

Kirsty wanted to make sure her sons' different needs were met appropriately, and King's Hedges Educational Federation has been able to do that and more



Kirsty and Bryan Cooke live in North Cambridge with their sons Joshua, six and Adam, four.

Good reports

Although King's Hedges Educational Federation is perhaps the furthest primary school away from their home, Kirsty and Bryan were keen to secure a place there for Joshua as it incorporates a Nursery. "We felt that it would be much better for Joshua to start school with friends he had already made through Nursery and I had heard good reports from other people about King's Hedges," Kirsty explains. "Joshua is quite a shy and reserved child, so we wanted to make sure he had as good a start as possible."



Excellence achieved through care, creativity and challenge

The right approach

As Kirsty thought might be the case, Joshua did have a few problems with settling in at first and had it not been for the constant support of the staff she believes she would have had to look elsewhere. However: "The teachers were really brilliant and fully understood how to approach the situation," she says. "There were days when it was quite a battle to get Joshua to go to school but I knew that he would be taken care of and I trusted the staff completely. They would always let me know how he was getting on and kept me in touch with anything they thought I should know about and so I was reassured."

Improving confidence

King's Hedges runs a programme called So To Speak, designed to give extra encouragement to children who may lack confidence in some aspects of their learning and a child may spend one or more terms on the programme during their Nursery year, depending on the level of support required. Kirsty believes that it was So To Speak which made Joshua's transition to Reception much smoother than it might otherwise have been. "I think he would have found it much harder to go into Reception from Nursery had he not had this extra boost," she says. "The classes were smaller with a higher teacher to pupil ratio and Joshua responded very well. The school realises the importance of transition stages and that some children need more help than others which makes me more certain than ever that this was the right place for our children."

Adam is also benefitting from So To Speak, although for different reasons. Born with meningitis, he needed help with his speech and language skills which had been affected by his illness. "Again, the attention he received was wonderful and he came on a great deal in a short time," Kirsty says. "I cannot fault the effort put in for children who need it at an early age, making sure they are able to keep up when they move to the next year group."

Emphasis on family involvement

King's Hedges places major importance on parental involvement and as such hosts regular Sharing Lunches where parents can join their children and eat together. They are also invited into the classroom to read and work with them. "It's really nice to take part in a meal or lesson and see at first hand what the children are doing. It's also good to watch the social interaction between the children which is, after all, an important part of their school life."



Treating children as individuals

Having two children with very different personalities makes Kirsty appreciate all the more the excellence of a school which can offer appropriate and timely support to both. "I feel fortunate that we have been able to find somewhere which is prepared to treat children as individuals and recognise their specific needs," she says. "King's Hedges has more than answered our boys' needs, and that is well worth the extra few minutes walk in the morning!"

Children say

Joshua says: "I like number work and ERR and playing with my friends. I like playing games especially Pop up Pirate in the Group Room and my teachers are nice and I like doing my work."

Adam says: "I like snack time and playing outside with my friends and singing."

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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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