



Vinnie is doing so well at Avonbourne, I'm very proud of the young man he is becoming

Lily Martin lives in Bournemouth with her son, Vinnie Brewer, aged 16.

A helping hand

Vinnie had difficulty initially adjusting being a pupil at Harewood College and one particular member of staff really helped him to settle in. Lily says: "Vinnie wasn't in a good frame of mind between Year 7 and Year 8 as he was very unsettled at school. One person that made a real difference was Miss Ball, Head of Year 7. She really was outstanding. Miss Ball recognised that Vinnie was struggling, and she took him under her wing and kept a close eye on him. When he was feeling stressed or not quite himself, she would get him to come and sit with her and this helped him to feel grounded. Gradually he started to enjoy school more.

"It gave me such peace of mind as it was a very worrying time knowing how unhappy my son was then. At one stage, I was so concerned I had considered moving Vinnie to a different school but thanks to the help we received, things gradually started to improve. From year 9 the school was taken over by United Learning and became Avonbourne Boys' Academy. I've watched Vinnie become an absolutely amazing boy. He is now in Year 11 and Vinnie is happy when he's at school and he's doing so well. Words cannot express how proud I am."



Excelling at school

"Vinnie is growing into a really lovely young man, and I think that's partly down to Avonbourne Boys Academy," Lily explains. "I think they've worked so hard with all the kids and Vinnie has achieved so much from when he first started. English is his favourite subject, and he really excels in that. He also enjoys history and geography. He recently had a grade nine predicted in design and tech and I was just blown away with that. All of his grades are good, he really is smashing it at school."

Learning environment

The focused learning environment at Avonbourne is beneficial for all pupils. Lily says: "What's been especially helpful for Vinnie is the disruption-free learning environment at Avonbourne as he really benefits from having that structure in place. He gets on really well with all of his teachers and they are great with him. When he comes home from school, he actually wants to get on and do his homework. He really doesn't see it as a chore. He just wants to do well at school."

Friends together

Vinnie has a wide circle of friends and enjoys being able to chat with both his male and female friends at Avonbourne.

"It's great that the girls' and boys' academies can now mix together as I feel that's had a big impact on Vinnie," Lily says: "He's really grown in confidence, and it's made such a difference. He had previously been in a mixed class in primary school so that change in dynamic and being separated from his female friends partly contributed to how unsettled he initially felt I think. He has such a great unit of friends, many of them he has known since primary school. He enjoys playing basketball at school too."

Ideal location

Lily also went to school at what's now known as Avonbourne when she was younger, and she has really good memories of her time there. She says: "We still live in the same area that I grew up in, so Avonbourne is ideally located for us. I knew it was where I wanted Vinnie to attend from him being a little boy."



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Some of the people you will get to know:

Mrs Dyer - Principal

Miss Barr - Assistant Principal

Vinnie says:

"I like going to Avonbourne because I like seeing my mates. I also enjoy PE lessons with Mr Brown."