



Rowan Atkinson is grateful to Shap Church of England School for helping her son Noah with his speech

Rowan's son Noah is age 6 and is in Year 1

Starting life at Shap

Noah attended Shap Nursery and moved into Reception class without any issues. "Noah has settled in brilliantly. He's now in Year 1. In nursery he had a jumper and a polo shirt to wear, which felt like a first step towards big school. He understood that starting school would mean less playing and more learning but he's taken to it all brilliantly. The transition was made easy, the teaching team were excellent and it feels like he's been there forever," says Rowan.

Part of the community

"I was brought up in the village and I feel so lucky to be part of a community that has such a wonderful school. There was never any question, Noah was always going to go to Shap school. There is a playgroup in the village which is a great starting point for the children to make friends. It makes such a difference having familiar faces. Noah has a little brother and the last Thursday of every month we visit the nursery area at Shap school. It's a great time for everyone connected to school to come together. We go in just after lunch time, the children all play together and we have a chat. It's a great way to start building familiarity for the younger children," says Rowan.

Making learning fun

Noah enjoys everything about school and has settled into his class well. "Noah loves playing with his friends and learning maths. School make learning maths fun. Even the homework is fun, everything is made into a game so it doesn't feel like learning," says Rowan.

Christian values

Shap is a Church of England school and embraces Christian values. "My family is involved with the church, my dad is a church warden, so we have a connection with church outside of school. What I like about Shap school is that the Christian values are encouraged and the children learn about them, but they're not forced. There is a Jesus Christ Club after school which involves the vicar from church. My niece attended and it will be lovely for Noah to go," says Rowan.

Empowering children to be independent

"Noah struggled with his speech initially. Through school we were recommended to a speech therapist. The improvement he's made is just incredible. His sense of achievement is wonderful. It's been brilliant and so empowering for Noah. He doesn't get upset anymore and everyone can understand what he's trying to say. Everyone has afforded time and effort. Seeing him so happy is a wonderful reward for all the hard work. Noah is a confident little boy and school are helping him make decisions for himself. School encourages his independence. I can't wait to see him perform in the school plays and play music," says Rowan.

Building life skills

"On a Tuesday there is after school club which Noah attends and he loves going. There is always something different going on, from crafting to sports. There was a cooking club and he absolutely loved it. The impact it had on him at home was great. He's now got the confidence to get himself a drink and he can make himself a ham sandwich which are the skills you want your child to be developing alongside their school learning," says Rowan.

Reassurance and safety

"It's a great a place and from the first day, the staff and everyone there make it welcoming and calm. There is no stress and no worries, everyone fits in, it's a lovely place. The children are safe, secure and well looked after. My husband works away regularly and having the support of school is just wonderful. It's reassuring to know that they're there," says Rowan.

Children say:

Noah says: "I love cooking club."

Ofsted says:

Pupils with SEND are quickly identified by skilled staff. Purposeful and well-chosen interventions support individual pupils to access the school's ambitious curriculum.