

Long-Term Operational Lead for OPAL Play

Nominated person: Kerry Scott (June 2025)

A Long-Term Operational Lead for OPAL Play plays a crucial role in turning strategic vision into day-to-day reality. This role focuses on ensuring the practical implementation, coordination, and continuous improvement of outdoor play and learning, based on OPAL principles.

Purpose:

To lead the operational delivery of the OPAL programme across the school, ensuring high-quality, inclusive, and sustainable play experiences are embedded into daily practice and consistently maintained over time.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Day-to-Day Coordination

- Oversee the daily running of outdoor play sessions across all age groups.
- Coordinate playtime schedules, supervision rotas, and staffing to ensure coverage and consistency.
- Monitor and respond to issues that arise during playtimes, adapting as needed.

2. Resource Management

- Maintain, organise, and replenish play resources (e.g. loose parts, mud kitchens, den-building materials).
- Ensure zones and materials are safe, engaging, and developmentally appropriate.
- Manage the play budget in collaboration with SLT and site staff.

3. Staff Support and Supervision

- Support midday supervisors, teaching assistants, and other staff in their play roles.
- Model and coach positive play supervision techniques.
- Provide ongoing informal CPD and briefings to ensure consistent adult behaviour and language at playtimes.

4. Health, Safety, and Risk-Benefit

- Conduct and maintain dynamic risk-benefit assessments for different play zones and materials.
- Work with site and safeguarding leads to ensure compliance with health and safety protocols.
- Respond to accidents and incidents, ensuring accurate reporting and reflection

5. Environment and Zoning

- Organise and maintain play zones across the school grounds, adapting to seasons and weather.
- Work with pupils and staff to co-design and evolve play areas based on engagement and feedback.
- Ensure the environment remains inclusive and accessible for all pupils, including those with SEND.

6. Monitoring and Feedback

- Observe and record playtime behaviours, engagement, and challenges.
- Collect pupil voice regularly to inform improvements.

- Feed operational insights into the strategic lead to support broader planning.

7. Pupil Engagement and Play Culture

- Support the development of play leaders, ambassadors, or pupil play councils.
- Promote pupil responsibility, creativity, and conflict resolution within play.
- Celebrate success in play through assemblies, displays, and communication with families.

8. Maintenance and Development

- Liaise with the site team and external contractors for repairs and maintenance of outdoor structures and equipment.
- Plan and implement termly updates to play spaces, themed zones, or new initiatives to maintain excitement and engagement.