



Strathmore OPAL Play Strategy

2025 - 2028

Commitment

Our school undertakes to refer to this play policy 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.

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 play times 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.*”

This rationale aligns with the Strathmore vision ‘Nurturing Brilliant, Resilient Minds’ ensuring that children are given the opportunity to explore risk, problem solve, socialise and have fun during their outdoor times. It provides pupils with the opportunity to live our values in a number of different ways at break and lunchtime. For example:

- Be Safe - learn to assess and navigate risk and how to support each other to be safe while exploring new opportunities.
- Be Kind - opportunities to share, be supportive, encourage and enjoy spending time together.
- Be Resilient - opportunities to problem solve, try out new things and to rebuild when things go wrong.

3 Year Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zone playground and develop storage solutions - Develop play team roles and share job descriptions - Write and review action plan - Create small world, music, construction, water play, sports, mud kitchen areas, large loose parts, digging area, den building - Communicate OPAL with parents, hosting parents’ workshops and stay and play sessions - Train play team in risk benefit assessment and playworker essentials - Develop systems for resource maintenance - Develop systems for wet weather clothing including wellies - Develop risk benefit assessments for OPAL resources - Launch and lead OPAL assemblies - Teach children the risk benefit analysis through OPAL assemblies - Complete annual stakeholder surveys to ensure stakeholder impact
	<p>18 Month review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop play team meetings and communication within annual training cycle - Develop annual plan for parental involvement including parent workshops/stay and play events for new parents - Further develop roles of play team to develop focus on organisation and maintenance of equipment - Complete ROSSPA recommendations annually - Develop cycle of natural play, including hay bales, maize maze and long grass maze. - Plan no mow zones and communicate with contractors - Invite Early Birds to stay and play event run by Year 2 pupils - Introduce play detectives Sept 2027
5 Year Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop succession planning for play team and working group, to ensure consistency of OPAL - Develop OPAL buddies for new staff to support training and induction - Offer site for extended community access - Raise profile of UNCHR by becoming a rights respecting school - Ensure continued high profile of OPAL through assemblies and participating in national events – e.g. national day of play, no pens day, Earth day - Incorporate natural art into the environment - Develop OPAL staff play events, encouraging staff to play within the new areas as they develop.

