



Oakham Primary School

Welcome to our school.

Foundation stage - Meet the team



Mrs B Smith
EYFS Lead
Assistant Head

14 years teaching.
3 years in EYFS



Mrs H Reilley
Reception
teacher

13 years teaching
30 years EYFS



Mrs H
Learning support

4 years EYFS



Mrs Williams
Learning support

35 years EYFS



Mrs Langford
Learning support

23 years EYFS



Mrs Taylor
Learning support

18 years EYFS

Foundation stage- Meet the team



Mrs R Grainger
Nursery
Teacher

8 years teaching
in EYFS



Mrs A Ward
Learning support

29 years EYFS



Miss Whittingham
Learning support

19 years EYFS



Miss Bentley
Learning support

22 years EYFS



Mrs Currie
Learning support

15 years EYFS



What is the foundation stage? (Early Years)

The Foundation Stage is a **play-based, child-centred stage of learning**. Rather than formal lessons, children learn through **exploration, play, and hands-on experiences**.

It focuses on developing the **whole child** – not just academic skills, but also social, emotional, and physical development.

Why is it so important?

The Foundation Stage:

Builds **confidence and independence**

Develops **communication and social skills**

Creates a **strong base for future learning in school**

Encourages children to become **curious, motivated learners**

The Foundation Stage is all about helping young children **learn through play, grow in confidence, and develop essential life and learning skills** in a safe, nurturing environment.





Learning is divided into **7 key areas**:

Prime Areas (most important first)

These build the foundations for all learning:

Communication and Language – speaking, listening, understanding

Physical Development – movement, coordination, health

Personal, Social and Emotional Development – confidence, friendships, managing feelings

Specific Areas

These build on the prime areas:

Literacy – early reading and writing

Mathematics – numbers, counting, shapes, problem-solving

Understanding the World – learning about people, places, nature, technology

Expressive Arts and Design – creativity through art, music, role-play





How do children learn?

Children learn best through:

- Play and exploration**
- Active, hands-on experiences**
- Following their interests**
- Working and playing with others**

Adults (teachers and practitioners) support learning by:

- Asking questions
- Introducing new ideas
- Observing progress and planning next steps

How is progress checked?

Observe children regularly during play and activities

Keep records of what children can do

Share updates with parents

At the end of Reception, children complete the **EYFS Profile**, which gives a summary of their development which will be reported to you in an end of year report. There will also be key worker meetings for you to attend to be kept up to date with your child's progress.





Early Reading, Writing and Maths

Phonics and Reading

Daily phonics sessions and listening groups in nursery help children learn letter sounds and blend words to develop early reading skills.

Writing Development

Writing begins with mark-making and fine motor skill development, progressing to letter formation and simple words.

Hands-On Maths Learning

Maths is taught through practical activities focusing on counting, shapes, patterns, and problem-solving.

Play-Based Exploration

Foundation stage introduces skills informally through play, talk, and exploration to help our children to foster a love of learning which will then hopefully stay with them.





What is the RBA in the Foundation Stage?

The **RBA (Reception Baseline Assessment)** is a short, one-to-one activity that takes place when children first start **Reception year** (usually within the first 6 weeks).

It helps teachers understand **what your child can already do** when they begin school.

In short, The RBA is a **short, informal assessment** that helps teachers understand your child's starting point so they can support their learning in the best possible way.

What does the RBA involve?

The RBA is:

Carried out **one-to-one with the teacher or practitioner**

Done through **simple, practical activities**, not formal tests

Usually takes about **15–20 minutes per child**

Your child might be asked to:

Look at pictures and talk about them

Count or recognise numbers

Listen carefully and follow simple instructions

Show early language and thinking skills

It is **not a test** and children won't even realise they are being assessed.

It is designed to feel like: A **game, conversation, a normal classroom activity**. There is **no pressure**, and children cannot “pass” or “fail”.



Working Together for Your Child's Journey



At our school, we believe that **strong partnerships between home and school** are essential. Our aim is to **work closely with you** to support your child not just this year, but throughout their **lifelong learning journey at Oakham and sometimes even beyond that**.

We know that you are your child's **first and most important teacher**, and by working together, we can give your child the best possible start and ongoing support as they grow, learn, and develop.

How We Communicate with You

We offer a variety of ways to keep you informed, involved, and supported:

Daily Communication

Staff are **available at drop-off and collection times** for quick conversations

This is a great chance to share small updates, ask questions, or pass on information

We value these daily connections as an important part of building relationships.

Key Worker Meetings

You will have opportunities to meet with your child's **key worker or teacher throughout the year**

These meetings allow us to:

Share your child's progress

Talk about strengths and next steps

Discuss how we can work together to support learning at home and in school

Working Together for Your Child's Journey



School App

Our school app is an important tool for communication
We use it to share:

Updates and reminders

Termly key dates and events

Important announcements

This helps ensure you always have access to the latest information. – We are a paperless school.

School Website

Our school website provides a window into your child's classroom

We regularly share updates about:

What the children are learning

Class activities and experiences

Photos and examples of learning

Instagram

This helps you understand what your child is doing in school and gives you opportunities to talk about and extend their learning at home.

Uniform



Named Belongings Importance

Children should bring named items like water bottles and book bags to ensure lost items are returned easily.

Practical Clothing and PE Kits

Comfortable, practical clothing with easy fastenings supports independence; PE kits stay at school unless advised otherwise. – No Jewelry. Any religious jewelry that can not be removed will be covered with a sweat band.



Donation rail in the hall at the end of the meeting.

Uniform



This is the same with coats. Please do not send your child with their best coats to nursery as we are always inside and outside, painting, playing with mud, water, slime, etc

Please ensure everything is labelled with your child's name and class.

Attendance



The Importance of Regular Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for your child's learning and development, particularly in the early years. Every day in school provides valuable opportunities for children to build friendships, develop confidence, and progress in their learning through play and structured activities.

Our Expectations

By choosing our setting for your child, you are making a commitment to their education. In return, we expect families to support this commitment by ensuring children attend regularly and on time.

Consistency helps children to:

Settle into routines

Feel secure and confident

Build strong relationships with staff and peers

Make steady progress in their learning





Nursery Places and Attendance

We are fortunate to have a high demand for places in our nursery, and currently have a waiting list.

Because of this:

- Regular attendance is very important

- Poor or irregular attendance may result in your child's place being reviewed

- In some cases, this could mean losing your child's place, so that it can be offered to another family waiting for a space

Working Together

We understand that there may occasionally be genuine reasons for absence. If this happens, we ask that you:

- Inform the school as soon as possible

- Keep open communication with us so we can support you

- Our goal is to work with you to ensure your child has the best possible start, and regular attendance plays a key role in this.



Squirrels Club

We operate a breakfast and after school club at Oakham, with a range of activities, games and crafts that is led by Oakham staff.

Opening hours: 7:40am to 8:45 am
3:30pm to 6:00pm

Sessional charges: Breakfast club £6.50 per child
After school club £10.00 per child

Bookings and payments for Squirrels club should be made via ParentPay.

Children should be collected by 6:00pm prompt. For late collection a charge of £5 per child per 15 minutes will be applied.

If you have any queries, please contact Miss Stretton, the school office or call the Squirrels mobile on 07376 481 659.



School Meals

When your child begins with us, school meals are booked online using ParentPay.

Getting Started

You will receive an email with instructions on how to set up your ParentPay account

This will guide you through logging in and booking meals for your child

Booking Meals

All school meals must be booked before 8:00am on the day

This allows the kitchen to prepare the correct number of meals for the children

Cost of Meals

School meals are free for all Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children

Although they are free for parents, they are not free for the school

It is therefore important that meals are booked and managed carefully

Changes and Cancellations

If your child's plans change:

If they have a school meal booked but decide to bring a packed lunch instead, you must:

Cancel or change the meal via ParentPay, or let your child's teacher know in advance

If your child has an appointment or will not be in school for lunch, please also cancel the meal on ParentPay, or Inform the school/teacher





Supporting Learning at Home

Your child learns best when home and school work together. There are many simple and enjoyable ways you can support your child's learning as part of everyday life.

Talk and Listen

Talk to your child as much as possible throughout the day

Ask questions like "What do you think?" or "Why did that happen?"

Encourage them to explain their ideas and feelings

This helps develop language, confidence, and thinking skills



Share Books Together

Read stories every day (even short ones)

Talk about the pictures and characters

Let your child join in with repeated phrases or retell the story. This builds early reading skills and a love of books

Practise Early Maths

Count objects (toys, steps, snacks)

Talk about numbers, shapes, and patterns

Use everyday moments like cooking or shopping

This helps children understand **numbers and problem-solving**

Encourage Play and Creativity

Provide opportunities for:

Drawing and painting

Building with blocks or Lego

Role play (e.g. shops, home corner, dressing up)

Play helps develop **imagination, social skills, and creativity**

Explore the World

Spend time outdoors

Talk about nature, weather, and seasons

Visit parks, shops, or local places

This builds **curiosity and understanding of the world**

Support Independence

Encourage your child to:

Dress themselves

Tidy up toys

Try new things

This builds **confidence and resilience**



Most Importantly...

Praise your child's efforts, not just results

Make learning **fun and relaxed**

Follow your child's **interests**



Thank you for taking the time to attend this meeting. We really value your support and involvement – it makes such a difference to your child's experience and success in school.

It has been wonderful to meet you, and we are truly excited to begin this journey together.



We are very much looking forward to getting to know your wonderful children – their personalities, interests, and unique strengths. It is a privilege to be part of their early learning journey, and we are committed to providing a happy, caring, and inspiring environment where they can grow and thrive.

We can't wait to see the progress they will make and all the special moments we will share along the way.

“The first five
years have so
much to do with
how the next 80
turn out.”

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ounceofprevention.org

- Bill Gates Sr., Co-Chair
of the Bill and Melinda
Gates Foundation