

Access Policy for Oakham School Archives

1 INTRODUCTION

The Oakham School Archives, hereafter Archives, is located in The Barber Rooms, College House. It derives its authority to collect, preserve and make available archives from this policy statement, adopted formally by the Trustees of Oakham School. The Archives were officially set up in 2010. Beforehand, there was no official service and archiving and staff volunteers on an ad hoc basis undertook collecting. An official archive was set up to ensure proper security of the material as well as enabling collecting of material from Old Oakhamians and other sources. Peter Lawson, OO and Chairman of Trustees, provided considerable support.

Previous volunteers made up of ex members of staff and Old Oakhamians including Jack Barber, Terence Treanor, Brian Needham, Roger Blackmore, Nigel Webb, Kate Williamson, Roger Anderson, and Michael Allbrook.

The Archives currently holds a wide variety of materials relating to the history of Oakham School dating from the 16th Century.

This policy has been created in order to update the previous collections policy, but additionally, it will lay out future collecting plans, enshrine the values to which the archive is committed to and highlight the method of working within the archive.

2 LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

The archives adhere to the following statutory framework for accessing of information:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (henceforth GDPR) 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000 (amending the text of the Public Records Act 1958/1967)
- Equality Act 2010
- The Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978
- The Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

The archives will also adhere to standards of record keeping and access upheld within the school.

3 FINDING AIDS

The archive is currently improving its catalogue and regrettably for the time being, the catalogue is only searchable by the archivist and assistant archivist.

It is expected that in the future, an online version of the catalogue will be created and placed online for the general public and the school community to use for themselves.

3.1 REQUESTING ITEMS TO VIEW

As a result of the restricted nature of the archive's catalogue, it is recommended that any potential reader should contact the archives with their area of interest. The archive staff will then search the catalogue and suggest items to the reader that may be of interest to their work.

We aim to have all items requested ready for a visitor's arrival.

4 ON SITE ACCESS

We welcome readers to our archive and encourage visitation for certain classifications of material. The archives are based on the first floor of College House (previously the sanatorium) which is beyond the Memorial Chapel from the main school gate in Market Square. Unfortunately, the archive is only accessible by stairs at present.

We are free of charge to visit.

Visits to the archive will be by appointment only, made in advance. However, we will endeavour to accommodate users who have not made appointments and who arrive during our opening hours.

No archival material may be viewed by the public or members of the school community without the presence of the archivist or assistant archivist. Staff are present in the archives during the times stated in the opening hours (see 4.1). This is for preservation and catalogue purposes.

4.1 OPENING HOURS

The archives are currently open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays 9am – 4pm.

4.2 ADMISSION

Before a visitor's arrival to the archive, the archivist will inform the school's reception of a reader's expected visit.

On arrival, please report to the reception in Chapel Close where guests may need to sign in and may be issued with a visitor's badge. A member of the archive's team will come to greet you and to guide you to the archives.

On departure, guests will need to ensure that any visitor badges are returned to reception and that they sign out accordingly.

4.3 READING ROOM FACILITIES

Visitors to the archive can expect friendly, helpful, and knowledgeable staff, who will introduce both new and experienced archive users to the reading room rules (see 4.4). Advice and guidance will be given on how to handle documents on a case by case basis.

Visitors can make subsequent requests for material when they visit. Additional material will be given to guests incrementally after they have finished consulting their original request material.

A gender neutral toilet is available on site for visitors on the same floor as the archive.

4.4 HANDLING AND USING ITEMS

When visiting the archives, the following rules will apply:

- Laptops and cameras are allowed provided that they are on silent with any flash capabilities turned off.
- Permission must be sought before taking any photographs of material.
- Bags and coats are to be kept away from working areas.
- Food and drink is strictly prohibited when viewing the documents.
- Only pencils (preferably 2b) can be used to make manuscript notes. No pens, tippex, erasers, gel pens or coloured pencils will be permitted owing to the risks posed to the documents.

When handling documents, the following rules will apply:

- Readers must have clean and dry hands before handling any item.
- If gloves are provided by the archivist, readers must wear them for the collections or items highlighted. This is particularly important for photographic and metallic material.
- No items should be leaned upon, creased in order to mark the page, nor should a reader lick their fingers to turn any page. Archival weights will be provided for readers' when viewing material.
- No item should be removed from any protective packaging unless done so by the archivist or assistant archivist.
- No tracing of the documents is allowed.
- All items should be treated with respect and so handled a little as possible and with great care.
- If readers notice any defects or issues with the material, they are expected to alert a member of the archive staff immediately.

During a visit, we welcome any and all questions that visitors have.

5 REMOTE ACCESS

We recognise that we have a diverse readership from all around the world and that sometimes it is not practical or easy for visitors to visit to the archives in person. We will endeavour to accommodate remote requests for material as best as we can with the archive's available resources.

We encourage all readers who are not able to come to the archives in person to contact the archives (see section 10) with their request of material or research area. From there, the archive staff will undertake searches of our catalogue (whilst it remains restricted) and limited research to fulfil the request.

Items may be able to be digitised by scanning or photography and sent to readers electronically providing that the material is in a suitable conservation condition and that the archives have access to physical resources which will allow for the safe digitising of documents concerned.

5.1 ENQUIRIES

During the school's term time, the archives aims to respond to any enquiries received by telephone, email, letter or social media, with at least an acknowledgment within 5 working day.

During the school's holiday period, the archives is open sporadically and therefore no guarantee can be given as to response times for enquiries.

Oakham School's term time dates can be found through this url:
<https://www.oakham.rutland.sch.uk/Term-Dates>.

6 ONLINE ACCESS

At present, we regret that we have no online catalogue for readers to search at their leisure. This is a goal that the archives are currently working to achieve.

We do, however, make material available through several online channels including our archives blog and twitter page. Material published on line is restricted by copyright laws, data protection rules and by physical resources constraints.

7 RESTRICTIONS

Items may be restricted for public access for a variety of reasons. Should an item that a reader requires be affected by any of the factors listed below, then archive staff will endeavour to explain the reasoning for the restriction and, if appropriate, suggest alternative material to the reader.

Legislative Reason

As outlined in section 2, the archive abides by several key pieces of legislation which may restrict the accessibility of documents. Key pieces of legislation include the Data Protection Act 1998, GDPR 2018 and the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

The majority of our collection focuses upon children under the age of 18, and therefore access may be refused on the grounds of data and child protection. Consequently, all items from the previous 8 years are closed to public access.

Material which contains medical records will be closed for 100 years after the individual's death.

Items considered to contain sensitive or personal data may be completely restricted or made available in a limited format, depending upon their severity. This decision will be made by the archivist who will issue material with the necessary restrictions as well as providing a full explanation to the reader behind the decision.

Personal information about employees and students (for example birth dates or personal lives), may be restricted to 80 since leaving the school or 100 years from their date of birth.

Request for information for living individuals will be evaluated by the archives staff and sensitive or personal data may be redacted from information provided to the readers unless permission is gained from the living individual concerned by the researcher.

General administration, legal or financial files have a 30 year since creation restriction upon them.

Any items of concern will be discussed by the archives team and the data protection controller at the school.

Preservation reasons

Some items may be too fragile to be handled or to be scanned for remote access. The decision as to the accessibility of such material will be made by the archivist. If the reader is viewing material in person, the archives staff will ensure that the visitor is confident and trained to handle the material correctly.

Depositor's wishes

Some material donated to the archives may be restricted upon its acquisition by the wishes of the donor. Although we do stipulate on our acquisition agreement forms that all material will be available for public consultation, occasionally this is denied and consequently, such wishes will be respected.

Uncatalogued material

Any material which is uncatalogued may be restricted for public access due to the need to investigate the material for any copyright or data protection concerns.

7.1 REPRODUCTION AND COPYRIGHT

All reproduction of material will be done so in accordance with copyright law. Copyright law exists to protect the owner's creative rights and applies to both digital and physical reproduction of material.

The following points will be considered before any reproduction rights will be granted:

- The type of material
- The form of reproducing the document
- The purpose of copying
- Percentage of the original needed

Items reproduced for private study, criticism/review, and non-commercial research fall under exemptions to UK copyright law.

If copyright permission is needed to be obtain for use of the material which does not fall in the categories above, then it is the researcher's responsibility to obtain the relevant permission from the copyright holders before publishing or quoting material obtained from the Archive. Oakham School will not be held responsible for any breach of law in this respect.

7.1.1 Photography

Photographing material within the archives will be considered on a case by case basis.

When permitted, the taking of photographs in the archives is free of charge. No flash is to be used at any time.

7.1.2 Photocopying and Digital Scanning

Photocopying of material will be strictly limited depending upon the necessity of the reader. Whenever possible, items will be digitally scanned and sent to readers for their use via email or by other transfer facilities if the size of the material is too large for the use of email. This is to help minimise any damage, which may be caused to the document through repeatedly scanning items.

7.1.3 Refusal

Unfortunately, at this time, the archives are unable to scan digitally the following items:

- Maps and plans
- Whole school or staff photographs,
- Art work
- Items too large for an A3 scanner
- Fragile books

Refusal for reproducing items may rest on preservation, copyright or data protection concerns.

8 OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

The archive is keenly involved within outreach and educational activities within the school and wider community.

8.1 EDUCATION

We aim to collaborate with teaching staff to assist in the lesson materials on offer for pupils. In addition, we aim to help in the creation of educational materials for use within the classroom.

8.2 RESEARCH

We aim to support all staff, pupils and members of the public who wish to use the archives for research purposes.

8.3 EXHIBITIONS

The archives will prepare and exhibit exciting displays around the school of its archival material. When possible, the archive is willing to loan material out to external bodies for use within exhibitions and displays. Loans are subject to the agreement of preservation, safety and legislative concerns.

In the future, the archive hopes to develop an online exhibition platform in which to make exciting and different ways of exhibiting material, as well as increasing the potential audience for our displays.

We will produce displays for key school events such as Speech Day or Old Oakhamian dinners.

8.4 SOCIAL MEDIA/ ONLINE

The archives will continue to expand its online presence through promoting its material and the school's history on its blog and twitter page.

Our website and all of our online platforms will be maintained and kept up to date.

8.5 MEDIA

We will collaborate with our press and marketing office to assist all enquiries from external media companies.

8.6 ALUMNI

We aim to connect with the school's alumni as much as possible be it online or in person. We work closely with our colleagues in the School's Foundation Office in order to build and maintain alumni relationships and to provide access to archival material.

9 CUSTOMER CARE

We aim to provide an excellent, friendly and knowledgeable service to all of our readers. We welcome any feedback or suggestions that readers wish to make.

10 CONTACT

For any information or questions that you may have, you can contact the archives through the mediums below:

E: ArchivesUser@oakham.rutland.sch.uk

A: Oakham School Archives

The Barraclough

Ashwell Road

Oakham

Rutland

LE15 6QG

T: 01572 758 608

Or contact the archivist directly by emailing:

cvm@oakham.rutland.sch.uk

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