

**Outcomes
First
Group.**

**ACORN EDUCATION
AND CARE**

OptionsAutism

**School
Admissions Policy
Oakham Shires School**



Oakham Shires School

Introduction

Oakham Shires School is an independent specialist day school. We provide specialist education for young people aged 11 to 18, including children in care, who have a range of complex behavioural, communication and social difficulties associated with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

At Oakham Shires School we support young people who present with a wide range of complex needs associated with Autism. A young person may be considered for a place at Oakham Shires School if they have an Education, Health and Care plan, a diagnosis of ASD or demonstrate behaviour and difficulties commensurate with a diagnosis of ASD and where a typical mainstream environment has not appropriately met the needs of the young person.

Oakham Shires School is committed to raising achievement and enabling pupils to recognise their potential, supporting them through a personalised, engaging curriculum. Our priority is to develop the foundation knowledge and skills required to make a manageable and smooth transition to the next life stage. We offer an outstanding therapeutic, supportive learning environment where our young people are supported enabling them to accept responsibility for their actions, make positive decisions and display pro-social behaviour. We aim to help each young person to become confident individuals and responsible citizens with a fundamental understanding of British Values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Our planned admission number (PAN) for Oakham Shires School is 40 day placements.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that Oakham Shires School admits, as far as is possible, those pupils whose special educational needs can be met effectively and in doing so ensure progress in all aspects of their development.

Objectives

The objectives of the policy are that:

- All concerned will have a clear understanding of the criteria used in assessing the appropriateness of a placement for individual pupils at Oakham Shires School.
- All concerned will have a clear understanding of the processes of judging the appropriateness of that placement.
- Parents/carers, each pupil and representatives of LA's, social service departments and other interested professionals have a clear understanding of the opportunities on offer at Oakham Shires School.
- Parents/carers, each pupil and representatives of LA's, social services departments and other interested professionals understand all key aspects of school life at Oakham Shires School and are prepared to play their part in ensuring the success of any placement.

Criteria

Oakham Shires School accepts referrals from parents/carers, Local Authorities and their partners for prospective pupils who would benefit from specialist education designed for those with a primary diagnosis of Autism. Referrals may come directly to Oakham Shires School or via our central admissions team: James Taylor-Lawrence – Admissions Manager – 07866 549513 – james.taylor-lawrence@ofgl.uk

- The school caters for pupils with primary diagnosis of Autism/ADHD that may have additional moderate learning difficulties or other needs.
- The school provides education for pupils who are functioning significantly below Age Related Expectations (ARE) upon entry.
- We would expect any prospective pupil to be able to be educated alongside other pupils within small groups, therefore the school would not expect to cater for pupils whose levels of behaviours that challenge are likely to put at risk the well-being of other pupils. However, it is recognised that pupils are likely to exhibit behaviours that may challenge resulting from their Autism and Learning Difficulties.

Referrals

1. When a referring agency or agencies approaches Oakham Shires School they will be dealt with promptly, courteously, and effectively.
2. Oakham Shires School will seek to establish the status of the enquiry, distinguishing between:
 - requests for information about referrals, fees and the availability of places
 - a request to ascertain in principle if the school would be able to consider a referral regarding a specific pupil
 - formal referral for a place
 - a request from a Special Education Needs Tribunal to establish if the school could provide a place that would meet a young person's needs
3. Where the enquiry is for information or to whether in principle Oakham Shires School could consider a referral, the school will respond in writing with the required information.
4. Where a formal referral is being made, the school will commence to gather the initial information. This will include ensuring that the referring agency or agencies has up-to-date information about Oakham Shires School, its fees, and the availability of places, that they are aware of the referral process and the provision currently being made for the prospective pupil.
 - a. Once all the required information has been provided, Oakham Shires School's admission panel will consider the referral and all supporting documentation. This will be done within 10 working days of the information being provided to Oakham Shires School. The admission panel can decide that: i) the school cannot meet this young person's needs ii) more information is required before a decision can be made iii) that it appears that Oakham Shires School can meet this person's needs.
 - b. Oakham Shires School will then complete its referral process by arranging for school to carry out a pre-admission assessment of the young person; this will be at Oakham Shires School's expense.
 - c. Oakham Shires School's pre-admission assessment will include meetings with the pupil, their parents or guardians and the service currently or most recently supporting the pupil. The assessment will build on the referral information and will cover the following areas:

SCHOOL POLICY: LOCAL POLICY FOLDER

- The young person's primary need is for a service catering for pupils with Autism/ADHD alongside learning difficulties and other additional needs
- Consider issues around significant risk and dangerous behaviour, in particular any history of arson, sexualised assault, self-harm and physical attacks on others.
- Particularly for young people who are aged 15 or more, evidence that previous placements have failed to meet the young person's needs and whether Oakham Shires School would have the time necessary to provide the stability and continuity required to meet their needs.
- Whether conflicts between the young person's family and providers have undermined previous placements, if so what arrangements have been made to resolve the underlying roots of the conflicts.

d. The report of this assessment will then be considered by the admissions panel who will decide whether or not to make a definite offer of a placement to the referring agencies. Oakham Shires School aims to complete its assessment and to decide on a definite placement offer within 10 working days of starting the process.

Admissions Process

1. Once the placement of a child/young person at Oakham Shires School has been agreed, then the admission process begins. This is a flexible process that is designed to support four outcomes:
 - firstly, led by the needs and wishes of the young person, enabling them to have the familiarity they require about the school to reduce any anxiety and to help them understand where they will be moving to
 - secondly, to support school to make the necessary arrangements to promote the child/young person's successful placement at school
 - thirdly, to support the family or guardians to develop the trust and confidence required for them to support and promote the placement
 - Lastly, to ensure that all administrative details of the placement have been agreed and that contracts have been agreed between the school, and the funding agencies.
2. The timing of each admission will be individually tailored to the needs for the young person but the school will actively work to promote timely placements and will seek to ensure that the admissions process is not unduly extended.
3. The admissions process may require staff to visit the child/young person where they are currently living/attending education; it will normally involve the young person visiting school unless it is agreed that this would not be in the best interests of the prospective pupil.

Contact information

For any placement enquires please contact any of the following;

James Taylor-Lawrence – Admissions Manager
07866 549513 – james.taylor-lawrence@ofgl.uk

We are part of the Outcomes First Group Family, by working together we will build incredible futures by empowering vulnerable children, young people and adults in the UK to be happy and make their way in the world

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**Acorn Education And Care
National Fostering Group
Options Autism**