



## OUTDOOR PLAY & LEARNING PROGRAM

The Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) program was developed in the UK and is a comprehensive play provision program designed to improve school performance, through enhancing play experiences.

### How well does your school provide for play?

Given the amount of school time devoted to play, it is important to take a strategic approach to ensure children are receiving the maximum benefit for this time.

The OPAL program, through the assistance of an OPAL mentor, will assist your school to develop a strategic and policy-based approach to improving play. The program runs over a 12-18 month period and through OPAL you will:

- Identify your school community's play values
- Write a play provision policy and strategy
- Gather baseline and evaluation data
- Create a comprehensive action plan
- Have support & guidance throughout via your OPAL mentor
- Enhance play and learning opportunities at your school

The program's focus is on creating a lasting and significant change in play provision, which can provide significant benefits that extend to all areas of children's learning and wellbeing: physical; cognitive; social and emotional; and overall wellbeing.

Nature Play Solutions adopted the OPAL program to enhance the work we do in supporting play for children in schools, child care centres, local government and other facilities. As accredited OPAL providers, we are excited by the opportunity to provide support for play through the structure of the OPAL program.

Feedback from a parent at a Perth school currently undertaking the OPAL program:

*"I have been very impressed with the play opportunities that have been afforded my daughter Caitlin as part of the OPAL program. Caitlin has been raving about the fun she has had and said it has helped her to "unlock my imagination". It was particularly useful during the first few weeks of school, as Caitlin is new to the school and it meant that she was able to engage in unstructured play that broke down the social barriers and allowed her to meet the other girls in a non-threatening environment. It was during one of these play sessions that she met her new best friend, they spontaneously started building a car (complete with wings and a kitchen) and during this process established their friendship.*

*As a result of Caitlin's experiences I am now approaching my son's school to see if they can implement a similar program."*

For more information about the OPAL program, please contact us:

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