next couple of years. We will also want to know how changes in playtime make you feel and affect the children you work with.

I look forward to getting to know you and your school over the next couple of years and I hope you'll get to know me. I was previously a teacher in London, worked in education policy, and went on to be Director of Play England before setting up my own Hackney based non-profit, Outdoor

Outdoor People

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Outdoor People delivers the OPAL Primary Programme under license from OPAL CiC

Outdoor People is a social enterprise founded as a Company Ltd by Guarantee (8896547) where profits are reinvested into projects to achieve our mission:
To make it easy to get outdoors!



People. As well as Mentoring schools going through the OPAL programme in London and Kent, we run a range of projects helping families and schools get outdoors more, and we also have a shop selling outdoors clothing and camping equipment.

Outdoor People is delighted to now be able to offer this award winning and rigorously evaluated programme to support your school in giving all children more outdoor play opportunities every day.

I'm really looking forward to receiving your survey responses and meeting you at a future Parents' Playday.

Best wishes,

Cath

Cath Prisk MA PGCE
OPAL Mentor
CEO Outdoor People

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