

# Hadeel feels welcomed as part of the family at Kingston Park Primary School



Hadeel and George Takla have one daughter, Danielle, who is five years old. The family live in Kingston Park.

## High standards

If Hadeel had the chance to move to a bigger or better house in a different area she would, she says, refuse to do so unless she could take Kingston Park Primary School with her! "We needed to find a school close by as it had to be within walking distance but obviously it had to be a good one," she says. "I asked around my friends and neighbours and as the school was consistently praised I was reassured, so I went to look for myself. One thing which immediately struck me was the excellent behavioural standards of the children and that to me is an extremely important issue; I believe that if a child's social and moral development is encouraged they will be in a better position to achieve academically."



## Like a family

Despite the unusual open-plan arrangement of the school, with partitions rather than walls between classrooms, Hadeel explains that the atmosphere is quiet and calm. "I don't know why it works but it does! I think it also helps to promote close relationships between the children, helping transition to a new year-group and making the children feel at home. Cross-year peer support and interaction is also made a priority so that, even in a fairly large primary school, the children are made to feel part of a family, with the confidence and independence that that encourages."

## A welcome for parents

It is not only the children who are encouraged to feel at home as parents, too, are actively welcomed into the life of the school. There are many opportunities for mums and dads to make a contribution and to help support their own, and other, children. "Whenever possible we attend the workshops where we are invited into the classroom to observe lessons, and then to take part in the lesson itself, and this helps us to have a greater understanding of what, and how, our children are learning. It means that we are better able to support our children at home."

Hadeel is also a regular volunteer, reading with pupils and enjoying the opportunity to bring her own skill-set into the school. "As a teacher of ESoL I have something to contribute and there are many other parents who are also happy to give a few hours of their time to come into the classroom and bring their own unique talent and experience. We are all welcomed, not because the school lacks resources but because it values parental input. The children love it when their friends' mums and dads come into school – it's all part of the family atmosphere!"

## Home/school communication

For parents who are unable to regularly visit the school the website is, says Hadeel, an excellent resource. "There is a monthly newsletter and a weekly blog which keep everyone up to date on everything which has been happening during the last few days and includes photographs which make us feel we are actually there! This home-school communication really makes us feel involved and that we matter; families are just as important as the pupils themselves."

## A sensitive approach

Hadeel has little but praise for her daughter's school and a recent event sums up her feelings. "When Danielle was identified as long-sighted and needing to wear glasses I was concerned that she might feel embarrassed. Unprompted, her teacher suggested that he would make a point of wearing his own spectacles in class so that she wouldn't feel different, and he gave the children an informal chat about how many people needed a bit of help with their eyesight. Since then, Danielle has felt perfectly comfortable and that is a tribute to her teacher's sensitivity towards her feelings."

## Ticking all the boxes

There are many boxes Hadeel could tick in a list of Kingston Park Primary's assets. "Praise children, instil confidence, teach them good manners and behaviour, encourage achievement. I would tick every one of those."



## Children say:

Danielle: "I think my school is one of the best. I love my school, my teachers and all my friends. I wake up excited every morning and don't not want to miss even a single day at school! I would like to thank all the teachers for being so good and kind."

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