

**As a member of the staff
Angela knows more than
most about Paddock
Nursery, Infant and Junior
School, and that is why she
sent her son there**



Angela and Anthony Crane live in Paddock with their son Luke, who is ten years old. Angela is a member of the Educational Support Staff at Paddock School.



A happy and caring environment

If proof were needed that Angela believes Paddock Nursery, Infant and Junior School to be an excellent one, it would be not only that she has worked there for twenty years but also that her son is now in his own tenth year there. Having started out as a cleaner and then as a lunchtime supervisor, Angela enjoyed the working environment so much that she went on to train in her current role, which she absolutely loves.

"Obviously there have been a lot of changes over the years but Paddock School still retains the happy and caring atmosphere it has always had," she says. "Because I have been able to see it from both sides, as a member of staff and as a parent, I know what an effective setting it is both academically and in terms of pastoral care. Luke went to the Daycare facility as a baby whilst I was working and has stayed at the school to the present day, and I have never had a moment's hesitation that he was in the best possible place."

Adapting to changing circumstances

Perhaps one of the biggest changes that Angela has noticed during the two decades she has been with the school is in the cultural and social backgrounds of families in the area, and she is impressed with how Paddock has evolved to address their needs. "Inevitably we have children who do not have English as a first language and indeed may not speak any English at all, so we have a number of strategies in place to help and support them in this. We also run the Thrive project, which aims to address any particular problems some of the children may experience, whether it's a personal issue, a family one or anything at all which might affect their ability to make the most of their education. Every child is different and requires a different approach, and I find it very rewarding to be able to help them with their individual needs."

The importance of listening

Angela is keen to emphasise that it is the strong relationship between her and her colleagues which ensures the effectiveness of the school's approach. "It's all about teamwork and we do work together very well indeed. As we all have the children's best interests at heart we know the importance of listening to each other as well as to the children and their families, and there is a strong sense of co-operation between us. It is a very happy and satisfying place to work."

Good relationships

Although she is both a member of the staff and the parent of a student at Paddock, Angela has never felt any conflict of interest on that score. "Just like any other parent, I appreciate the Homework Diary system which lets me know about what Luke has been doing at school and anything else I might need to know when he 'forgets' to tell me!" she says, "and like any other working parent would I appreciate the fact that if I occasionally need some time off for Luke's hospital appointments it is never a problem. It's good to feel that I have a similarly good relationship with staff members and parents alike. That is the way Paddock School operates."

Complete trust

There are many aspects of Paddock School which Angela would identify as being first class, the high educational standards and sensitive pastoral care being only two. "This school recognises that children need more than just classroom teaching; they may need help to achieve independence, additional support in their learning, or someone outside the family to listen if they have a personal problem. I also love the way that the children are given opportunities some of them might otherwise not have, such as an outing to the seaside: to see the look on their faces when we arrive is absolutely wonderful. This is why I work there and why I send my son there – because it is a place in which I have complete trust."

Children say

Luke: "My teachers are kind and helpful. I like school because I learn more."



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