



As teachers, Josh and Harriet knew St Mary's was going to be the perfect school for their boys Lawrie and Oliver

Josh and Harriet have Lawrie in Reception and Oliver in Nursery.

Embracing the school routine

"We're lucky to live close to school and so we ride our cargo bike with the boys every day and they love it. It's a great way to start the day. Lawrie didn't attend nursery at St Mary's. When it came to choosing a school for him, we were looking for somewhere vibrant and engaging where we knew the boys would be nurtured. When we visited St Mary's we just knew it was going to be the right place for us. My former teacher is now the deputy head, he's in fact the reason I became a teacher, so knowing he was also here felt like a positive sign," said Josh.

A calm and caring culture

"I've been pleasantly surprised and impressed by the calm and caring culture at St Mary's. As a teacher, seeing how the children behave when they're out and about, and even in school, there is a sense of positivity and energy but without any over the top gregarious or disruptive behavior. The children are guided to be sensible and there is a sense of everyone looking out for each other, which is brilliant to see," said Josh.

Solid foundation for learning

"My wife and I were looking for a school with strong values and we wanted to feel part of a community that would support those values. When we were looking around other schools, St Mary's stood out as it felt there was a strong foundation, a richness to what life at school was built on and we were impressed by that from the beginning. The head teacher and the staff are at the heart of the school, and together they create a warm and welcoming environment. Many of the teachers' children attend St Mary's and I always think that's a strong indication of how well the school is doing," said Josh.

We feel like we've won

"There are so many positives about our experience so far that we feel we've already won when it comes to the boys being at school. There's lots to look forward to. With the diverse range of children and parents that go to school, we feel very content and we're excited to learn more

from the people we'll meet as the boys' progress through school, and through the friends they'll make. There are specially trained staff taking the children's PE lessons, so the children are going to get a great introduction to sport, that's something to look forward to and all the events like the Christmas play and the summer fair," said Josh.

Donkey day

"Every year St Mary's celebrates Easter with what we call "Donkey Day". Derek the donkey from the local farm comes to school, and the children walk in a parade with him. It's in preparation for Palm Sunday and celebrates the journey of Jesus into Jerusalem, it's a great event and one the children enjoy. The police get involved and make sure the children can walk safely, and the Rectory Garden children come out and wave their palm leaves and everyone sings songs that they've been learning in class," said Josh.

Loving to learn to read

"The boys enjoy the stories from class. There's a great English scheme with names like "Opening Octopus" and "Problem Penguins" where they're learning about story structure and it's something I've not come across before, the children are engaging with it very well. They come home with books every week and they're good quality books and they're excited to be working towards their reading awards," said Josh.

Children say:

Oliver says: "I like playing in the playground."

Lawrie says: "I'm nearly at bronze award for my reading."

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