



CLAIRE AND DAN LIVE IN SOLIHULL WITH THEIR DAUGHTERS, ISABEL, AGED 16, AND JESSICA, AGED 14.

Isabel can look back on wonderful experiences and happy memories during her time at Lode Heath School

Taste for travel

Isabel will never forget the amazing experiences she had in Costa Rica on a school trip when she was in Year 10 at Lode Heath School. She says: "To be in a swimming pool in the middle of a rain forest in Central America was breathtaking. I have always wanted to travel and to see the authentic side of places and going to Costa Rica has made me want to travel even more now."

Gaining understanding

She was fascinated when they met people from a local tribe and she saw how differently they lived in Costa Rica. "They made their clothes from the trees in the forest by sewing pieces of bark together to make a fabric. We went to water parks and hot springs and saw some amazing scenery there. I was with people I had known for the last four years but afterwards I found I could understand them on a deeper level because of going to Costa Rica with them," Isabel says.

New people

During the trip, Isabel enjoyed getting to know some of the Year 11 students who had gone to Costa Rica as well. "It was lovely to make friends with people from a different year group and to stay friends with them afterwards," she says.

Experiencing subjects

When Isabel started in Year 7 at Lode Heath, she remembers she liked being there straight away. "I had been to open days at two schools, but I preferred Lode Heath to the other one I went to visit. It was smaller and seemed more friendly. We sat together in the classroom and got to know the form teacher. I liked the creative subjects we did on a rotation basis in the first few years, such as Catering, Dance, Music, and Drama. It was good to be able to try different subjects and I enjoyed Catering."

Helping at school

It was while she was on the school trip to Costa Rica that Isabel was given the idea to apply to be a Senior Student in Year 11. "The Head of Pastoral Care was on the trip and talked to us about being a Senior Student and encouraged us to apply. Being a Senior Student during Year 11 was good experience and has given me a fresh perspective on things. I have enjoyed participating in student conferences and helping out at events."

Making friends

Isabel is now waiting for her GCSE results and is planning to go to Solihull Sixth Form College to study Health and Social Care, Psychology and Sociology. She says: "It was strange to be leaving Lode Heath at the end of Year 11, but I have enjoyed my time there and I have made some good friends at the school that I will keep in touch with. My sister, Jessica, is now doing well in Year 10 at Lode Heath and she has also made lots of friends there."

Parental viewpoint

Isabel's Mum, Claire, says: "We are pleased that going to Lode Heath has given Isabel lots of opportunities and some great experiences. Being a Senior Student and doing activities with students from other schools has definitely increased her confidence. We also think the pastoral side at Lode Heath has been good. We have encouraged Isabel to throw herself into everything while she has been there because we consider her education to be very important. We believe parents have to have the same commitment as the staff and we have always found that we have been able to work well with the teachers at Lode Heath School."