

Oakham School

Oakham, United Kingdom



Where a 1584 market-town foundation meets Rutland Water sailing, early co-education, and a long-standing IB Diploma alongside A-levels.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	61/100
Academic outcomes	69/100
University placement	67/100
Prestige & heritage	72/100
Alumni network	12/100
Facilities	73/100
Transparency	61/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

What marks Oakham out is not ancient-foundation cachet alone, though a school founded in 1584 has every right to trade on continuity. The stronger point is structural: this is a co-educational boarding and day school for ages 11 to 18 that has long fused serious academic provision with a large, organised co-curricular life and a full boarding culture in a small English market town. The setting matters. Oakham sits in Rutland, not in a London commuter belt, and that gives it a more self-contained rhythm. For families who want the classic British boarding experience without the single-sex frame that still defines parts of the sector, Oakham has a clear niche. Its Anglican foundation and HMC membership place it squarely in the mainstream of established UK independents, while ISI accreditation gives the basic

external reassurance parents expect.

The academic proposition is stronger than the school’s gentle public tone might imply. Oakham offers a British curriculum and, crucially, an established IB Diploma alongside A-levels; that dual route still sets it apart from many traditional boarding schools that talk breadth but funnel most pupils into one sixth-form track. Recent destinations give a useful measure of outcomes: from **170 leavers** in 2024, **78%** went to top-100 universities, with 7 to Oxbridge and 45 to Russell Group institutions; Oxford took 4, Cambridge 3 and Loughborough 10. That is not a finishing-school profile. It is a school that sends a substantial block of pupils to demanding universities while keeping enough breadth in the sixth form for students whose strengths sit outside the narrowest academic lane. Parents who want transparent evidence of intellectual ambition, without the constant theatre of an exam factory, will find Oakham *reassuringly substantive*.

The other reason to shortlist it is that Oakham does not force a false choice between scholarship and participation. The school’s own language about a “Connected Curriculum” risks sounding branded, but the underlying proposition is sensible: academic life, co-curricular life and pastoral life are treated as linked rather than decorative add-ons. In practice, that matters most for students who need room to do several things well at once — the musician who also wants sport, the solid all-rounder who thrives in houses and activities, the sixth-former weighing IB against A-levels, the boarder who wants a community with *proper breadth* rather than a narrow high-pressure machine. Fees put it in the serious-buy category: an average annual day fee of **£31,137** and an average annual boarding fee of **£42,023**. That is expensive, but not outlandish for a full UK boarding school with this profile.

Oakham will suit pupils who are energetic, community-minded and ready to use a broad school properly. It is *not for families chasing pure hothouse intensity* or social-signalling first and education second. The student who does best here is the one who wants a traditional boarding framework without old-fashioned rigidity, values co-education as normal rather than novel, and will take advantage of a school where pastoral care, houses, activities and sixth-form choice all carry real weight. In a crowded boarding market, that combination still gives Oakham a *distinct, durable position*.

STRENGTHS

- Founded in 1584 with a long-established British boarding tradition
- Sixth form offers both A-Levels and the IB Diploma
- 78% of 2024 leavers progressed to top-100 universities
- World-class sport, music and drama provision (co-curricular scores 9.6, 9.6 and 9.3)
- Extensive town-wide estate with strong sports, arts and boarding facilities
- Full and flexible boarding options for a co-educational 11-18 community

TRADE-OFFS

- Boarding fees of £55,000 a year are at the premium end of the market
- Academically broad rather than ultra-selective, so less suited to families seeking the most rarefied hothouse
- Town-wide layout is less self-contained than a single enclosed campus
- Rural Rutland location is less accessible than metropolitan alternatives

ADMISSIONS

Oakham School is a boarding school in Oakham, Rutland, taking pupils from 11 to 18, so the obvious admission stages are at 11+, with further entry possible into the sixth form for A-level study. Beyond that, the school context provided here does not publish a detailed breakdown of entry points, timetable, or age-specific intake patterns. Nor does it state the format of assessment. Families should therefore expect a standard selective independent-school process, but the school's own published admissions materials would need checking for the exact combination of tests, school reports, references or interview.

The same caution applies to deadlines and financial support. No fixed application deadlines are given in the material supplied here, and no bursary or scholarship scheme is described, so it would be wrong to imply particulars. What can be said is that this is an HMC and ISI-accredited English boarding school with relatively modest class sizes and a 10:1 student-teacher ratio; for some families, that will matter as much as the mechanics of entry.

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_bacab013b2.