



# PROSPECTUS

## 2023-2024

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# Welcome

**Welcome to Oakham Shires School, a nurturing setting for autistic children and young people, and those with other associated needs.**

We are a small independent special day school set in the heart of Oakham town centre, offering specialist secondary education for pupils aged 11-18 years old.

Our aim is to provide exceptional educational experiences to Autistic children and young people who may have once attended a mainstream educational setting or larger SEND educational settings and who now need a smaller environment to meet their complex special educational needs.

As a school we are passionate about providing high quality educational experiences across a broad and balanced curriculum. Learning at Oakham Shires School takes place both in and outside of the classroom and we are committed to ensuring every pupil realises their full academic potential while developing the essential social and emotional regulatory skills which will help them to navigate their young and adult lives.

If you would like to book a visit to see our school please contact Michelle Jordan on 01572 720327

# Our Vision

At Oakham Shires School we are committed to enhancing the lives of all our young people so they can all become 'Curious, Courageous, Communicators, and Confident learners'

'Curious, Courageous, Communicators, and Confident learners', known in our community as "the Four C's".

We support our children to be:

**Safe** – be safe, feel safe, and understand risk

**Understanding** – be effective and successful communicators

**Kind** – be kind to all around them, to understand and respect the needs of others

**Happy** – be healthy and happy individuals who enjoy coming to school

**Ambitious** – have goals and dreams for their futures and be supported to achieve them

**Successful** – find regular achievement and celebrate this as part of a community.



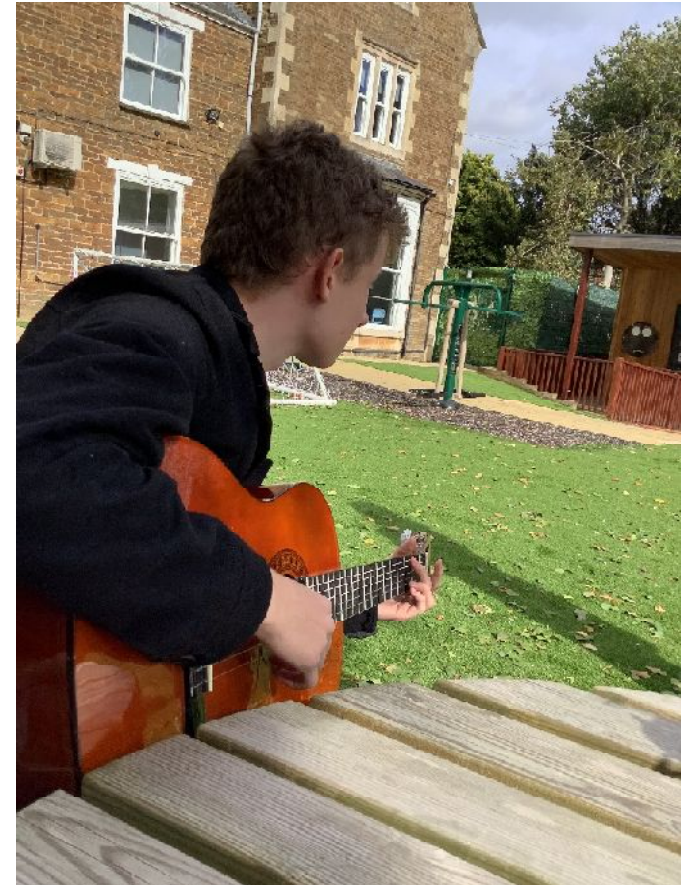
# Our Ethos

At Oakham Shires School we believe that every child is an individual and we use a person-centred approach to ensure learning is tailored to meet their specific needs. Pupils at Oakham Shires School are provided with a broad and balanced educational offer, appropriate to their developmental stage. Pupils are given opportunities to work both within and outside of the classroom to be able to develop, generalise and apply skills in community settings. Personalised accreditation pathways are developed for each pupil ensuring they are supported to gain meaningful outcomes that will support them to take their next steps into adulthood. Wherever their destination on leaving us, we aim to make sure they are confident and have the resources and skills needed to succeed.

# Curriculum

At Oakham Shires School we want our pupils to be immersed in a curriculum that supports them to experience and develop an understanding of:

- skills to support functional communication, interaction, and reading skills, enabling effective communication and safe access to a variety of community settings and wider learning opportunities.
- skills to support emotional regulation, linked to physical and sensory needs, ensuring safe access to a variety of community settings and wider learning opportunities.
- skills to support social, emotional, and mental health, developing independent living and life skills that will support safe access to a variety of community settings and wider learning opportunities.
- what it means to be a human and how human behaviour impacts and shapes the world they live in.



- the visual, cultural, social and environmental aspects of the wider world and where they live.
- the natural world and an appreciation for the animal species that inhabit the world and live alongside them.
- how to compare through the investigation and exploration of various processes and materials.
- the significance of people, places, events and inventions that have helped to change the world in which they live.

We recognise that all pupils will need to develop core communication and interaction skills, learn how to manage their physical and sensory needs, impacting positively on their social, emotional and mental health before they are able to immerse themselves in the wider demands of the curriculum.





## **Accreditation and outcomes**

During Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 pupils work towards a variety of accreditations appropriate to their developmental stage. All pupils work towards five accreditations to include English, Maths and Science. Further accreditation opportunities across a range of subject areas are built around the interests and career aspirations of the individual.



# Clinical therapy

To support the school to deliver high quality education, the experienced clinical team provide direct therapy and oversight to the children and young people in our school to ensure that they have the necessary tools (communication strategies / emotional & sensory regulation strategies) to be able to access and enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum.

Our clinical therapeutic offer includes:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Psychotherapy
- Support to access other types of therapy as required

The team work with each student, as well as their parents or carers, to agree a support plan which will become part of their school life, enabling them to build on their strengths and increase their resilience.

The clinical therapy team operate predominately using an integrated therapeutic model, immersing themselves within the classroom, whether indoors or outside, to ensure pupils learn to implement and generalise the use of strategies with the guidance of their support staff.



# Safeguarding

We are committed to providing the highest standards in relation to the safeguarding of the children and young people entrusted to our care.

We support all pupils by:

- Providing a caring, safe, and positive environment within the school
- Encouraging communication, self-esteem, and self-assertiveness
- Effectively tackling child on child abuse including bullying and harassment
- Promoting all aspects of the Equality Act 2010
- Training all staff in Child Protection and Safeguarding to the appropriate level and ensuring they are aware of safeguarding procedures within our school
- Providing the infrastructure for effective reporting, record keeping, and working in partnership

We expect all staff and visitors to our school to behave in a way which ensures our children are safeguarded at all times. This includes a duty for any safeguarding concerns to be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

# Pastoral Care & Pupil Welfare

We take the care of our young people and their families seriously and work closely with parents and carers to ensure appropriate support is identified and offered.

## **Accidents / medical concerns /sickness**

Doctors, Dentists and Orthodontists: We ask that these appointments are made for after school hours. If it is absolutely necessary for a pupil to attend an appointment during the day, you must contact the class teacher beforehand. Medical Appointments: We understand that medical appointments will sometimes need to take place during school hours and we would ask that a copy of the appointment letter is forwarded to us

## **Attendance**

It is vital that pupils attend school regularly in order to make good progress with their learning, develop confidence in school work, build positive relationships and develop independence. We expect all our pupils to be excellent attenders to school. It is a legal requirement that any unexplained absence is kept on record and reported. If your child has not arrived at school and we have not heard from you we will contact you to clarify their whereabouts and obtain the reason that they are not in school. We comply with KCSIE2023 regulations by ensuring we have a visual check in with every pupil on roll each week regardless of whether they are in school or not.

## **Child protection & safeguarding**

Oakham Shires School takes their responsibility for safeguarding all children very seriously. There is always a Designated Safeguarding Lead on site and contactable at all times during school operating hours.

## **Food and healthy living**

We do not allow pupils to go off-site during lunchtime. Pupils will experience an array of fresh, home-produced menu choices featuring recipes and ingredients from around the world. Both hot and cold meals, along with a range of healthy snacks and drinks, are available at every service time. There is a hot main course and daily dessert; for pupils requiring something different a range of options are available to them including sandwiches, toasties, or soup. Fresh fruit and yogurts are available daily.

## **Antibullying**

At Oakham Shires School our aim is to create an atmosphere which is caring, protective, and supportive where no one feels humiliated, intimidated or abused. Recognising bullying in all its forms is a vital part of this process. The ethos and working philosophy of Oakham Shires School means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Good and kind/polite behaviour is expected, regularly acknowledged and rewarded. Staff will reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular theme in line with our vision and our learning behaviours expectations.

## **Careers & enrichment**

We actively work with our pupils to establish their goals and aspirations in life, helping them to identify career ambitions and put a plan in place to achieve those ambitions. We work to support their ambitions both through our on site offering, but also through the use of local colleges and alternative education providers to develop the skills and experience our children need to succeed in their chosen path. We ensure that all our children have had experiences of work before they leave us.

# The School Calendar 2023 - 2024

September 2023							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
36				31/8	1	2	3
37	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
38	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
39	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
40	25	26	27	28	29	30	

October 2023							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
40							1
41	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
42	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
43	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
44	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
45	30	31					

November 2023							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
45			1	2	3	4	5
46	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
47	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
48	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
49	27	28	29	30			

December 2023							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
49					1	2	3
50	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
51	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
52	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
53	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

January 2024							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
3	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
4	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
5	29	30	31				

February 2024							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
5				1	2	3	4
6	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
7	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
8	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9	26	27	28	29			

March 2024							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
9					1	2	3
10	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
12	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
13	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

April 2024							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
14	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
17	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
18	29	30					

May 2024							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
18			1	2	3	4	5
19	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
20	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
21	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
22	27	28	29	30	31		

June 2024							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
22						1	2
23	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
24	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
26	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

July 2024							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
29	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
30	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
31	29	30	31				

August 2024							
WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
31				1	2	3	4
32	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
33	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
34	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
35	26	27	28	29	30	31	

**Key**

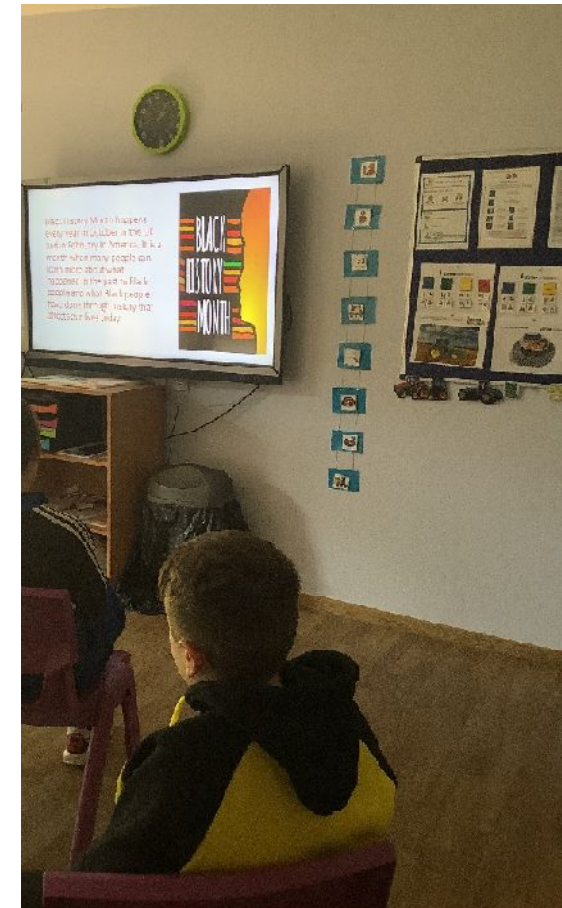
Pupils at School
Weekends
Teacher Training Days
Bank Holidays
Holiday

# The School Day

The school day runs from 09:00 to 14:30.

The day is structured to support students with making transitions from one place or activity to another; an example timetable would be:

08:45 - 09:15	Arrival, breakfast club, hello and welcome time
09:15 - 10:00	English
<i>10:00 - 10:15</i>	<i>Snack time / Break time</i>
10:15 – 11:00	Mathematics
<i>11:00 - 11:15</i>	<i>Snack time / Break time</i>
11:15 – 12:00	History
<i>12:00 - 12.30</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
12:30 - 13:00	Phonics / Reading
13:00 - 14:30	Enrichment curriculum e.g. Sport / SMSC / Citizenship / Careers
14:30	School Day Finishes – transition to taxis



# Residential Care

Across The Shires Group we are able to offer residential accommodation from 38 weeks to 52 weeks. Our homes support the individual needs of our children and provide the space and comfort they need. Our homes are beautifully decorated and furnished, with spacious living areas, kitchen and dining areas and outdoor spaces for the children to relax in. Every resident has their own bedroom, a space they can modify and personalise to their own needs and tastes.

We encourage all of our children to actively participate in family life, from cooking to doing their laundry, building their life skills and independence. For children with additional communication needs our homes use the Picture Exchange Communication System and Makaton Sign Language. All of our children have the opportunity to take part in off site activities each week to develop their interests and broaden their experiences and are encouraged to engage in community life.





# Referrals and admissions

We're more than happy to take referrals directly from parents and carers, and with a network of schools and homes across the UK, we're able to identify the right setting for each individual child or young person.

Parents and Carers are advised to talk first with the SENDCo at their child's current place of education. The SENDCo (along with the parent/carer) can then refer to the Local Authority admission placement process where decisions for referral will be made.

For admission, children and young people:

- Will be aged between 11 – 18 years
- Will be referred by the relevant local authority
- Will have an Education Health Care Plan (or will be under assessment)
- Will have autistic spectrum conditions
- May have specific learning difficulties such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Dyscalculia
- Will benefit from the school's therapeutic input

If you'd like to make a referral or you simply want to know more, please get in touch with [james.taylor-lawrence@ofgl.uk](mailto:james.taylor-lawrence@ofgl.uk)

Options Autism is part of the **Outcomes First Group** family along with the National Fostering Group and Acorn Education and Care. Together, we educate, care for and support children, young people and adults across the UK.

### Acorn Education And Care

Acorn Education and Care is our group of specialist SEMH and complex needs schools.

### Options Autism

Options Autism manages our specialist ASC nurseries, schools, colleges and adult services.

Oakham Shires School

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