



Lisa Lambert and her partner, David, live in Halifax with their son Harvey, who is 10

# Lisa believes that the dedication and commitment of teachers at Whitehill Community Academy is setting her son up for life



## **A deep commitment to pupils**

Lisa says that it was the wonderful and welcoming feel of Whitehill Community Academy which left her in no doubt that it was the school she wanted for her son, Harvey. A personal tour with the Headteacher convinced her that he and his staff were deeply committed to the school and to their pupils, and seeing how contented the children all appeared to be was a further incentive. "I knew the school had a good reputation and although others did too, there was just something about Whitehill that felt completely right for us," she says.

## **Outstanding facilities**

And she has not been disappointed during Harvey's five years at Whitehill. "There always seems to be something new, something which really helps to engage the children's interest and enhance the whole learning experience. Certainly, Harvey has been inspired in all sorts of ways and thoroughly enjoys his lessons." One of Harvey's favourite classes is ICT and with a suite containing what Lisa describes as outstanding facilities, is not to be missed.



"I recently asked permission to take him out of school one day so he could join me as I was inaugurated as Deputy Mayor; permission was granted, but as it meant he would have to miss his IT lesson, Harvey felt he had to decline. I had to be very happy that for him, lessons came first."

### Helping parents to help children

Most parents are keen to help their children with schoolwork but the changing curriculum and teaching methods can be a pitfall so Lisa was glad for the chance to attend a parents' Back To School Day', offering parents the chance to sit in during classes. "I was so impressed with the innovative way in which many of the lessons were presented, often using technology such as iPads for research and illustration," she says. "The maths lesson was particularly useful for me as things have changed considerably since I was at school and it was useful for me to see how multiplication and division, for example, are taught now. Rather than confusing Harvey with my own way of doing things, I can actually help him with his homework now."

### Something for everyone

Aside from the classroom, Lisa also has much to praise in terms of the outdoor space and facilities. "The wooden swings and slides are beautiful and the grounds are a lovely environment for the children to run around and burn off energy. That, combined with the after-school and lunchtime clubs, offer so many options to take advantage of - there really is something for everyone." Harvey himself is a member of several clubs including football, woodwork and French and enjoys the Breakfast, Out-of-School and Holiday Clubs when Lisa and David are at work.

### Reassurance for working parents

For working parents, the wrap-around care is obviously a major bonus, and Lisa has also been grateful for Whitehill's policy of keeping the school open in adverse conditions. "So many schools seem to be prepared to close as soon as it snows but I have only ever known Whitehill close once, for one day, when the weather was absolutely dreadful," she remembers. "The Head and the staff go to a tremendous effort to make sure that parents aren't put in the position of having to take time off work or find alternative childcare, and even go out shovelling snow when necessary. That is hugely reassuring and a great credit to them."

### A valuable local resource

As a Local Councillor, Lisa has visited Whitehill Academy in her official role as well as that of a parent and believes that it is setting an excellent example to its pupils by providing valuable facilities to the community. "One thing which has been very successful is the offer of apprenticeships at the school to trainees from the Job Club which is held next door. Several of the apprentices have been helped into full-time jobs through this initiative and it is refreshing to see a school reaching out in this way to local people."

Lisa's enthusiasm for Whitehill is clear. "Harvey is happy there, safe and achieving well. He is thriving socially and I really believe this school is setting him up for life."

### Children say

The thing I like best at Whitehill is the really nice ICT suite," says Harvey, "and the best thing I have done there is F1 Challenge where we had to make things like name tags. Whoever had the best name tag could then win and be picked to race the Formula 1 cars.

I have made some really good friends at Whitehill. We have started merit points this year where if we bring our homework in on time and behave well in class and do good work. We can get bronze, silver and gold awards. Bronze award is a certificate and a badge, silver is picnic, badge and certificate and Gold is a day trip out, badge and certificate. I would like to win gold.



### Whitehill Community Academy

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