



# Toby's confidence has grown immensely at Holly Hill Church School

Tina lives with her seven-year-old son, Toby, who is in Year Two at Holly Hill Church School.

## A positive start

Starting school can be a daunting experience for many children, but Toby's transition to Holly Hill Church School was remarkably smooth. Tina recalls: "I was expecting his first day to be difficult, thinking he'd cling to me. But he went straight in and wasn't bothered at all when I left him. It was such a relief."

## Nurturing a love for learning

Toby has developed a keen interest in various subjects, with a particular passion for maths. Tina shares: "He loves maths. He always says, 'Mummy, give me some quick math questions.' It's wonderful to see his enthusiasm for learning."

In addition to his academic interests, Toby has participated in extracurricular activities that he thoroughly enjoys, supporting both his physical and social skills. "He's done dodgeball in the past and Forest School, which he absolutely loved," says Tina.

## Friendly and approachable staff

One of the standout features of Holly Hill Church School is its dedicated and approachable teaching staff. Tina recalls her first impressions: "Even on our first look around when Toby was three, the teachers were really approachable and friendly. Every morning, when you drop your child off, they're willing to talk to you. You're not rushed away; they listen and are very welcoming."

The teachers' commitment to the students extends beyond the classroom. Tina explains: "They have been fantastic in supporting Toby's confidence. He has always struggled with expressing himself, knowing what he wants to say, but lacking the confidence to put his hand up. The teachers have noticed when he's struggling and have gone over to offer a little extra support. One of the older teachers explained it to him in a way that he understood, calling it 'brain soup' when he gets flustered and muddles things up."

## Learning to express feelings

Holly Hill Church School also provides exceptional support for students' emotional wellbeing. Tina shares an example of how the school has helped Toby manage change: "Recently, they had an outside agency come in to work with some of the Year Twos who are moving to a new school. They did art-based work around emotions and feelings."

Toby just saw it as art and drawing, but it was really about helping them express their emotions. He came home and talked all about it. It's really helped him to express how he's feeling."

## Happy and engaged children

For Tina, the most reassuring aspect of Toby's school experience is his happiness. "The main thing for me is how happy he is there. He enjoys it so much that he's counting down the days until he goes back. That's a massive reassurance for me. If he didn't want to be there, I'd be concerned, but he's so happy and enjoys it. I haven't got a bad word to say about the school. I'm gutted he's leaving."

## Living the school's values

Tina is also impressed by how Holly Hill Church School implements its values. "They have a list of values such as honesty, love, respect, and patience. Every Monday, they have an assembly focusing on a specific value, and on Friday, two children from each classroom receive a certificate based on that value. Parents are invited to watch, which is lovely. Toby brings these values home and talks about them with his little sister. It's a wonderful way of teaching the children to live by these values."

## Supporting advanced learning

Toby's love for learning is strongly supported by the school. "He's always asking for more work to do at home, whether it's maths questions or other activities. The school recognises his capabilities and keeps challenging him. Even in nursery, he was given Reception books to read. They encourage him to keep progressing to higher levels, which is fantastic."

## Children say:

Toby says: "What I enjoy the most about Holly Hill is working with all the teachers and the different people you meet and all the school trips we go on."

