

# PASTORAL CARE POLICY AND BOARDING PRINCIPLES

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Counter Bullying Policy
- Medical Care Policy

## **Introduction**

Oakham School is a community which places strong pastoral care at its heart. It is the golden thread that provides the framework by which we ensure that every individual is given the opportunity to fulfil their potential, develop their strengths and thrive in every aspect of their lives at Oakham. Through their time at Oakham, we aim to equip our young people with the skills required to be successful beyond Oakham and empower them to make a positive contribution to their lives and others.

The heart of Oakham pastoral care is based upon a House system. This system allows us to establish and identity a physical place in which every individual feels a sense of belonging and is valued with friendships made in Houses endure for years beyond Oakham.

Whilst nearly every member of the teaching staff is involved in the life of a House, Housemasters/ Housemistresses, Tutors and Senior Pastoral Assistants/Matrons play a central role in caring for the individual within the school; with clear guidance, support and training being given to staff to ensure they provide a safe and stimulating environment. As our young people progress through their Houses, they are challenged to take on increasing responsibility for the care and leadership of others.

Oakham is committed to promoting and safeguarding the physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing of its pupils, with a strong commitment to individualised care and early intervention for young people who are struggling. The pastoral care of our young people is everyone's responsibility and our well-established House systems, supported by an excellent Medical Centre which is staffed 24 hours a day, and our mental health practitioners enables our young people to receive the best possible pastoral care. To compliment that there are currently 34 staff, including Housemasters/ Housemistress and senior pastoral assistance/ matrons who are Youth Mental Health First Aid trained. We also have 15 members of teaching and support staff who are Mental Health First Aid trained.



We believe that parents must be included in and understand the world in which their child is growing up. We therefore insist on regular communication between tutors and parents and offer talks and discussions to help educate and support parents in understanding drug and alcohol use, sex and relationships and electronic communication amongst teenage pupils. This also allows us to listen to their concerns and develop our programmes accordingly.

### Aims of our Pastoral Care

- To look after the welfare of each of our young people considering the different needs at each stage of their education.
- To create an inclusive community which facilitates a strong sense of respect, celebrating the diversity within our community remaining mindful of each other's protected characteristics.
- Encourage pupils to take on leadership responsibilities via curriculum opportunities and to practise leadership within a supportive and safe environment.
- To create an environment where each pupil can work and relax in an environment free from intimidation, harassment and bullying.
- To help our young people uphold the four school values: Care, Courage, Contribution and Connection; making the experience of living and studying at Oakham one that enhances and enriches their life and that of others.
- To safeguard and promote the welfare, health and safety of each student in school and in activities outside school and ensure that she knows who she can approach if she has a problem or concern.
- To ensure that every student is known and valued through the Tutor and House system.
- To ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils is at the centre of school policies.
- To help staff and pupils understand that the health, safety and welfare of pupils is the responsibility of all members of the School.
- To demonstrate the commitment of Oakham School to the pastoral care of its pupils.
- Actively encourage the involvement of parents and guardians in Oakham School life. Links with parents are an indispensable part of the support and development of our pupils.

Policies which govern all of school areas have due regard for this overarching aim.



### **Pastoral/ Boarding principles**

Oakham is a school where ambition, enthusiasm, initiative and hard work are rewarded. Our Houses provide opportunities to support our core values of care, courage, contribution and connection. They are communities where the compassionate and consistent pastoral support enables pupils to develop as individuals whilst fostering a sense of acceptance, tolerance and respect. We endeavour to help pupils have an awareness of their environment and the wider world we live in with a genuine confidence to play a positive role in its future. This comes through giving opportunities to connect and contribute to the House, the School and the wider community. To lead and be led with courage and care, developing young people who are comfortable in leadership positions, happy to accept responsibility but not assume privilege as a result.