

RUGBY

Over 400 boys of all ages from 1st XV to U11 level regularly enjoy playing rugby across 25 teams on a traditional and well-balanced fixture list against some of the top rugby-playing schools in the country. The boys have the opportunity to play in a number of regional and national competitions where they have achieved considerable success. They have won the National Schools Cup three times, most recently in 2023.

There are opportunities to play rugby all year round, starting with the week-long pre-season training camp held at the end of August each year. This helps the teams to bond and provides invaluable training and match play before the start of the season.

Rugby sevens is played in the Spring Term and we have enjoyed considerable success at the Rosslyn Park National Schools Sevens Tournament; our U18 team were Runners-Up in the Vase Competition in 2022 and our U16 team won the Plate Competition in 2024.

In the Summer Term, pupils can participate in additional coaching sessions, to help them prepare for the following season. Our first-class facilities include 8 rugby pitches, including our famous Doncaster Close grounds.

Led by Director of Rugby Rupert Harden, who has extensive playing and coaching experience, our excellent coaching staff includes internationally renowned coach Glenn Gelderbloom (former Western Province and double European Cup winning Leicester Tigers centre). Our pupils have also enjoyed external professional coaching sessions from the likes of Martin Johnson, Graham Rowntree, Geordan Murphy and Austin Healey.

PERFORMANCE PATHWAYS

Many of our athletes are chosen for representative programmes at County, Regional and Premiership Rugby Academies and go on to win professional contracts. Just as importantly many boys continue to play rugby at university, which can for the most talented players still lead into professional sport.

Josh Lewis ('19) was named as Loughborough University Player of the Year in 2020, while Fred Davies ('17) captained Durham University in the 2021/22 season before embarking on a professional career with Bristol. Charlie Titcombe ('20) went to Loughborough University before being signed by Worcester Warriors.



Rugby sevens is an increasingly popular option for girls. The U14 team were Cup Runners-Up in the Rosslyn Park National Schools Sevens Tournament in 2024

EXCELLENT LINKS WITH PROFESSIONAL CLUBS

We collaborate and work with strength and conditioning coaches from Leicester Tigers and Northampton Saints to support those pupils who are selected for performance pathways. Oakham's current and former list of 1st XV Tigers Academy players is impressive, and they have helped Leicester Tigers U18 Academy win the Premiership title in three consecutive years (2018, 2019, and 2020).

Oakham School's association with the Tigers first began with Michael Aldred in 1896 and among the many alumni who have played for the club, the most prolific player was David Matthews ('54) who played a record 502 games for Leicester!

RUGBY ALUMNI

Alumni who have received national and international recognition include:

- Jack van Poortvliet ('19) (England), Sam Costelow ('19) (Wales), Hamish Watson ('10) (Scotland and British Lions), Lewis Moody ('96) (England and British Lions), and Tom Croft ('04) (England and British Lions).

Recent Old Oakhamians now playing Premiership Rugby include:

- Jacob Cusick ('21) (Leicester Tigers), Sam Wolstenholme ('17) (Wasps), Cameron Jordan ('18) (Gloucester), Sam Costelow ('19) (Scarlets), and Harry Glynn ('20) (La Rochelle).



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