



Claire and Dave have seen Lawrence and Vincent thrive in the friendly environment of Olney Infant Academy

Happy and settled

Both Lawrence and Vincent have attended Olney for more than a year now and are very happy at the school. But what a difference that year has made to the family. Claire says: "This time last year I was having an awful time because I knew that the school they were attending just wasn't right for Lawrence. Now both my boys are happy at school. It was such a relief when I was offered places for the two of them at Olney."

Claire and Dave Dowling live in Olney with their sons, Vincent, aged seven, Lawrence, aged six, and Frank aged 18 months.

Happily Learning Together

Right move

"I now know that moving them both to Olney was the right thing to do. The previous school was probably okay for Vincent but it was not at all suitable for Lawrence," Claire says. "It was a very small school and there was no consistency of approach. They didn't seem to have any ability to work with children independently.

They seemed to pigeon hole Lawrence as 'trouble' right from the start and although they came up with strategies to help him they didn't stick to any of them."

Individual attention

Claire and Dave were very heartened that the staff at Olney were confident they would be able to deal with both boys. Dave says: "The head teacher, Steve Dunning, was very reassuring when we met him and he took the trouble to show us round the school himself. He continues to be reassuring and my experience is that the staff will all stick to what they have said to you. Nothing is too much trouble for them and they treat each child as an individual."

Encouraging achievement

Claire says: "Lawrence is very intelligent and gets bored easily. The other school saw it as a problem but Olney have dealt with this by giving him tasks to encourage him to use his skills. Staff at Olney have already worked out that Lawrence will mess around when the class are doing fun things but will really concentrate when it is Maths. Olney have also encouraged him to be proud of his achievements in reading and spelling."

New challenges

Claire says she was worried about moving Vincent because he had made friends at his old school. "But he has succeeded in walking into a new environment and making new friends with the help of the staff at Olney. He is doing well in class because he is much more challenged now. At his previous school he was top in everything but here at Olney he is constantly encouraged to do better and to achieve that little bit more."

Varied activities

Both the boys like Maths and they enjoy playing football and taking part in PE. Claire says: "Olney also provide a lot of extra activities and events for the children. Vincent did Spanish after school for a while and took part in the Olney pancake race even though it was during half term. He went in dressed as Dennis the Menace and Laurence dressed as the Gruffalo on Book Day when the school invited an author in to talk about his books and sign copies. On the last day of the half term they held a movie night and the children stayed to watch a film till five pm."

Friendly staff

Claire says: "I can't speak highly enough of Olney and I would definitely recommend it to other parents. All the staff are fantastic, including the ladies who work in the school office. Lawrence's teacher promised me he would be all right at Olney and he has been more than all right. Vincent has also had lovely teachers and is thriving in this happy atmosphere."

Children say

Lawrence says: "I love my teacher and going to school each day."

Vincent says: "I enjoy going to school and seeing all my friends."



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