

Mr and Mrs Hashim Mahroof live in Harrow with their three children. Sumaiya is six, Ismail, four, and Abdul-Rahman is seven and has just finished Year 2 at Harrow Primary School.



Hashim had **high hopes** of Harrow Primary School, and these have been both met and **exceeded**

### **The three things which make a school**

There are three main criteria that Hashim Mahroof looks for in his childrens' schooling – a good standard of behaviour and discipline amongst the pupils, an excellent academic record, and a safe and happy environment. He is in no doubt at all that these issues are more than adequately addressed at Harrow Primary School.

"We had heard very good things about the school from family and a friend but we decided to wait a few months before moving Abdul-Rahman there as it had only recently opened; we wanted to satisfy ourselves that it would live up to its early promise. Having visited Harrow Primary and meeting the Head Teacher, we were impressed by the obvious mutual respect between staff and pupils, the polite behaviour we particularly noticed, and the general welcoming atmosphere. Since we decided to move our son there we have been very happy indeed with what we have found."



## Complete contrast

Within a very short time, Hashim noticed not only a remarkable difference in the quality of Abdul-Rahman's work but also that he seemed more relaxed and happy. "Coming from a school with thirty or more children in each class, the contrast at Harrow Primary is vast," he says. "Now he is in a class with a maximum of twelve students and so the quality time each teacher can spend with the individual child is much greater; this is probably the reason why the results are, frankly, quite astonishing."

## Speechless

Hashim says that he was left almost speechless on seeing the evidence of Abdul-Rahman's progress at a recent Parent's Evening. "I couldn't believe how much he had achieved in a fairly short space of time and the sheer quantity of demanding English and maths work he was completing was very impressive. It is clear that the pupils are expected to work very hard and that they are constantly challenged to perform to the best of their abilities, but it also appears that they respond very positively and enthusiastically."

## Getting the balance right

With two of his nephews, Ibrahim and Musa, also at Harrow Primary, Hashim can see that the quality of Abdul-Rahman's work is not out of the ordinary. "My brother's sons are doing equally as well but the important thing is that they all really enjoy the experience," he says. "There is obviously a balance maintained between hard work and fun, so the children have never complained about being under any pressure – they really want to do their best. The high calibre of the teaching staff is reflected by the results they are getting from the students, and if Abdul-Rahman comes home each day exhausted but happy, I am happy, too!"

## Engaged with learning

Hashim is especially interested in the core subjects of maths, English and science and is pleased that these are given high priority. However, the regular extra-curricular activities and occasional school trips are also, he feels, a valuable addition to the children's school experience. "Abdul-Rahman has engaged in tennis and kick-boxing, as well as trips to all sorts of places – museums, a farm, even Legoland! Again, I like the balance between study and leisure; it keeps the children interested, keen to learn and engaged with the learning process."

## An ethos of inclusivity

Whilst Harrow Primary is an Islamic Faith School, Hashim appreciates their ethos of inclusivity and the welcome extended to families of other faiths. "When I spoke to the Head Teacher before Abdul-Rahman joined the school I wanted to clarify what the policy was. I was completely reassured that our own requirements would be respected and that is what has happened; Abdul-Rahman and his cousins settled in well and I give the school credit for this."

## Nothing better

Hashim says that although he had high hopes of Harrow Primary School he was not expecting miracles straightaway. Nevertheless: "I could not have wanted anything better from a school – quality of education, good discipline and a caring environment are very important. I am currently in the process of applying for a place there for my daughter also, and that says it all."



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