

Maytham and Sarah Ibrahim live in Stanmore with their daughters Fatma, nine and Ayat, eight.



Maytham was taken by surprise at how closely Harrow Primary School reflected his wishes for his daughters' education

Taking the plunge

Just as any other parents would, Maytham and Sarah thought long and hard before moving their daughters to a different school. Having moved from another part of London and being unable to secure places at their choice of state school, they decided to visit Harrow Primary.

"We thought it would be sensible to wait until the school had become established as it was an unknown quantity when we first considered it as an option," explains Maytham. "When we eventually went to look round we were struck by the friendly and caring atmosphere and the small class sizes, and the fact that it is also an Islamic school persuaded us to take the plunge. The girls have just completed their second term there and already we are convinced that this was a very good decision indeed."



Children say

Ayat: "The school is good because the teachers repeat things until we understand. We have good and kind teachers that teach us."

Fatma: "I am learning a lot at the school. The teachers are nice. I am happy at the school. All the children at the school are also nice."

A smooth transition

Changing schools is not always easy for a child but the transition was, says Maytham, sensitively handled by Harrow Primary. "They were offered a 'taster day' at first and when that proved a success they went for a further week without our having to make a definite commitment. Both Fatma and Ayat were delighted with the experience; they came home so excited and asked to be allowed to make it permanent, and they have remained just as enthusiastic ever since."

A push in the right direction

At their previous school the girls had frequently become bored in lessons, finding much of the work too easy and finishing ahead of time with nothing else to occupy them. "I asked their teachers if they could be given some more challenging work, or be moved up a class in some subjects, but I was told it wasn't practical and at one point we even considered home-schooling," says Maytham. "When they moved to Harrow Primary, far from not having enough work to do, at one point I almost thought they had too much! They are now being taught according to their ability rather than their age and we noticed the difference within weeks. They are pushed when their teachers feel they are capable of doing more but equally, they are supported if they need a little extra help. I really couldn't be happier with what Harrow Primary is doing."

Good things come in small packages

Maytham does not believe that girls are missing out on a social level because the school is so small; rather, he is impressed by the range of activities and visits to local museums and attractions. "They have more outings than many other schools can provide and get to meet a lot of people in various different settings. The fact that by necessity they use public sports centres and the local library means they get out and about a great deal, and the real bonus is that the size of the school gives it a real family feeling. The children are treated as though they are part of a family – with praise, reward and affection. They are also expected to respect given boundaries and a code of conduct, and the standard of behaviour within the school is very high."

Everything a parent could wish for

Every school has something different to offer its students but Maytham believes that there are relatively few which could so closely reflect his requirements for his daughters. "The staff are very professional, dedicated and approachable and

there has never been a time when I have not been able to see and talk to one of them if I have needed to. They maintain a presence in the playground before and after school, as does the Headteacher, promptly respond to telephone calls or emails, and effectively address any issues which arise. This, and the fact that the girls thoroughly enjoy school and can practise their faith during the school day, makes me very glad that we were fortunate enough to find Harrow Primary School."



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