



Rebecca and Robert are pleased how well Thomas has settled in at Olney Infant Academy

Careful preparation

Rebecca is delighted with the good start made by Thomas at Olney since last September and grateful for the care taken by the school to prepare new children. She says: "The school did a brilliant job settling him in. Preparation started before the summer holidays when the whole family was invited in for a couple of mornings. Thomas was able to go in and use all the facilities and equipment. It helped him become familiar with the school before he had to go in on his own."

Rebecca and Robert Wemyss live in Olney with their son, Thomas, aged five, and daughter, Emily, aged two.

Happily Learning Together

Happy occasion

Rebecca said it was a positive memory that the family were able to talk about during the summer holidays. "Because we were with him we saw what he did and could discuss it with him afterwards. All the teachers were there to answer questions and he enjoyed playing in their outside classroom. They use it all the year round for learning through play. They have a sand pit with dinosaurs in it and many other things that really stimulate the children."

Trust building

She says that Thomas has had no problems settling in. "After summer the children are introduced gradually to the school and go in for mornings or afternoons. They don't do full days straight away. Their teacher and teaching assistant come to your house for a cup of coffee and a chat to get to know your child. They ask the child to show them their favourite toy. It builds trust and gives them information to use later if the child is unsettled."

Play facilities

Rebecca says Olney has great facilities and a fantastic outside play space with swings and a climbing frame. "There is a lot for them inside too and Thomas particularly enjoys playing with learning activities set out before the register."

He loves the outside classroom and doing messy play with sand, water and paint. I can see that they are teaching the children the behaviour necessary for progressing through the rest of the school."

Free play

"Thomas enjoys 'golden time' when he can choose an activity or go to visit friends in other classrooms. It is a reward for being good and gives him chance to interact with other classes. He likes yoga and music and will eventually get the opportunity to learn to play an instrument or do French and Spanish after school," Rebecca says.

Work displays

Rebecca thinks rewards such as giving them stickers and 'golden time' show that the staff really understand five year olds. She says: "You can tell a lot from the walls of the school which are always full of work and photos and parents get to know what they are doing. Thomas is making excellent progress and his reading is really coming along. He has been taught by staff using a reading programme that involves learning through phonics and it obviously works."

Well organised

"There is an intake of 90 children every year, which sounds a lot, but the school have a lot of staff and facilities. They break them down into smaller groups and the classes all have different entrances. A lot of thought has gone into the organisation of the school. Now he is in there and settled I am happy with the size of the intake. I admit it was a concern to begin with but I can see that the staff know how to make it work, Rebecca says."

Building confidence

"I would recommend Olney to any parents who are concerned about their child starting school. Thomas's confidence has really grown because he was quite shy before. He now has a nice group of friends and never complains about going in," says Rebecca.

Children say

Thomas says: "I like school because everything's fun."



Olney Infant Academy
Spinney Hill Road
Olney
MK46 5AD

Tel: (01234) 711388
Fax: (01234) 717067
Email: admin@olneyinfant.org
www.olneyinfantschool.co.uk

