



Arnold Mill Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I wanted to write to you regarding the Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) programme that has been launched this week.

As Mrs Oldfield mentioned in her letter last week, playtimes are a huge part of primary school, and it is important that this time is beneficial for the children.

As parents I think most of us look back fondly on our primary school playtimes, how we used the skipping ropes not only for skipping but to create outlines of houses or make shapes in the playground for dobby off ground – I think the modern-day name for this is 'floor is lava'! - hula hoops weren't just for hula hooping but for creating hopscotch and the freshly cut grass was perfect for bug houses or pretend campfires. Times have changed and technology has become so enticing and addictive that imaginative play has dwindled.

As Chair of Governors part of my role is to look at the strategic vision of the school and ensure that it benefits all of the children at Arnold Mill. The main aims of OPAL are to improve wellbeing, improve behaviour and develop skills, all of these changes align with the school's strategic vision. Over the past couple of months, the school has been working hard behind the scenes to bring OPAL to life. I know at the moment it might seem a little unusual when your children come home saying things like "we need to take in old pots and pans!" but the saying 'One person's trash is another person's treasure' feels very fitting when setting out on an OPAL adventure! So please consider the school before putting anything in the bin or doing a charity shop run. If you haven't already, please check out the Bingo Cards that have been emailed out and put on the schools Facebook page.

This week I went into school to watch the OPAL launch assembly. It was lovely to see all of the children engaged and excited about their new playtimes. I hope you will join me in being fully supportive of the introduction of OPAL at Arnold Mill. I am looking forward to all of our children enjoying the outdoors and fulfilling their playtime potential – whether that is making mud kitchens, building dens, learning to walk on cable reels and much, much more.

'The imagination is the golden pathway to everywhere' (Terence McKenna) and that is where we want the children of Arnold Mill to go – wherever their imagination takes them.

Melanie Haslam
Chair of Governors

Get ready to play... OPAL BINGO

Pinecones/ acorns 	Adult clothing for dressing up 	Nets 	Fabric 	Plastic crates 
Action Figures 	Hats 	Dinosaurs 	Frying pans 	Seashells 
Tree stumps 	Balls 	Buggy 	Corrugated pipes 	Tarpaulin 
Beach spades 	Buckets 	Trowels 	Laundry Basket 	Baking trays 
Guttering 	Wooden planks 	Colanders 	Plastic Pipes 	Plastic vehicles 

