



# Warboys Primary Academy

A proud member of



**Principal: Mr Stuart Mallott**  
Warboys Primary Academy  
Humberdale Way, Warboys  
Huntingdon, PE28 2RX  
Tel: 01487 822317  
Email: [office@wpa.education](mailto:office@wpa.education)  
Web: [www.wpa.education](http://www.wpa.education)

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Warboys Primary Academy is about to start a programme to improve opportunities for physical activity, socialisation, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment through improved play.

In what ways, if any, do you think you benefited from playtime? Thinking about your own childhood, what did you like playing at school or at home? Children today don't have the same freedoms we once did, so we want to give children back time to really enjoy and learn from play. After all, it's a child's basic human right.

The Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) Primary Programme is the result of over 20 years of testing and development in over 800 schools and has been used in Spain, Canada, France and New Zealand. The programme has also been adapted and used in schools in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Austria under the Play Friendly Schools project. In 2018, OPAL won first prize in an EU-funded award for the best active school's programme in Europe and two UK National Playwork Awards. In 2019, OPAL was awarded a quarter of a million pounds by Sport England to bring the programme to many more 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.

There are many proven benefits for schools that carry out the OPAL Primary Programme. They usually 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.

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continued:-

As we begin the journey to improve play opportunities for our children, you may find we lean on parents and the community for resources, reducing the overall cost of the project. We will also be making changes in how the children use the school grounds. These may include using more of the grounds, for more of the year. Children may get a bit messier, be exposed to more challenges and have greater freedoms to play where, with whom and how they like. The experiences we strive to foster 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.

The school will be supported by OPAL for 18 months and there will be an opportunity to come and talk to the OPAL mentor at your child's school. If you would like to learn more about the OPAL Primary Programme, please have a look at the OPAL website ([www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk](http://www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk)), where you will find lots of useful information and several videos about the programme.

In the coming 18 months you will be invited to events where you can come and see for yourselves what is happening and have the opportunity to join in too!

We have created a parent survey to capture your views on playtimes. We would be very grateful if you could share your views via the forms link or QR code below:  
[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=nowK81Jo8E2Ms5kmm08dZuMYhMyhLoBikSyOE\\_t6b-dUN0s4VEJGVzc1V1JPM1Y3WVdKNDZXRzJSVC4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=nowK81Jo8E2Ms5kmm08dZuMYhMyhLoBikSyOE_t6b-dUN0s4VEJGVzc1V1JPM1Y3WVdKNDZXRzJSVC4u)

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

Kind regards

Mr Mallott, Mr Herring and Mrs Flisher



Parent survey link