



Grace has three boys and their experience of St Mary's cannot be measured as it's how they feel about their school that counts

Grace has three boys, Prince has moved on to secondary school, Frank is in Year 4 and Emmanuel is in Year 3.

Support from the start

"Prince is my eldest son and he has finished at St Mary's and has moved to Riverside School. He's autistic and has been supported by St Mary's from his first day all the way through to Year 6. I'm very happy with St Mary's and how they provided support for Prince through his schooling. He's had the support of the teachers and his classmates. The class team were always helpful, he felt very cared for," said Grace.

Open and easy communication

"Emmanuel and Frank are doing very well. St Mary's has been part of our life now for so long. I've loved going to the coffee mornings when I have time and I have lots of lovely memories. From my experience I think St Mary's is amazing. The teachers are friendly and welcoming. If ever there is something bothering me or I don't understand something, I just go straight to them, they are open and easy to communicate with," said Grace.

Moving forward as a community

"Around two years ago, some parents were very distracted by the school's Ofsted report. It wasn't as good as we'd hoped it to be. I couldn't believe it, I was shocked. I still don't understand why it came out the way it did. Some parents decided to move their children, but many of us didn't. St Mary's is a good school. After the report we met with the Headteacher at the time, he's now retired, and he took the time to chat to us all and help us to understand, that helped very much. A couple of months later, Ofsted came back and said the school was good, so I know it was the correct decision to stay at St Mary's," said Grace.

Caring for parents and children

"They always help as best they can and if they can't they pass you to someone who can. At Christmas they look after the parents that are on low incomes and make sure they receive what they need, this is what makes them special. Parents are always encouraged to come into school, they're invited to the Harvest Time assembly and the Christmas concert. There is no pressure. They take the time

to listen to you and they are patient, they know it's not easy and they help when they can. They check in to make sure people are doing okay and they look after all the children as individuals," said Grace.

Children are settled and enjoy school

"The children love it when parents are invited to watch them. The boys love it when I come into school to see them perform. Emmanuel plays the recorder and Frank plays the violin. Getting awarded 'Star of the Week' motivates them and it's lovely to see their hard work and kindness to others being recognised. They all love being in the playground and playing, enjoying their free time. When the teachers reward them with more time in the playground, it makes them happy. The teachers make sure the children understand what is expected and they are consistent and fair," said Grace.

Part of a family

"I don't want to think about the boys not being at St Mary's. I've volunteered on my days off and gone in and helped at school, that's how much I've loved the boys being there. Prince continues to do well since leaving. He's coming home after school and telling me about his friends and his uniform. His speech has improved and St Mary's helped give him a good start," said Grace.

Go and visit

"To anyone thinking of sending their child to St Mary's I would suggest they go and visit, take their child into the school and go and experience it. I've been with the school for seven years now and I've never regretted it. When Prince left, we wrote a letter to the Headteacher thanking them for everything," said Grace.

Children say:

Prince says: "St Mary's was good for me."

Frank says: "I like playing on the playground."

Emmanuel says: "I love playing my recorder."

Friendship, compassion, hope, wisdom, community and endurance.