



Moving from one end of the country to the other, George and Becky Grace and their three children have embraced life at Shap Church of England School

George and Becky Grace have Daisy in Year 4 and Freddie in Year 1, their third child is yet to move up to school

From Devon to Shap

George and Becky moved their family to Shap from Devon the year the “Beast of the East” struck, and Becky remembers it was still snowing in May. “We were used to seeing daffodils in December in Devon, but Shap is an affordable place to live with your family and it’s a very active, outdoor area. There are 1,200 people in Shap, and it is well resourced with a strong community. The school’s vision is that the church is at the heart of the community and school is the extension of that for families with young children. There is a huge amount that goes on and school works hard to include everyone,” says Becky.

Deciding on school

“In our immediate area Shap is the largest school and schools here have a strong sense of identity. Shap’s school identity reflects the heritage of Shap. The religious education and personal development at school is very inclusive and the children are taken to visit different places of worship. School is underpinned by Christian values; community, respect and harmony and the children learn these values. Our son who’s only 5 talks about treating people equally and how we’re a friend to all. The values come across naturally at Shap and they are at the centre of school life,” says George.

Strong diversity

Ofsted had made a recent visit to school and as Becky is a school governor she had participated in the visit. “Ofsted have been in school this afternoon; we’re always working towards diversity. Ofsted commented on how Shap goes above and beyond in terms of educating the children about diversity and how well the school’s heritage is integrated with a sense of inclusivity. The aim for the children is to develop good learners who are good people. It’s not just about SATs, it’s about being curious and understanding the world outside of Shap. The children said school is welcoming and friendly and the teachers really care about them, everyone knows them and their families.” says Becky.

Above and beyond

“School go above and beyond in terms of providing opportunities for the children. They’ve just completed two weeks of daily swimming training at the lido and that’s in preparation for the triathlon. There are theatre workshops, they had a professional rapper come in and teach them a rap about the school’s values, they have had breakdancing and skateboarding tuition. There has been a debate trip for children excelling in English, they have a chess competition and an inter-school football tournament. They had a STEM day with 3D printing which was great,” says Becky.

Children are at the centre

Shap school puts the children’s interests as priority and the team create an environment that considers the whole child and their needs. “They have a school council and reading champions which is great for the children’s sense of responsibility. School is colourful, clean and well cared for. There is a nurture room where a play therapist and a grief therapist work with the children. We have a dedicated team member who secures funding and this year we have had a new kitchen and we’re getting a new entrance and community hub space where uniforms and a food bank will be housed. Everyone is listened to, children, parents and teachers and actions are taken when feedback is shared,” says Becky.

Children say:

Daisy says, “I like getting to visit the bookshop with school to choose books for the other children.”

Freddie says, “I like that we can play outside even if it’s raining.”

Ofsted says:

Pupils proudly represent the school in debating, musical and sporting events. They thoroughly enjoy working alongside other like-minded pupils from an array of local schools.