

Abeer's daughter, Valentina, moved to Dronfield Junior School in Year 5 and it's been the best move they've ever made



Abeer has Valentina in Year 5. Valentina's older sister Sofi, is in Year 7 at high school

Moving back after time away

"Both of our girls had been at Totley Primary School until we moved away for 12 months due to work. When we came back the girls started at another primary school, Sofi in Year 6 and Valentina in Year 4, but Valentina struggled to settle in. The class sizes were small, which sometimes is great, but it meant there were a lot of established friendship groups and Valentina found it difficult to make new friends. With Sophia heading to high school we thought it would be a good opportunity for Valentina to try somewhere new. She came to Dronfield Junior School for a couple of days to see how she felt and has never looked back," said Abeer.

Moving to Dronfield and enjoying school

"Valentina enjoys learning and she finds her teaches and lessons stimulating. She has settled in well and thanks to some of the friends she already had through Brownies the move to Dronfield Junior School has been smooth and she's much more engaged with school now," said Abeer.

Encouraging responsibility and independence

"Valentina and her friends are part of the School Play Leader Scheme and they help to set up games and activities for the younger children in

the playground at break and lunch times. For example, if they want to set up some tennis games, they'll be given the equipment and get an early pass for the lunch queue so that they can get everything ready for the other children. They really enjoy and respond positively with being given these tasks, they like to contribute and be part of their school community," said Abeer.

Little steps to big achievements

"Valentina likes English and she is quite competitive with herself, she wants to do well. My husband is a primary school teacher so she is supported at home with her studies and she finds Dronfield's way of teaching interesting and fun. When she started at Dronfield her handwriting was very small and she desperately wanted her "pen licence". Her teacher set her targets and worked with her to improve little by little. There was no stress or pressure, just encouragement and little targets that helped her feel she was improving," said Abeer.

Feeling settled and looking forward to school trips

"Valentina is adamant that we stay here for now so that she can stay at Dronfield and complete her Year 6 there. That was quite a surprise to me, but I'm happy she feels so settled. She's really looking forward to the school residential trip, she's already making a list of what to pack

and planning her snacks with her friends. They go away for two days and she can't wait, it'll be her first trip without any family there so she feels very independent," said Abeer.

Enjoying school clubs

"Valentina enjoyed going to the cooking club and she loves the chess club at school, that has proven very popular with the children. She's been watching the chess masters on the BBC. At first she was the only girl but that hasn't put her off, she picked up the rules quickly and is enjoying playing," said Abeer.

Inclusive, welcoming and friendly

"Dronfield is a great school for diversity. There are lots of different families from different faiths, cultures and backgrounds going to school which is maybe why Valentina has settled so well. She has swapped gifts with her friends for Easter and done the same for Eid and Ramadan. Valentina likes her teachers and knows she can talk to them, everyone is welcoming and friendly," said Abeer.

Children say

Liz says: "I like this school because it is full of joy, kindness, and happiness. This is a marvellous school."