



Twins Thomas and Emily are flourishing in different ways in the happy atmosphere of Olney Infant Academy

Class of their own

Thomas and Emily both made a good start at Olney at the age of four in different classes. Mum Julie says: "We chose Olney because it was important for us to be able to separate them. Until they started school they had spent every day together but James and I wanted them to be in different classes from the start so they could develop as individuals. The school reassured us that they could always go and see each other if they needed to. We felt splitting them from the start was better than doing so later. All the other schools locally had just one reception class so there would have been no scope for separating them anywhere else. They are not compared with each other by the teachers and are always treated as individuals, which reflects their very different characters".

Julie and James Paynter live in Olney with their twins, Thomas and Emily, aged six.

Happily Learning Together

Making friends

Thomas and Emily had no problems settling in and have been able to develop their own circle of friends. Julie says: "They took to it straight away and have never said they don't want to go to school. Although there are lots of children, Olney still has a friendly, community feel. Thomas and Emily play with children from the other years and know everyone."

Approachable staff

Olney is a happy place and the staff are all enthusiastic, Julie says. "The head teacher is very approachable and his door is always open to children and parents. Communication is good and regular newsletters and Parentmails keep parents updated with what is going on in the school."

Satisfied parents

"I have now become joint chair of FOIOA (Friends of Olney Infant Academy) with another mum because I feel the school has done a lot for my children and any additional support that we can offer the school can only be a good thing. James and I have made many friends through the school and I enjoy talking to other parents and seeing how their kids are getting on. Olney put evenings on for parents to show us how they teach English and Maths so that we can support our children and not try to teach them in a different way," Julie says.

Enjoying learning

"Thomas loves 'golden time' at the end of the week when he can choose an activity as a reward. He is quite quiet, a thinker and is keen to learn. He loves Maths, reading and writing and always wants to get things right. He has become more confident and independent and loves the outdoor facilities where staff teach the children in imaginative ways.

"Emily is still quite shy but her confidence has definitely grown. The school are helping her with Maths at the moment and being very supportive. She is creative and likes to draw and see her work on display or bring things home to show us. She also loves to write stories," Julie says.

Varied activities

"The twins are both always keen to do their homework, often asking on a Friday night if they can do it straight away" says Julie. "They both love doing yoga and Thomas plays tennis after school. There are plenty of extra-curricular activities and after school clubs for them to join at Olney."

Happy atmosphere

"I would tell other parents that Olney is a happy, caring environment where children will have the best possible early education experience. The classrooms are welcoming and stimulating and often if the children go somewhere in the morning, the photos from the trip are on the walls for the parents to see in the afternoon," Julie says.

Children say

Thomas says: "I like school because I love learning and doing experiments."

Emily says: "I like colouring in at 'golden time', playing with my friends and the yummy lunches we have."



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