

Justina admires the early learning provision for her children at King's Hedges Educational Federation and is helping other children to benefit in the same way



Justina and Michael Cornwell have three children currently enrolled at King's Hedges Educational Federation – Finley, 10, Ruby 8 and Nate, 6. Justina is also a Senior Teaching Assistant in the So To Speak programme which runs alongside the school's nursery provision.

Making the most of every child's talents

Justina's husband, Michael, had himself attended King's Hedges as a child and, living locally, they were both aware that the school's reputation was still an excellent one. Although Justina now acknowledges that the school has changed over the years she is convinced that it has only improved in that time. "We had no hesitation in sending all of our children to King's Hedges and, despite their very different personalities and



Excellence achieved through care, creativity and challenge

abilities, they have all been given precisely what was needed to develop their own talents," she says. "Finley, Ruby and Nate have varying skills and interests and the school recognises this, offering so many opportunities to capitalise on them."

Innovation in early years teaching

All three children take part in a number of the after-school and extra-curricular clubs which include sport and art as well as the chance to improve their academic performance. "The ENR and ERR maths and literacy clubs, which were introduced by the current Headteacher, are a wonderful innovation and I am totally in awe of how the children are brought on so early. Nate is way ahead of where his older brother was at the same age, purely, I am sure, because he actively enjoys the way the subjects are taught."

Extra support for late starters

Justina is a trained nursery nurse and when her oldest child, now 20, started at the King's Hedges nursery, she decided to offer her services as a parent helper whilst she was not working elsewhere. From there, she has gone on to become one of the main facilitators of the So To Speak initiative, designed to help children who may have difficulty with the transition to a school environment. Parents are encouraged to participate by joining their children in maths and reading sessions, exercises in dexterity and 'Sharing Lunches', all of which help parents to understand how the children are learning and to support them at home.

The So To Speak programme, unique to King's Hedges, came about when nursery staff became aware that some of the children appeared to need additional support in their communication skills, or were shy and lacking in confidence in a school setting. "We recognised that some children would benefit from a bit of extra input to better prepare them for reception year," explains Justina. "As I have seen with my own children, every one is different and may need help to make sure they have the social skills to cope in a school setting. In So to Speak, we try to bridge the gap between school and home; it is a nurturing, caring environment where we do the sort of things children do with their parents - shopping, cooking or playing - and that helps to give them the confidence they need to move on to school proper."

Putting theory into practise

Having seen King's Hedges from various standpoints, Justina hopes she will be working there long after her own children have left. "I love what the school has done and is still doing for my children, and I love what we are able to do for children who need, for whatever reason, that little bit of extra help."



The school's mission statement of excellence through care, creativity and challenge is not just words but is put into practise, as I have seen for myself."

Children say

Finley: "I enjoy going to After School Club. We have been learning about healthy food and cooking lots of deliciously healthy snacks."

Ruby: "The teachers are nice and helpful and I like After School Clubs."

Nate: "I like King's Hedges because they help me with my handwriting and I like learning."

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If you are interested in enrolling or, would like to look around, please feel free to call us on 01223 518330 and arrange an appointment.

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