

# Hajra valued her own early education, which is why she sent her children to her old school – Paddock Nursery, Infant and Junior School



**Hajra and her husband Sajid live in Huddersfield with their four sons Raihan, Arsalaan, Farhaan and Kamran who are six, five, four years and a few weeks old respectively.**



## A family tradition

Many people would agree that a primary school should be more than just a place of academic learning. Whilst becoming proficient in reading, writing and arithmetic is obviously vital for every child, the attainment of life skills is of equal importance and this is part of the reason that Hajra is so happy with Paddock Nursery, Infant and Junior School.

Hajra was born and brought up in Paddock and attended Paddock School herself: "I loved it when I was a child and I am so glad that my own children have the chance to share my experience," she says. "It is just as happy a place now as it was then and the quality of the teaching is as good as I could wish; both Raihan and Arsalaan are doing very well, enjoying themselves, and keen to learn."



## Celebration of diversity

What particularly appeals to Hajra is the fact that Paddock is very much a neighbourhood school, where everybody knows each other and the relationship between teachers, students and parents is close and effective. She also welcomes the cultural diversity and the way in which the wide variety of cultures and religions which are represented there are explored and celebrated. "One year, Raihan asked if we could have a Christmas tree as he had been learning about Christianity and the various other religious festivals and although as Muslims we do not observe Christmas, I was happy to decorate our house with lights as he wished. It is healthy for all children to learn about the people amongst whom they are living and growing up, and to learn tolerance and acceptance."

## Listening to the children

Raihan had, however, initially been uncomfortable about mixing with girls and this was something Hajra mentioned to his teacher. "She said that she understood he preferred to be with boys but felt, as I do, that as we live in a mixed society he needed to become used to talking to girls in the classroom. She made an effort to gently introduce Raihan to the idea of being taught alongside other children of both genders and now he feels it to be more natural. She was very understanding and whilst she accepted his point of view, she also found a way to overcome his anxieties."

## A sensitive approach

The teaching staff were also very accommodating with Farhaan who became clingy following his brother Kamran's birth. "Both Arsalaan and Farhaan loved hearing from Raihan about his day at school and to begin with were excited about going themselves.

Then after Kamran was born, Farhaan became more attached to me and to home so instead of sending him to Nursery School we decided to leave him in Daycare at the school instead, as he was already attached to the staff there. This has worked very well and I have been impressed with the way the school handled what could have been a difficult situation. Farhaan is happier now, and much more settled."

## Encouraging a love of learning

With her background as a Nursery Teacher Hajra can appreciate the quality of the teaching at Paddock, and the fact that Raihan especially is happy to try his best and even to ask for more work! "He has consistently been at the top of his subjects so I have nothing to worry about on that score. It is also very reassuring that the pastoral care is excellent – Raihan is asthmatic and on medication, which I completely trust his teacher to administer to him when necessary. As a parent, I value that reassurance."

## Children say

**Raihan:** "I like school because all my friends and cousins go there and I like to learn new things."

**Arsalaan:** "I liked Reception because I was always playing and now I am in Year 1 we do lots of reading and writing and it is fun."

**Farhaan:** "I like my daycare nursery because I have lots to do and soon when I be big and go to big school I will be there all day and I will get a present!"



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