

# Yvonne has found that at Paddock Nursery, Infant and Junior School actions speak louder than words



**Yvonne and Russell Joyce live in Paddock and have three children. Twins Thomas and Rebecca are ten years old and Katie is eight.**



## Support network

Choosing a school because it happens to be on your doorstep can only be the right thing to do if it is also a good school, and Yvonne feels very fortunate that in Paddock Nursery, Infant and Junior School she has both these advantages. "I have always loved the school ever since Rebecca and Thomas started there at Nursery. It is invariably friendly and demonstrates a strong community spirit whereby all the teachers and children look out for each other. If anyone needs help of any kind that help is offered, and the great support network ensures that no child needs to be at a disadvantage for any reason."

## An accepting ethos

This support, Yvonne says, extends from children with physical or learning difficulties, to those who need extra help with their lessons. "There is a very accepting ethos throughout the school and it is lovely to see the children looking after each other. They take no particular notice of skin colour or social background, for example – they just accept each other for who they are, but at the same time they learn so much about different religions and life styles, just by mixing with such a diverse range of people. It's a healthy, happy and effective environment."

## Helping parents to help children

Another aspect of the school which Yvonne appreciates is the way parents are actively encouraged to take part in school life, whether it is helping to decorate the classrooms with murals, accompanying children on outings and fun days, or sitting in on lessons so that they are better placed to help with homework. "The way that maths and English is taught now is quite different to the way I learned so it's good idea to get parents in to find out about the new methods and avoid confusing our children! I also like the various educational trips where the children see history coming to life; it stays in their minds and makes it more real to them, more so than seeing it on film or paper."

## Making a difference

Yvonne has a further reason to admire the pro-active approach of the teaching staff, who have not only identified dyslexic tendencies in Thomas and Rebecca but put measures in place to address this. "Both the twins have at different times been recognised as having mild dyslexia but because it was addressed early, both have benefited hugely from the appropriate intervention provided by the school. I think it's wonderful that a small problem was not only picked up but followed up, too, before it could become more serious – it has made all the difference."

## How to bring out the best in children

Behavioural standards at Paddock School are high, with an emphasis not only on discipline but especially on reward. "Every child wants to be awarded Paddock Star of the Week!" says Yvonne. "It is given not just for academic achievement but for making a contribution in any way, in the classroom or for kindness, punctuality or effort. Being recognised for what they have done brings out the best in the children, and I think it shows them that the more you put in to something, the more you will get out."

## Absolute support

Yvonne is by no means the only parent whose child has thrown a bit of a tantrum at school on occasion, so she realises how understanding the teachers at Paddock can be in a sticky situation. "I can recall having to pick Katie up and carrying her into the playground, both of us in tears! Her teachers were so kind and completely non-judgemental – I wasn't made to feel awkward or that I was a bad mum, I was just given absolute support by people who knew what it felt like for both me and my daughter, and you can't ask more than that."

## Children say

**Rebecca:** "I love the chance we get to try lots of clubs in school at lunchtime and after school. I like drama club after school and at lunchtime I like to have a go at netball and basketball. I also like dancing club. We get to go swimming every week too!"

**Thomas:** "We learn something every day and the teachers make it fun!"

**Katie:** "I love school – it's the best school EVER! And the teachers are the BEST!"



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