

OPAL Play Lead

Job purpose / description

Leading the school's Play Team (comprising Teaching Assistants and Lunchtime supervisors), you will ensure that all our children have meaningful lunchtime play every day. You will work as a member of the OPAL Team to create and manage a safe and stimulating outdoor environment providing social, active and creative play experiences for all.



Main duties

- Work as part of the OPAL Team to cover all lunchtime tasks daily.
- Work with the OPAL Coordinator (Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher) to ensure all children have access to exciting play opportunities every lunch time.
- Facilitate play opportunities and act as an ambassador for play.
- Work with the Site Manager, School Business Manager, Play Coordinators, and OPAL Team members to ensure that all our children have a safe site for play.
- Assess play areas for risks daily and communicating/implementing any changes required.
- Assist with the coordination of and putting out and packing away of play equipment/kit.
- Record and report incidents of note that occur during lunchtime – e.g., site issues, behaviour, first aid.
- Assess and deliver first aid to pupils where appropriate.
- Offer care, support and advice for children during lunchtime.
- Contribute ideas and suggestions to improve the team practices and performance.
- Promote and safeguard the safety and welfare of children in accordance with school child protection and behaviour management policies.
- Support and uphold Coldfall's behaviour policy, school rules and reward pupils with verbal praise for positive attitudes and behaviours.
- Attend periodic team meetings and/or training for professional development.
- Assist with training new team members.

Job context

The OPAL Play Leader is directed by the Head Teacher, DHT and OPAL Governor who will take the lead on the strategic direction of the school, setting its philosophy and its vision. The post holder will have an important role in working directly with our children; working alongside other OPAL Team members to deliver a programme of activities that is appropriate to the age and needs for the children in his/her care.

Supervision and work planning

The OPAL Play Lead is required to supervise and direct staff during lunchtimes. They will also need to work with the OPAL Coordinator (Head teacher) on planning activities for the children. It will be incumbent on the OPAL team to supervise children at all times. Please note: this supervision is within designated zones but known as 'roaming supervision'.

Problems and decisions

The OPAL Play Lead will be required to resolve day to day issues of a practical or routine nature amongst the children but big issues of an operational or organisational nature should be referred to the OPAL Coordinator.

Knowledge, experience and training

- Previous experience of play work or working with children highly desirable
- Knowledge and/or understanding of Playwork Principles desirable
- Previous first aid experience desirable (basic First Aid training will be provided)
- Literacy and numeracy: Ability to follow written guidance and procedures
- Problem solving: Ability to identify and resolve straightforward problems and refer complex problems to an appropriate member of staff
- Verbal and written skills: OPAL team members will be required to record incidents swiftly and add to appropriate central school records. Ability to give clear verbal instructions to children and team members.
- Ability to follow good protocol.

Skills and personal attributes:

- Enjoy working with young people (all ages in the primary school range 4 – 11 years).
- Desirable to have a good range of DIY skills in order to develop the play environment further.
- Positive and supportive attitude towards young people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- Confident in working with and able to influence and negotiate with children from Year 1 (5 years old) to Year 6 (11 years old).
- Strong team work skills; enjoy being part of a team, supportive, flexible and reliable.
- Practical, solutions driven.
- Able to co-ordinate volunteers from the parent community to develop the outdoor space
- Friendly, approachable and caring manner.
- Dependable, with good time keeping.
- Willingness to try new things and work outside comfort zone.

Physical effort and/or strain

Working with children is demanding and requires stamina and resourcefulness. This post will require physical effort, such as initiating active games, demonstrating safe play, walking on uneven surfaces (slopes, sand) and moving 'loose parts' materials, containers and furniture.

Working environment

The working environment will be part or all of the school premises or accommodation selected by the school. Areas of high use are the outdoor play spaces (playgrounds, field, MUGAs, outdoor seating, wooded / scrub areas, 'The Beach', Mud Factory, Forest School area), but not restricted to these.

General

This job description only contains the principal accountabilities relating to this post and does not describe in detail all the tasks required to carry them out. Duties may vary from time to time without changing the character of the post or the level of responsibility.

Special notes or conditions

The post holder will be subject to a full police and suitability check to satisfy child protection requirements. The post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and all convictions or cautions must be declared.

The post-holder has a responsibility to promote and safeguard the safety and welfare of children in accordance with the school's child protection and behaviour management policy.

Whilst the school hours are set, it is inevitable that other duties will be required from time to time. The post holder should be willing to work flexibly to deal effectively with such eventualities.