

Innovation in education: In Maldon Primary School, Penny has found exactly what she wanted for her daughters – encouragement, challenges and choices



Maldon Primary School
Inspiring success for all



Penny and Mike Adams live in Maldon with their three daughters. Pippa, Pollyanna and Poppy are eleven, eight and six respectively.

Chance to flourish

Penny is more than happy to acknowledge that one of the main reasons she and Mike chose Maldon Primary for their children was its proximity to their own place of work, the secondary school next door, where she is Head of Performing Arts and Mike is Head of Technology. However, it was also extremely important to them that their daughters should receive a non-exclusive, comprehensive education alongside a diversity of their peer group.

“In a society where we all live amongst people of different backgrounds, abilities and cultures, we wanted our children to experience life in the real world and not be cosseted in an exclusive environment,” Penny explains. “What is so excellent about Maldon Primary is that every single child is given the chance to flourish, whatever their circumstances or aptitude, and as a teacher myself, I can really appreciate the diverse approach the school is taking in this respect.”

Flexing the right muscles

Penny completely endorses the Headteacher's opinion that the brain is a muscle which can be stretched, exercised and improved with the right approach, an approach which may be different for each child. "The point is that every child has their own strengths and weaknesses and that appropriate treatment will bring out the best in that child. I have seen how my own girls have benefited from different teaching methods, tailored to their own needs, and I cannot fault this way of ensuring each achieves their true potential."

Working wonders with a different approach

There are many aspects of Maldon Primary's provision that Penny likes, not least amongst which is what she describes as an innovative education: "The experiential learning approach is so effective, and completely engages the children's interest. A recent topic was 'Chocolate' and from that single subject the class learned about weights and measures, geography, history, English, maths and more, all of which contributed to their overall progress. A pupil may not remember a particular lesson in fractions or science, but putting these subjects into a context that appeals to them works wonders!"

Benefits for every child

This holistic approach is, believes Penny, one which can benefit every child whatever their ability. "The Headteacher's philosophy is that children should be challenged, pushed to achieve within their limits and that their achievements should be recognised. No pupil is ever written off as every one has something to offer; if a child needs intervention for academic or other reasons, this is addressed by specialist staff so that they are not left behind."

There is also a great deal of emphasis placed on the importance of social responsibility and children are rewarded for kindness, good behaviour and effort, as well as for their academic performance."

Giving children choices

The standard of education offered at Maldon Primary is, Penny believes, of a sufficiently high quality to ensure that the children will have a greater choice in terms of secondary schools. "In this area we have a wide variety of secondary school options and that can only be a good thing," she says. "At Maldon Primary, all the children are given the appropriate grounding to enable them to move on to the best possible setting for them as individuals, whether that is comprehensive, grammar or private. Being in a position to pick and choose means that they will be able to make the most of their own skills, talents and aspirations."

Enthusiasm, encouragement and engagement

Penny is convinced that the strong leadership and management at the heart of Maldon Primary, together with its relatively young teaching staff and forward-thinking ethos, creates an atmosphere of enthusiasm, encouragement and engagement, where children will thrive. "I am very realistic about what to expect in a school; what is and what is not possible and what can be achieved, and I have no doubt whatsoever that Maldon Primary is the one I would recommend for any parent," she says. "I have never had any doubt whatsoever that my daughters are at the right school for them and that they will have benefited from their primary education. I really believe that this school is on a journey that will lead to the award of Outstanding status."

Children say

Pippa: "I love all the music opportunities I have had especially performing with the choir at the O2 arena."

Pollyanna: "I love school, especially all the fun I have at breakfast club!"

Poppy: "I love playing with my friends and learning things I never knew about."



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