



Dear parents and carers,

Horniman has begun working with OPAL on a programme to improve opportunities for physical activity, socialisation, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment through improved play.

The Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) Primary Programme is the result of over 20 years of testing and development in over 800 schools. OPAL is based on the idea that, as well as learning through good teaching, your children also learn when they play. As 20% of their time in school is playtime, we want to make sure that this amount of time (equivalent to 1.4 years of primary school) is as good as possible. If you would like to learn more about the OPAL Primary Programme, please have a look at the OPAL website (www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk), where you will find lots of useful information and several videos about the programme.

There are many proven benefits for schools that carry out the OPAL Primary Programme. They include: more enjoyment of school, less teaching time lost to disputes between children, fewer accidents and greatly improved behaviour.

Play is not messing about. It is the process evolution has come up with to enable children to learn all of the things that cannot be taught, while also having so much fun. There are certain things children **must** have in order to be able to play. These include:

- Having clothes that they can play in.
- Having things to play with.
- Having a certain amount of freedom.

As we improve play we will be using more of the grounds, for more of the year. Your children may get a bit messier, be exposed to more challenges and have greater freedoms to play where and how they like. The experiences the school are fostering are essential for children's physical and mental wellbeing and are in line with all current good practice advice on health and safety, wellbeing and development.

We are really excited about this project and hope that you will support us in our efforts to improve playtime for all children.

The first steps will be for us to create 4 new opportunities for play at lunchtimes: a mud kitchen, dressing up area, small world play and a chill out social area.

In order to do this, we are asking for donations of the following items:

- Pots, pans, baking trays and bowls (they do not have to be new or clean)
- Wooden and metal kitchen utensils such as spoons, spatulas, sieves, colanders and tongs
- Picnic blankets or throws
- Dressing up clothes

Horniman Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



- Old clothes such as hats, shawls, dresses, cloaks that could be used for dressing up in

Please bring any items to school before half term so they can be checked, sorted and ready for use after half term.

We also want to find out parents and carers views about play. Please fill out the following quick survey. <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PHCKQ3R>

Thank you for your support.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best wishes

Andrew Pickering
Headteacher

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