

Back to School, Forward with Purpose: Why the First Day Matters More than Ever

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The academic journey of a child is marked by several milestones and the first day of the year is always special. The quiet bravery of a young child letting go of a parent's hand, the excitement of older students eager to create new memories, and the teary yet proud smiles of parents reassured they've made the right choice. All moments that become powerful memories that forge the connect between school and students.



Students walk into a vibrant welcome on their first day back to school, filled with bubbles, banners, and boundless excitement for a new academic journey

At **Oakridge International School, Gachibowli**, the recent “Back to School” event was more than just a return to classrooms. It was an experience carefully designed to leave a mark on hearts. Crafted with emotion and intention, it wasn’t simply a beginning; it was a moment of belonging.

“The warm welcome gesture on reopening day is a reiteration of our belief that every student thrives best in a safe and nurturing environment. A happy start is the springboard to success, and we stand united to ensure that Oakridgers receive the best academic experience curated with focus, commitment, and care,” shares **Dipika Rao, Principal, Oakridge Gachibowli**.

Every learner, from the youngest to the oldest, was welcomed into an environment thoughtfully curated to match their age-appropriate interests. For early years students, the experience was vibrant, warm, and emotionally grounding, the kind that makes children feel instantly safe and offers a sense of peace and serenity.

According to **Jemima Victoria**, Early Years Teacher, *“For our little ones, this wasn’t just a school day; it was the beginning of a magical journey filled with colour, laughter, and wonder. A warm, exciting welcome like this energises and sets the tone for an action filled year ahead.”*

For older students, the experience took a different shape, more reflective, more thought-provoking, and aligned to their growing sense of identity and purpose. There was a greater focus on AI being a part of their lives and the impact of a positive engagement with it to support their learning.

Designing Transitions That Matter

The beginning of the academic year brings renewed energy and purpose. **Esheita Gupta, MYP Coordinator**, noted, *“A new year offers every student the chance to set meaningful goals, adopt positive habits, and embrace the journey ahead with curiosity and determination. At Oakridge Gachibowli, we are committed to*

guiding and supporting our young learners through this important chapter.”

The return to school is a crucial transition for students and parents. It reintroduces routines and structure that help children thrive emotionally and intellectually. Predictable rhythms build security, while school environments nurture social skills essential for personal growth. **Shreya Sangam**, a pre-nursery parent, shared, *“The welcome we received was magical, warm, thoughtful, and so well-planned. I’ve never seen my child this engaged on the first day of school. The environment feels so open and friendly, I truly believe every child would feel right at home.”*

Educators at Oakridge play a central role as facilitators, focused on building trust before diving into academics, and they are not alone in this journey. The parents seek active involvement in their child’s education, and the school welcome this partnership. Oakridge Gachibowli believes parents’ role is vital, especially during the transition into a new school year.

In a rapidly changing world shaped by technology and global shifts, the way children are welcomed into school sets the tone for the year that follows. At Oakridge Gachibowli, learning begins the moment a child steps through the doors, with wonder, courage, and confidence that they are in a safe space where they will be nurtured, challenged, and celebrated.

