



West Acton Primary School was Mamiko's first choice for her girls once she heard about their welcoming approach and Japanese community

Mamiko has Karen age 10 in Year 6, Marin age 4 in Nursery and Nanami age 13 in Year 9 at high school

Starting school

Mamiko's eldest daughters moved to West Acton when Mamiko learned of other Japanese families attending. Mamiko says, "My eldest daughter started in Year 4, Karen started in Year 1 and Marin has joined in Nursery. I wanted the girls to attend West Acton because it had other Japanese families attending the school and I'd heard great things about how well the children had settled in. They had been going to a school that was further away and

so moving them closer to home into a familiar community felt right."

Making friends

"All the girls made lovely friends at West Acton. They would all say that their friendships are what they like most about being at school. There is a large playground and Nanami remembers looking forward to playing games with her friends at break and lunch times," says Mamiko.

Clubs for everyone

West Acton have a variety of clubs for children to attend throughout the year and as they move up the school. Mamiko says, "Karen has enjoyed going to Athletics Club. School hosts lots of different clubs. There's Spanish Club, Tennis Club, Cooking Club, Art and Drama Club and Sports Club. Lots of things for the children to join and try. Lots of variety which is good at this age."

Wonderful teachers

"The teachers are so nice and always ready to share how the girls are doing. They're easy to get in touch and I've always felt comfortable in approaching them if ever I needed to discuss anything with them. They work with the children so well, they progress so quickly, they do a wonderful job," says Mamiko.

Positive energy

"The teachers are always there to welcome everyone when you walk in. It's always a lovely start to the day and makes the girls feel comfortable. There is an energy when you walk into school, it feels like everyone is ready to learn and join in. There are different backgrounds and cultures represented by all the families at school and that adds to the sense of energy," says Mamiko.

School events

West Acton provides opportunities for the children to perform on stage and on the sports field. Mamiko says, "We have a Christmas concert which we look forward to, the children sing songs and act in performances. There are sports events where the different houses at school compete against each other, that always prove a popular day."

Science experiments

Karen helps Mamiko with speaking English and was keen to share what she likes most about school.

Karen says, "My favourite lessons are Maths and Science. In Science we did an experiment about mouldy bread. We learned how bread becomes mouldy. We get homework and I read books from school at home. I like playing Netball and my favourite school dinner is spaghetti. Our dinner ladies are nice."

School re-fill station

School is eco-friendly. There is an eco-refill station which all the children help with. "You can come to school and refill things you need for at home. It's a very good idea and gives the children the opportunity to get involved and learn about working as well as adding to the community and supporting the environment," says Mamiko.

Learning English

"School are great at welcoming children and families for who English is their second language. There are lots of children who join and need step by step support to build their knowledge and understanding of English and school do this very well. For me it's great because the Head Teacher can speak Japanese which is helpful and she's wonderful," says Mamiko.

Children say:

Karen: "My favourite sport is Netball."

Marin says: "I like playing with my friends."

Nanami says: "I have lots of memories."

