



Sue Stoddart has two sons. Jonas is 13 and Max, eight

## A great education and a nurturing environment - Sue couldn't ask for more than she has found at Whitehill Community Academy



### Somewhere everyone knows your name...

Sue chose Whitehill Community Academy for her sons for several reasons; an attractive Ofsted report and recommendations from friends. But, since she has experienced the school for herself she is more convinced than ever. "If I had to pick out just one thing which really appeals to me about Whitehill - and that's not easy as there are many - it would be the fantastic rapport that all the staff have with the children," explains Sue. "The children are treated as individuals, all known by name even by the Headteacher, and all are encouraged to achieve to the best of their own abilities. I really couldn't ask more from a school than that."

## More than expected

She might not ask more, but Sue believes she gets more in many ways. "Everyone is so approachable, and very friendly, so I would never have to feel I was a nuisance if I wanted to discuss something which was worrying me," she says. "Any time I have any questions or concerns I can ring up and will be welcomed in by the appropriate member of staff, and have invariably found that the response is appropriate and effective."

"I've even turned up too early by mistake to collect the children from after-school clubs and been able to have a cup of coffee in the staffroom and an informal chat with some of the teachers - that's pretty good service in my book!"

## Recognising potential

Obviously, it is her children's education which is paramount, and having two boys with different interests and abilities makes the right school setting even more important. "Jonas has always been very bright and a quick learner, whilst Max finds some subjects challenging," says Sue. "What pleases me is that the teaching methods are focused on each individual child's needs, strengths and weaknesses, and that they are set their own achievable targets. Given those goals, the children are encouraged to do their best within their own limits and they are neither held back nor pushed too far beyond their abilities. I think this is an excellent way of recognising every child's potential and helping them achieve it."

## Concerns addressed

Sue had had some concerns about some aspects of Max's speech development and was glad when this was also picked up by his teachers. "Max had some difficulty with pronunciation of certain letters and, rather than ignoring the problem, the school intervened by helping with a referral to a Speech and Language Therapist. The school staff worked closely with the therapist and with us to try and resolve the issue and Max is now making good progress. I was really impressed that the school made this effort on Max's behalf."

## Dedication

So supportive is Sue of Whitehill Academy that for a while she served as a Parent Governor before work commitments obliged her to stand down. Consequently, she is more than impressed with the dedication of the staff who run the many extra-curricular activities, their interaction with the children and their obvious enthusiasm for what they do.

"I have a responsible career in the care industry but I really take my hat off to people who can care for and nurture young children in the way that the teachers at Whitehill Academy do," she says. "I genuinely believe that my boys could not be given a better start and I am certain that they will achieve their potential because of the approach that Whitehill has both to education and to personal development. The teaching staff take pride in their students' achievements, however big or small and I like that, very much."

## Children say

Whilst Max and Jonas have enjoyed and benefitted from the academic aspect of the school, their main priorities are perhaps a little different from Sue's.

Max says...

"I like Whitehill because of the playground - there's lots to play on, and learning is fun."

Jonas says...

"What I miss the most about Whitehill is all the sports, mainly the footie team and the football banter with Mr H!"



## Whitehill Community Academy

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