



*Remarkable education. Created for you.*



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**2024**

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**PREPARATORY PROSPECTUS**  
Oakley House Plumstead

## FROM OUR PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Oakley House School is well-known for the excellent education it offers children who learn differently. It is our privilege to take children under our wing as they grapple with learning in one form or another. Since each child presents with unique strengths and challenges, we develop a dynamic and specialised programme that allows for flexibility within the CAPS curriculum that we follow.

Our mission statement, *'To provide a happy and nurturing environment which supports all learners in achieving their full potential and creates opportunities for all in the Oakley House Preparatory School community to grow,'* is what we strive for daily. Our multidisciplinary team of specialists work closely with us as we consider each learner's strengths and challenges regularly. The Individualised Education Plan (IEP), which is drawn up for each learner, is used as a guide for the team in assisting learners as they strive to reach their true learning potential.

With the impact that the pandemic had on education, we can proudly say that we were flexible and creative in our response to the needs of our learners during that time. Technology now plays an integral part in the teaching and learning at Oakley House Preparatory School and exciting adjustments have been made to our programme. We are continuously striving to keep abreast with the educational needs of our learners in a dynamic and challenging 21<sup>st</sup> Century, as we prioritise educating ourselves as educators. As Charles Darwin said: *'It is not the strongest of species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change.'*

If you are seeking alternative schooling for your child and the above resonates with you, do read on and then make an appointment to see me. I look forward to engaging with you!



Sandra Wiesner  
PREPARATORY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

“ We are excited about the journey that we will take with each learner and family this year. We love what we do and would welcome a visit from any family who is concerned about their child's learning and development. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or the school office, should you have any queries.

[swiesner@oakleyhouse.co.za](mailto:swiesner@oakleyhouse.co.za)



## PREPARATORY SCHOOL PROSPECTUS 2024

**Oakley House is an independent inclusive school catering for learners who struggle to achieve their potential in a mainstream classroom.**

We aim to offer sympathetic help to learners whose learning difficulties affect their ability to achieve their potential. Our priority is to restore confidence and to develop a positive attitude to learning by providing specialised teaching within an atmosphere of support and understanding for each learner's specific needs.

Our focus is the following:

- To rebuild self esteem
- To nurture self-confidence
- To foster an enjoyment of learning through deep engagement
- To foster motivation for learning
- To provide a complete education within a mainstream-like context
- To help each learner reach his or her own goals
- To identify and reach potential in strengths
- To strengthen areas of weaknesses
- To stretch without over-stretching
- To return learners to mainstream schooling when ready

### **CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE**

Applicants should be of average ability, or above, and have an assessment from an Educational Psychologist indicating that they have learning difficulties. As a small specialist school with a very limited number of places, we carefully assess the suitability of each learner before making a decision as to whether we can offer a place. Oakley House will not offer any learner a place unless the staff feels confident that they can help him or her. Oakley House will not accept learners who have emotional or behavioural problems which might seriously inhibit their progress or compromise the learning of others.

## ASSESSMENTS REQUIRED BEFORE ENROLMENT

Apart from the Psycho-Educational assessment (to determine potential), it may also be necessary for a learner to undergo a battery of scholastic assessments (to determine actual functioning) during a period of observation. If your child has had any specialist assessments within the last 12 months, copies of the written reports are required, as well as recent school reports. The results of these assessments will determine the starting point of any individual programmes.

## CURRICULUM

Our curriculum provides a specialised, multi-sensory approach with an emphasis on basic literacy and numeracy skills combined with access to the full National Curriculum. To ensure our learners receive an enriching school experience, the learning areas of Art, Music, Drama and Physical Education form part of our weekly timetable. A Social Skills programme and a Digital Literacy programme are also embedded into the curriculum across the grades.

### Assessment

We assess our learners formally, on a regular basis, to ensure that they are learning at their grade level according to the National Curriculum (CAPS). We do not assess unnecessarily, keeping in mind that many of our learners are highly anxious when assessed. Foundation Phase learners are assessed once a term in a low-key fashion with no home preparation required. The Intermediate Phase learners are assessed regularly in an informal manner and they are also required to prepare for formal assessments throughout the year. The Grade 6 learners write exams in the second and fourth terms. Mark-based academic reports are written for each learner in the Foundation Phase and Intermediate phase (including DEN) in the second and fourth terms. Refer to the ALP Prospectus for a better understanding of how ALP learners are assessed.

### Thinking Skills

To assist our learners in successful learning, it is vital that we offer them tools for thinking. We are a member of Thinking Schools South Africa (TSSA) and we partner with them in our quest to add tools to each child's "toolbox". The eight Thinking Maps, and De Bono's Thinking Hats (Thinking Acorns) and a selection of Harvard's Visible Thinking Routines are embedded deep into our learning programme.

### Literacy Programme

We offer an intensive literacy programme that underpins the skills required for our learners to achieve the standards set in CAPS. Our learners are streamed according to their ability in small groups as we work to strengthen their literacy skills. We use the THRASS phonics programme as the basis of our programme and extensively use the Rave-O programme in the Foundation Phase.

### Mathematics

We make full use of the *NumberSense* approach to teaching Mathematics. Whilst upholding the standards set out in CAPS, we firmly believe





that the *NumberSense* programme teaches our learners to think more deeply about mathematical concepts. We do, however, make our own adjustments to the programme according to required remedial practices. Our learners are streamed according to ability in small groups for the daily learning of Mathematics.

### **Project Based Learning (PBL)**

We believe passionately that, if our learners are fully engaged in authentic learning, they will not only enjoy the learning experience, but it will be far more meaningful for them. It is for this reason that we follow the Project Based Learning approach. The required key knowledge, skills and concepts in the *Content Subjects* in the Intermediate Phase, and *Life Skills* in the Foundation Phase, are learned through this approach. Our learners also have the opportunity to practise what we call *Success Skills* throughout the life of a project. These skills are also referred to as 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and are important soft skills for our learners to acquire in today's world.

### **INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMMES OF LEARNING**

Our learners are carefully assessed and individual literacy, numeracy, perceptual, social, emotional, and/or behaviour goals are drawn up, appropriate to each learner's specific needs. These goals are written up in an *Individualised Education Plan (IEP)* for each learner, accompanied by specific strategies to achieve them. Progress is closely monitored and programmes are regularly reviewed.

### **SEPARATE STREAMS**

#### **Amended Learning Programme (ALP)**

For those learners who struggle to learn at the pace of the curriculum, we offer an alternative learning stream called the *Amended Learning Programme (ALP)*. It is in this programme that learners are offered the opportunity to learn at their own pace, and in their style, whilst still following the national curriculum. This stream falls under the *Alternative Stream* of our whole School, allowing these learners to continue in the ALP programme as they proceed to the High School. For more information, please refer to the Alternative Stream on our School webpage.

## Autism Class

DEN (Development Education and Neurodiversity) is a highly specialised class that allows for learners on the *autism spectrum*, who are struggling in our small classes, to flourish in an environment where they feel safe and where their sensory needs are met with a greater level of success. For further information, please refer to DEN on our webpage.

## SPECIALISED THERAPY

Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Counselling, on an individual basis or in small groups, will be arranged for those learners who need it. Therapists consult for Oakley House School in their private capacity and there is therefore an extra cost to parents for these therapies.

Remedial therapy is provided for those learners needing intensive small group instruction and extra support. Most therapy sessions take place at the school during the school day.

Class teachers and therapists work closely together to ensure continuity is maintained. Therapists are part of our multidisciplinary team and they are involved in all case discussions and feedback meetings with relevant parents.

## SPECIALIST STAFF

All staff are fully qualified in their own field and experienced in teaching learners with learning difficulties. At Oakley House School every teacher's objective is to remedy each learner's challenges as far as they can whilst giving them a confident enjoyment of learning.

## EXTRA MURAL ACTIVITIES

Oakley House Plumstead Preparatory offers a variety of extra mural activities in the afternoons, for example: Soccer · Cricket · Karate · Dancing · Coding Club · Lego Club · Arts & Crafts · Drama Club · Cooking Club · Experibuddies · Yoga · Rugga Roots · Games Club.

## SMALLER CLASSES

Small classes ensures individual attention and a caring and supportive environment.

A ratio of 1:8 in the DEN class and 1:10 in Grades 1 to 6 and the ALP classes, enables teachers to work towards developing each learner's strengths as well as guiding them to use compensatory strategies to overcome areas of weakness.

## HOMEWORK

Homework reinforces the work done in class, it alerts the teacher to work that is not fully understood and it teaches independence and self-discipline. It is an important part of educating the whole child. Parents are required to supervise and assist their child wherever necessary. It is essential that reading takes place each evening and we issue specific guidelines to parents on how to listen to reading. Reading and workbooks must return to school each morning so that follow-up can take place. The homework diary is a valuable means of two-way communication between parent and teacher and must be checked for messages on a daily basis.

## MEDICATION

The normal procedure is for any necessary medication to be given by parents at home. However, arrangements can be made for special circumstances to prevail – as in the administering of Ritalin, for example. Where it is agreed that medication is kept and administered at Oakley House School, a relating schedule will be completed and signed by the administering staff member.

## UNIFORM

Oakley House School learners wear a comfortable uniform which may be purchased from the school's office and online through *Pitt Promotions* (<https://pittpromotions.com>).

## SNACKS AND LUNCHES

We believe that a child's diet has a direct influence on his or her ability to concentrate effectively.

Teachers carefully monitor the lunch boxes to ensure that none of the following is brought to school:

- Sandwich fillings with too much sugar e.g. jams, chocolate spread.
- Sweets, cakes, chips, etc.
- Fizzy drinks, Oros, flavoured milk, juice, etc.

Our learners are only allowed to drink water at school and parents are required to provide a labelled water bottle for this purpose. Exceptions to the above may be made for birthday celebrations, but this must be prearranged and will be at the teacher's discretion.



## DISCIPLINE

It is essential that all learners at Oakley House School are made aware of the importance of good, well-mannered behaviour. Oakley House School has a Code of Conduct and an incentive/encouragement scheme and every effort is made to reinforce whatever school rules are in place at the time.

Generally speaking, we believe that action and reminders to prevent poor behaviour are much more desirable and effective than a stream of punishments. The learners are always encouraged to take ownership of their behaviour and to help devise solutions to any problems that arise.

## STATIONERY

Parents are required to provide their child's personal stationery items, for example pens, pencils, colouring pencils, notebooks, files, etc., as well as all textbooks and workbooks required in the grade. A stationery list is available on enrolment. A separate photocopying levy is payable each year and this goes towards costs of individual printing and the running of the photocopy machines.



### SCHOOL TERM CALENDAR

1 <sup>st</sup> TERM	2 <sup>nd</sup> TERM	3 <sup>rd</sup> TERM	4 <sup>th</sup> TERM
18 January - 20 March	9 April - 14 June	9 July - 19 September	8 October - 5 December

### SCHOOL HOURS

Grades 1-2, F DEN and F ALP	Grade 3	Grades 4-6, I DEN and I ALP
Monday to Friday 08h00 - 13h00	Monday to Thursday 08h00 - 14h30 Friday 08h00 - 13h00	Monday to Thursday 07h50 - 14h30 Friday 07h50 - 13h30

The school gates open at 07h15 daily. There is an FP and IP Aftercare facility which ends promptly at 16h30.

### NOTICE PERIOD

Should parents wish to withdraw their child from Oakley House School, written notice must be given not later than the first week of their child's proposed final term, failing which the fees for the following term will be payable in full, whether or not their child returns to school.

*We reserve the right to make amendments to the prospectus from time to time as and when the need arises.*





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**PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

PLUMSTEAD – 99 Main Road, Plumstead 7800 • 021 762 7204 • [infoprep@oakleyhouse.co.za](mailto:infoprep@oakleyhouse.co.za)