



Yazmin and Dontae are both thriving in the supportive surroundings of Hawkesley Church Primary Academy

Serina lives with her grandchildren, Yazmin, aged eight, and Dontae, who is nearly five, in King's Norton.

Happy at school

Serina is delighted with how much Yazmin and Dontae are enjoying attending Hawkesley Church Primary and the way they are being helped by the staff to achieve their best. She says: "Yazmin is having her creative talents encouraged by the teachers, and Dontae loves everything about the school and can't wait to get there each morning."

Good values

Serina chose Hawkesley for Yazmin after moving to live in King's Norton. "The lady who lived in my house previously had recommended it to me as a good primary school. I did consider another school that was about the same distance from our house, but in the end, I chose Hawkesley because I was impressed with its strong Christian ethos. I thought it would be a good environment for Yazmin, and I haven't been disappointed with the school," she says.

Welcoming staff

Yazmin, who is now in Year 4, settled in quickly, even though Serina thought it might have taken a while for her to get used to her new environment. "I had expected a few problems to begin with, but the staff were brilliant with Yazmin and made her feel very welcome at the school. Yazmin has ADHD and is currently waiting for an autism diagnosis. I was pleased that the staff put things in place to help her straight away, such as giving her a rewards chart and allowing her to take time out from learning if she needed to," Serina says.

Inspiring teaching

"The teachers have been a tremendous help to Yazmin by encouraging her art and creativity. She is not particularly academic, but they focus on the creative activities that she is good at and they bring in some Maths and English at the same time to help her learn. They concentrate on her strengths so that she is encouraged to keep on learning. I am pleased that Yazmin goes to school happily each day and that her rewards chart inspires her to try hard with her work."

Expert help

Dontae, who is pre-verbal, started in the Nursery and is now in Reception at Hawkesley. Serina says that he understands a lot that is said to him, and that he also loves going to school each day. She says: "I went to see the SENDCO and said I was sure Dontae was autistic, but I found that the school were in fact ahead of me and had already started a referral for him. The staff have been very supportive and have put things in place to help him in the classroom, such as one-to-one help from a TA. The SENDCO keeps in regular touch with me about Dontae, and he is also helping me apply for an EHCP for Yazmin and Dontae."

Fun outdoors

Serina says that Dontae loves learning outside and he particularly enjoys doing Forest School. "He loves the garden and is fascinated with details such as seeing worms underneath the rocks. The staff encourage him to socialise with the other children and he enjoys running around with them outdoors. Dontae loves school so much that he is always keen to get there in the mornings. He runs to get his uniform out at home and then, when we get to the school, he is so excited that he sometimes runs in without his bag and I have to call him back to fetch it. Then he waves goodbye to me and runs in again, because he can't wait to get into the classroom. Even though Dontae is still pre-verbal, I can tell how much he loves going to school each day."

Children say

Yazmin says: "I love all the different activities we do at school and I enjoy art and making things."