



## Carlien Ras's family has recently joined St White's School from South Africa and everyone has settled in brilliantly

**Carlien and her husband have their son Corniel in Year 1 age 6 and their daughter Caterien, in Year 4 age 9.**

### Quick to settle

Carlien and her family moved to the UK from South Africa where children do not attend school until the year they turn 7. "The children are doing well. We enrolled last year and they started in September. They have adapted so well and are very happy to come to school every day. This has been their first experience of being educated in English and they have surprised us at how quickly they have settled in. The school has been a huge support and instrumental to the children settling so well," says Carlien.

### Big steps

Corniel had only experienced a short time at school before moving to the UK and he had not experienced being taught in English before starting at St White's. "Corniel had not yet started to learn to read and write. The children had experience of speaking and listening to English but they hadn't been taught in English. Corniel has picked everything up so quickly and is reading fluently in English already. He knew sounds and could recognise the alphabet but didn't know the words, so his progress is incredible," says Carlien.

### Building a new life with friends

Carlien is excited for the children as they are building friendships and meeting new people. "The class teachers have said that they've both made great friends already. We were worried about how the children would adjust but in hindsight we needn't have: they've done brilliantly. It's helped reassure us that we've made the right decision to move," says Carlien.

## Getting involved with activities

"There are lots of activities. Corniel loves sport; he's enjoying football, forest school, allotment club and multi-sports. Caterien has enjoyed photography club, computing club and Gymnastics. Every term, there is something different and something they want to be involved with. They've done Cooking Club and really enjoyed that. My husband and I are getting involved with school. Parents are regularly invited to attend assemblies and get involved in different activities with the children. We recently had an Olympic afternoon and truly enjoyed the activities. I've joined the PTA and love being involved in organising special events for the children. It's important to me to be involved with school and become part of the community," says Carlien.

## Whole child approach

At St White's, children are encouraged to explore and discover their interests and Carlien has noticed this already. "School works hard to develop the children holistically. They are encouraged to develop their interests and the children enjoy these opportunities. They love being with their friends and the teachers really seem to see the children for who they are. There is real encouragement for the children to discover what they love and what they enjoy learning and doing. The children are very fond of their teachers.

Caterien went on the Year 4 residential camp and was away for 2 days. She loved it. It was so quiet when she came back as she was so tired. They went to a place called "The Wilderness" so they were immersed in nature and stayed in tents. They are still all talking about it; she really enjoyed it," says Carlien.

## Dedicated teachers that make school feel special

"Each class has a bird's name which the children love and it gives a sense of identity within school. You spot the birds throughout school and it adds to a sense of belonging. St White's provide a safe and nurturing learning environment, they ensure all the children are supported to reach their full potential. I'm so grateful for the teacher's dedication to the children: they seem very special and we feel very blessed to be parents at St White's," says Carlien.

## Children say:

**Corniel says:** "I like playing football with my friends."

**Caterien says:** "My teacher is the best."



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