



‘It has done wonders for our children’: Hannah and Shaun have been impressed with the all-round support Thorpe Acre Infant School has given their family

A justified first impression

Finding the right school for your child can be a daunting task but Hannah and Shaun believe they were particularly fortunate that they happened to live in the catchment area for Thorpe Acre Infant School, which they had no hesitation in making their preferred choice. “We didn’t know anything about it, or anyone whose children had been there but we were struck by how welcoming everyone was, how clean, bright and tidy it appeared and how well everything seemed to be organised,” says Hannah. “Our first impressions have been more than justified - it has done wonders for our children.”

**Hannah and Shaun
Murphy live in
Loughborough with
their four children.
Ryan is eight, Evelyn
seven, George five and
Lillian is two years old.**



A potential problem addressed and overcome

The first potential hurdle which Hannah and Shaun had to face was that Ryan, who suffers from ADHD, could often be something of a handful, disruptive in class and lacking concentration. Rather than writing him off as a naughty child, the school has been proactive not only in putting in extra measures to support his learning but in helping to get him the medical help which has made a big difference. "The staff never said they couldn't cope with him; on the contrary, they recognised that Ryan wasn't being deliberately difficult and that intervention was needed," Hannah explains. "The Head pushed our consultant for a diagnosis so that Ryan could access the appropriate medication and without her support Ryan would probably have been signed off and left without help. The school also kept in regular touch with us so that we could work together to make sure everything stayed on track, and his teachers took the trouble to speak to staff when he transferred to the Junior School so that they knew what to expect. All in all, it was very comforting to have that extra level of support."

Commitment

It was when Evelyn started at Thorpe Acre that Hannah realised the school's commitment to the pastoral care of the students was even stronger than she had thought. "Although Evelyn was toilet-trained she was unable to control herself and often needed to be changed during the day. Again, staff recognised that it wasn't Evelyn's fault and took a great deal of trouble to try and find out the reasons, eventually suggesting a scan which proved there was a medical problem which has now been addressed. The Nursery Nurse who looked after her in the Foundation Year was absolutely brilliant, encouraging and very discreet so that Evelyn never felt embarrassed, and now she has medication to control the problem Evelyn is much more confident and outgoing - it's changed her life."

A very positive experience

With such a positive experience of the school, Hannah and Shaun were more than happy to enrol George there, too, and they have been more than happy with his progress.

"George settled in very well but his reading skills had been quite slow to develop. In just four months, his reading level has increased amazingly through one-to-one sessions with a teacher and the way they made it fun for him by focussing on his love for paper aeroplanes; they found books about paper planes and when he'd finished reading them, he was allowed to make a plane and fly it down the staircase! So inventive and very effective."

George and some of the other children also benefit from a short session of exercise before school to encourage development of their motor skills which, in George's case, helps him with his co-ordination.

Benefits all round

Hannah has been so impressed with the way in which the school has treated her children that she is an enthusiastic member of the Friends of Thorpe Acre (PTFA), helping to raise money for extra play equipment and school trips which might otherwise be unaffordable for some families. "We run a Cake Stall, sell second-hand uniform and organise discos and a Christmas Fair and it all helps the school to provide the extras which so benefit the children," she says. "Thorpe Acre Infant School has been such an asset to us, going way beyond the call of duty, and it's good to be able to make a contribution in return."



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