

When your child is sad that it's not a school day, Brookhurst Primary School must be getting it right



First impressions

Sue says that she will never forget the day she first went to visit Brookhurst Primary School. "We were looking around the school with the Headteacher when a large group of pupils walked by. The Headteacher was able to greet each one of them by name and this was the case with all the other children we saw that day, and I was deeply impressed. There were other reasons why we liked Brookhurst but that connection with the children was what really convinced me."

Sue and Huw Treharne live in Leamington Spa with their children Will, Catrin, Tom and Elin who are 15, 13, 11 and 8 respectively.

Out-of-school care

The modern buildings and the extensive grounds also appealed as the children are keen on sport, and of particular importance was the facility for before- and after-school care. "As we both work we needed a reliable and convenient wrap-around option and as there is a Breakfast Club and an After School Club, as well a whole range of sports and other afternoon clubs, Brookhurst seemed ideal."

Refreshing

From an academic perspective, Sue was more than happy with the progress her eldest child, Will, made, despite his being amongst the youngest in his year group. "We found his teacher to be firm but kind and Will met all his targets on schedule, continuing to do so throughout his time at the school. If ever any of the children have needed any extra help, as Elin did at one point for a short while, it was provided, and we have never had to worry about the standard of their work. The quality of the teaching staff is high and whilst initially I was concerned when several newly-qualified teachers were taken on, they proved a great success - enthusiastic and with refreshing new ideas which the children responded to very well."

Innovation in teaching

It is not just the teaching standards which Sue finds more than satisfactory but the innovative methods applied. Twice a week, teachers who have specialist subjects, or ones for which they have a special passion, hold lessons in those subjects. There are also flexible learning groups, designed to teach children in a way that maximises their learning opportunities. Sue explains: "Several members of the staff have specialities, in French, Art, RE and Forest Schools, amongst others, and these lessons are delivered in a different setting to their normal classroom which is a bit of a novelty for them, and unusual in a primary school."

Giving children responsibility

Brookhurst's School Council, of which Tom was a member, is another example of the school's policy of inclusion, allowing the children to make their own contribution to many aspects of school life.



"The Forum is entirely child-led and they are encouraged to put forward their ideas and to put them into practice. One example is the strong eco-policy of the school, and the children have been very involved in environmental issues such as energy saving and recycling. It's a great way of engaging their interest and giving them a bit of responsibility for their own surroundings."

Knowledge through experience

School life is about much more than classroom learning and Sue believes that Brookhurst has created a very effective environment in which children can expand their knowledge through a wide range of experiences. "Sport, music, cookery, Spanish, dancing and links with the local church amongst other things all offer a package which adds up to provide a breadth of education which is so important to overall personal development. I have actively recommended Brookhurst Primary School to friends and family for these reasons and more."

Children say

Elin is the only one of her siblings still at Brookhurst and no more needs to be said to show her feelings than this: "Sometimes when I wake up on Saturday and realise it's not a school day, it makes me sad."

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