



Lee Foster and his wife, Prudencia, live in Greenwich with their daughters Yulee, 20, Charlene, 18 and Rachel nine, in Year 4 at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. Lee is an Extraordinary Ecumenical Minister in the Catholic Church.

Lee wanted Christianity to be at the heart of his daughter's education, and he has found exactly that at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

More than one priority

The number one priority for any parents when selecting a school has to be their child's welfare and happiness and Lee and Prudencia are no different. However, finding a school which also embraced and upheld their Christian faith came a very close second and so they felt very fortunate that when they moved to East Greenwich, St Joseph's was on their doorstep.

"We did consider other schools, including secular ones, as we wanted to make sure we made the right decision for Rachel," says Lee, "but in the end it was always going to be St Joseph's. Out of all the schools we looked at, it had everything going for it – it is small and friendly, near to where we live and it has a very strong Christian ethos. As there is only one class for each year group



everyone knows everyone and it feels very much like a family. Once she settled in, Rachel was very happy there and she continues to be so."

Making families welcome

The welcoming atmosphere of St Joseph's is illustrated in many ways, according to Lee, starting with the visit to their home of Rachel's Reception Teacher to introduce herself and put Rachel at ease before she started. Lee also explains how approachable and helpful he finds all the staff: "The children are welcomed by their teachers in the playground each morning and very often the Head Teacher will be there as well and make a point of chatting to parents. A Head Teacher often stays in the background but that is absolutely not the case at St Joseph's and is something I greatly appreciate as a parent."

Contribution to the wider community

Another aspect of St Joseph's which appeals to Lee is the way in which it reaches out into the community, especially in terms of the music and dance performances the pupils are encouraged to take part in. Rachel is a member of the school's choir, its Irish Dance group and Rock Band, and she plays both keyboard and violin. "Rachel has made a lot of performances in and around London with the school and it's lovely that the children not only get a lot of pleasure from it but are giving other people pleasure, too. Getting the school involved in events like this is a good way of helping the pupils to make a contribution to the community and the people they live amongst."

A safe and happy environment

Naturally, the opportunity for academic achievement is a crucial part of what a school has to offer and Lee has no concerns on that score. "Rachel is doing very well indeed, just as well as I could hope for and she has a good relationship with her teachers as well as her fellow students. A school which provides a good education as well as a happy and safe environment has to be what every parent could want."

Celebrating faith

There is no single feature of St Joseph's that makes it the ideal choice for Lee. "There are so many positives but the school's connection with the Church has to be close to the top of the list. Although other faiths are represented and celebrated within the school, and rightly so, Christianity is at the heart of St Joseph's and that is

extremely important to me and my family. I have seen the school's links with the church becoming stronger in the years that Rachel has been going there and as far as I am concerned that makes it even better."



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