

OPAL Play Coordinator

Ref: AMB2606

An opportunity to make your mark



Primary School and Children's Centre

Achieving more

CLOSING DATE: Midnight, Sunday 4th October 2026.

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Welcome from the Headteacher



Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in the role of **OPAL Play Coordinator** at Ambler Primary School and Children's Centre.

Ambler Primary School and Children's Centre is a unique, culturally diverse, community school with children from 6 months to 11 years of age. It is a place where every decision made puts the needs of the child first and foremost – a school that is aspirational for every learner. The successful candidate will be a part of a creative and hardworking team.



Our setting is a place where children arrive with smiles on their faces, full of questions and a desire to learn. This is due to the dedicated and passionate staff who ignite learning and support the children to '**Achieve More**' using their **DREAMS** qualities. The aim is to create lifelong learners ready for the 21st century, ready for the BIG WORLD!

Our enriched curriculum drives what we believe to be important. We celebrate role models and embrace equality and diversity. We place a strong emphasis on oracy, providing children with the tools to use their voice to justify their ideas. Through challenge, collaboration and problem solving we allow our children to make excellent progress and fulfil their potential.

Rated 'Outstanding' in all areas in our most recent Ofsted inspection (November 2024), we are a setting that is dynamic and innovative in order to support the needs of all children; socially, academically and in terms of their mental health and well-being.

Most importantly, we are '**One Ambler**', a school supported by parents, governors and Friends of Ambler with the sole aim to make school life the best it can be for every child. This is summed up in a quote from our recent parent survey:

"I love the spirit of the school and the buzz and the excitement that all the children have. It is a warm and safe place for people of any background to find a place within."

I feel privileged to be the Head of this school and am proud to see it go from strength to strength.

I really hope that you are as excited as we are about Ambler and you do apply.

Looking forward to meeting you.

Sandeep McNicholl
Headteacher



Why come to Ambler?



The Ambler provision of school and Children's Centre provides a seamless integrated service from pre-birth to the end of Year 6. We have the privilege of working in a very rich and diverse community which includes many children and families from a range of backgrounds and cultures and this vibrant blend makes the Ambler community a unique and energising place to be.

Ambler is a great place to work and has a positive environment where everybody works together to achieve more. This is a rare opportunity to join a committed and supportive team that works hard to make a difference to the lives of hundreds of children.

At Ambler, we promote equality, challenge discrimination and recognise the positive value that comes from having a truly diverse workforce. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds who reflect the diverse community of our school.

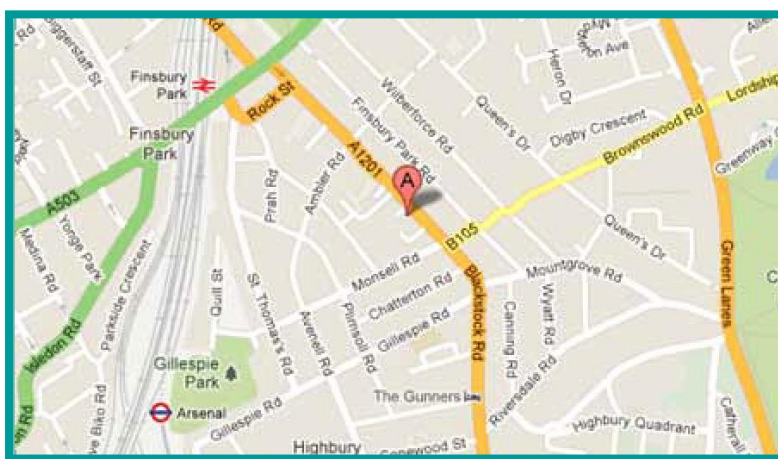
We can offer:

- A warm, positive working environment where everyone is valued
- The opportunity to be part of an engaging and highly motivated team, who provide excellent services for our community
- Fantastic opportunities for professional development
- A chance to share your ideas, contribute to improvements and make your mark across the setting and Islington
- Enticing Inner London pay rates and generous annual leave entitlement
- Highly supportive and enthusiastic leaders and dedicated governors
- Excellent location at the heart of Islington

Ambler Primary School and Children's Centre

Blackstock Road
Islington
London
N4 2DR

Tel: 020 7226 4708



Ofsted Report

For the latest reports on Ambler Primary School and Children's Centre, please [click here](#).

Website

Ambler Primary School and Children's Centre website is <http://www.ambler.islington.sch.uk>.

Islington

Further information about Islington borough is available at www.islington.gov.uk

Our Values



Determination



Resilience



Empathy



Ambition



Motivation



Self-Belief

Determination

You can show determination by:

- Trying your best
- Working hard in anything you find difficult
- Focusing on specific steps or targets
- Breaking your goal down into small steps
- Taking one step at a time if necessary
- Accepting that some goals require hard work
- Being persistent and tenacious

Resilience

You can show resilience by:

- Never giving up
- Persevering when working towards your goal
- Trying to achieve your personal best
- Overcoming the fear of failure
- Keep on going even when it gets tough
- Having the ability to problem solve
- Bouncing back from obstacles

Empathy

You can show empathy by:

- Being kind to those around you
- Thinking about how other people may be feeling
- Imagining what it would be like walk in their shoes or be in their position
- Be ready to help and support
- Listening to others without judgement.

Ambition

You can show ambition by:

- Identifying and aiming for a goal
- Knowing the steps to achieving your goal
- Pushing and extending yourself
- Believing that nothing is impossible
- Keeping focused on the 'big picture'
- Articulating your ambition and your progress
- Knowing there are different routes to success

Motivation

You can show motivation by:

- Being prepared to work hard
- Dealing with failure or setbacks positively
- Really wanting to achieve success
- Understanding why you are doing something
- Being driven and keen
- Accepting and understanding constructive criticism
- Being aware of your own areas of development

Self-belief

You can show self-belief by:

- Showing bravery
- Taking risks and trying new things
- Recognising what you are good at
- Having confidence that you will achieve
- Saying 'I can do this!'
- Visualising yourself succeeding
- Learning from your mistakes

Job Advert – OPAL Play Coordinator



SALARY RANGE:	Scale 6
ACTUAL SALARY:	£10,556 - £11,066 per annum
CONTRACT:	11 hours per week, Term Time Only. Fixed until 31/08/27 with the possibility of extension
REQUIRED FOR	October 2026

Do you believe that play matters?

We are looking for a passionate, enthusiastic and experienced Play Coordinator to join our team and help us provide meaningful, productive and inclusive child-initiated play opportunities for all our children. The successful candidate will understand the essential role that play has in children's lives and who can turn that passion, experience and knowledge into outstanding playwork practice across our school.

The successful candidate will support and facilitate high-quality child-initiated play, in line with our OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) principles. You will take a leading role in supporting and developing our Play Team, working alongside staff and pupils to create a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can play, explore, take appropriate risks, develop relationships and have fun.

We are looking for someone who:

- Has previous experience working with children in an educational or playwork setting.
- Is a strong advocate for children and understands the difference that high-quality play can make to children's development.
- Can build positive relationships with children and adults.
- Is confident supporting and developing colleagues.
- Is confident using digital communication and recording systems.
- Can organise resources and activities effectively.
- Has relevant qualifications or experience working with children.

Most importantly, we want someone who is enthusiastic about play and able to inspire children and adults to see the possibilities that play can offer.

Why work with us?

This is an exciting opportunity to play a key role in developing our school's approach to play and to make a tangible difference to children's experience of break and lunchtime.

If you are passionate about children's play, enjoy being creative and practical, and want to help create an environment where every child has the opportunity to play, explore, socialise and thrive, we would love to hear from you. Help us make play at Ambler extraordinary!

At Ambler, we promote equality, challenge discrimination and recognise the positive value that comes from having a truly diverse workforce. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds who reflect the diverse community of our school.

Deadline for applications: Midnight, Sunday 4th October 2026.

Short-listing: Week beginning 5th October 2026.

Interviews: Week beginning 12th October 2026.

Please apply online at <https://jobs.islington.gov.uk/> If you need any assistance, please email the office@ambler.islington.sch.uk quoting reference: AMB2606

Ambler Primary School and Children's Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. All appointments are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, a barred list check, and satisfactory pre-employment references. An online search will be conducted on shortlisted candidates.

Job Description - OPAL Play Coordinator

SALARY GRADE	Scale 6
ACTUAL SALARY:	£10,556 - £11,066 per annum
CONTRACT	11 hours per week, Term Time Only. Fixed until 31/08/27 with the possibility of extension
RESPONSIBLE TO	Headteacher, OPAL Curricular Lead

PURPOSE OF THE POST

The play coordinator will support and facilitate meaningful and productive child-initiated play during the school day in accordance with the play policy. The postholder will be passionate about play and understands the essential role it has in children's lives, translating that passion, experience, knowledge and drive to lead an effective playwork team that is dedicated to providing a welcoming and safe space for all children to play.

LINE MANAGEMENT

The post holder is responsible to the Headteacher and OPAL Curricular Lead for fulfilling the duties set out in this job description.

The post holder will mentor and support all of the Play Team: support staff on playground duty.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The post holder will have a responsibility to promote and safeguard the safety and welfare of children in accordance with the schools' child protection and behaviour management policy.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The post holder will have the following areas of responsibility:

Ensuring the wellbeing of pupils

- Supervise pupils in designated areas of the school (including playground or external spaces) during the lunchtime/break times and to ensure their safety, welfare and general conduct through appropriate application of the school's policies and procedures.
- Ensure the safety, welfare and general conduct through appropriate application of the school's policies and procedures.
- Participate in all OPAL meetings, leading when appropriate
- Complete written risk benefit assessments in-line with the R.A.P.I.D approach set-out by OPAL and ensure they are updated reviewed and updated regularly including after any incidents
- Establish safe and proper behaviour, by appropriate intervention or referral to senior staff, as appropriate.
- Complete any relevant documentation required by the school in relation to incidents occurring during the lunchtime break period.
- Take any immediate action to attend to sickness or accidents by carrying out minor first aid and summoning relevant assistance and recording all first aid actions via Medical Tracker
- Report any major accidents or bumped heads to parents via Medical Tracker and to the school office so a phone call to parent/guardian can be made.

Ensure a diverse range of playable resources is provided for, and is accessible to all children

- Ensure there are sufficient resources to promote each of the 'play types', schema and risks, adding in response to children's needs and opportunity.
- Ensure resources are stored appropriately.

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- Check the quality and condition of resources and repair or remove any resources that are not in a suitable condition for continued use.
 - Organise and carry out the replenishment of resources through:
 - Securing funding from internal or external sources.
 - Coordinating appeals within school and local communities for resources.
 - Collecting resources from sources such as the scrap project.

Carry out training and CPD following the OPAL principles and implement and contribute to create development plans

- Participate in all OPAL meetings, leading when appropriate
- Complete written risk benefit assessments in-line with the R.A.P.I.D approach set-out by OPAL and ensure they are updated reviewed and updated regularly including after any incidents

Provide support and training for other school staff or pupils as required

- Build playworker expertise and practice within the play team.
- Organise and support pupil playground buddies with their role.
- Facilitate peer-led play opportunities.
- Provide suggestions for playmaker activities and games.

Ensure enriching play events or opportunities are created

- Discuss and plan with pupils/staff and school council.
- Implement planned activities.
- Review activities to promote self-evaluation and play development.

Create opportunities for play to support the social and behavioural development of pupils

- Ensure a rich and varied set of play opportunities is available for all children to engage in.
- Provide engaging playwork interventions where pupils who find positive behaviour choices challenging.

Knowledge, experience and training

- Prior experience of working with children in an educational or playwork setting is essential.
- Be a strong advocate for children and understand the difference that play makes in children's development.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills, both written and verbal, with a good understanding of digital communication are essential.
- Relevant qualifications or experience of working with children.

Resources and support

- This post will carry an entitlement to appropriate support from the headteacher and outdoor learning leader.

Review

- The job description sets out the principle responsibilities for the post but does not describe each of the tasks that it may be necessary to carry out.
- The job description may be reviewed from time to time in consultation with the post-holder in order to address the changing circumstances of priorities within the school.

PLEASE NOTE

This job description is a guide to the general duties and responsibilities of this post, which reasonably may vary from time to time according to the needs of the service. It may be modified by the Headteacher, with your agreement, to reflect or anticipate changes in the job, commensurate with the salary and job title. It does not form part of the terms and conditions of employment.

All staff at Ambler Primary School and Children's Centre are required to be flexible in their approach to work, with a positive attitude and will be expected to support and cover for colleagues as needed, including undertaking duties commensurate with the scale of the post and duties normally allocated to posts at a lower scale.

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

1. To adhere to the Code of Conduct and demonstrate integrity and objectivity at all times.
2. To be professional in dress and manner at all times
3. To promote the wellbeing and safeguarding of children.
4. To maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people.
5. To carry out the responsibilities of the post with due regard to the Equalities Act.
6. To carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post in accordance H&S procedures and relevant H&S Guidance and Legislation.
7. To use information technology systems as required to carry out the duties of the post in the most efficient and effective manner.
8. To be aware of data protection responsibilities under GDPR. To use tact and discretion when handling, sharing or disposing of any information which could be confidential.
9. To undertake training and professional development as appropriate.
10. To constructively take part in meetings/briefings, appraisals, supervision, conferences and other events designed to improve communication and assist with the effective development of the post and the post holder.
11. To undertake other duties appropriate to the post that may reasonably be required.

Person Specification



The person specification is a picture of skills, knowledge and experience required to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the short-listing and interview process for this post.

You should demonstrate on your application form how you meet each of the following essential criteria. Please ensure that your address each one of the criteria as this will be used to assess your suitability for the post.

Qualifications and Training	Essential (E) / Desirable (D)
Good standard of literacy and numeracy.	E
Willingness to undertake official OPAL training and continuous professional development.	E

Relevant qualification (e.g. Level 2/3 in Playwork, HLTA status, or Forest Schools certification).	D
Current First Aid Certificate (ideally Paediatric First Aid).	D
Experience	Essential (E) / Desirable (D)
Prior experience working with children in an educational or playwork setting.	E
Experience supporting children with a range of needs, including SEND or social, emotional, and behavioural challenges.	E
Experience coordinating an aspect of provision or leading/mentoring a small team (such as midday assistants or pupil play leaders).	D
Previous involvement with OPAL or similar child-led outdoor learning initiatives.	D
Knowledge and Understanding	Essential (E) / Desirable (D)
Understanding of Safeguarding and Child Protection policies within a school environment.	E
Understanding of risk-benefit assessments in play, allowing children to experience managed risk (e.g. climbing trees, loose parts) rather than eliminating all hazards.	E
Knowledge of child-initiated play and how it impacts a child's physical, social, and emotional development.	E
Understanding of inclusion principles, ensuring children of all abilities can access rich play opportunities.	E
Skills and Personal Attributes	Essential (E) / Desirable (D)
Ability to use "low-intervention" playwork strategies—knowing when to step back and when to support.	E
Excellent communication skills to advocate for play with parents, senior leadership, and the wider community.	E
Resourcefulness and community focus to source, organise, and replenish "loose parts" (e.g., tyres, crates, tarpaulins) via community scrap drives or donations.	E
Ability to carry out dynamic checks of the outdoor play environment and ensure safety protocols are followed.	E
Passionate champion for outdoor play who believes in the core values of the OPAL Programme.	E
Resilience and physical stamina to facilitate play outdoors on the school grounds in all weather conditions.	E
Patient and positive approach to behaviour management, turning playground conflicts into reflective learning experiences.	E

Details of Selection Process

Application deadline

Completed application forms must be received by Midnight, Sunday 4th October 2026.

Please apply online at <http://jobs.islington.gov.uk> If you need any assistance, please email the office@ambler.islington.sch.uk quoting reference: AMB2606

Please note that application forms should not be returned to the school.

Completing your application

Candidates are asked to complete all the standard information required on the application form, and to submit a supporting statement, addressing all of the criteria identified at application stage.

Visits

We welcome visits. If you have any questions, get in touch!

Selection process

The selection process will be a combination of tasks, activities, assessment tools and interview. Further information will be provided to the candidates shortlisted for interview.

References

Candidates are advised that references will be taken up immediately after shortlisting. Candidates are asked to ensure that their referees are warned of the need to respond within the timescale set. In all cases at least one professional reference is required.

The post will be offered subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks.

Safeguarding children

Prior to appointment, formal checks will be made in accordance with the current statutory requirements relating to child protection.

Call **020 7226 4708** or email office@ambler.islington.sch.uk

