

Shehroze Akhtar is a student in Year 8 at Essa Academy. His brother, Mehroze, is in Year 10.

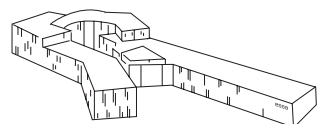


Shehroze is hungry to take part in everything Essa Academy has to offer – and that is a great deal

Looking at future goals

Although he is only twelve years old, Shehroze already has a pretty good idea of what he wants to do and how to go about it. "I am thinking about becoming an architect," he says. "I am a boy who likes to take part in everything but I have several goals in life and I think that Essa Academy is a good place to help me achieve them."

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Aiming high

Shehroze is keen to involve himself in everything he can, from mainstream lessons to foreign trips and as a school representative as a Prefect. "I like more or less everything. The Personalised Learning plan is a great idea because it means you get to choose the things you most enjoy and think you will be good at in Year 8 but even if you're not sure the teachers are very helpful in guiding you in the right direction. When I was moved up to the Year 9 English class because I was good at the subject I was nervous at first but my teachers and the other students supported me so it was the right thing to do. After a while I felt much more comfortable and started to really enjoy working at a higher level."

Variety – the spice of life!

As a Prefect, Shehroze enjoys his role as a go-between and greeter at events such as the Academic Review Days almost as much as he has appreciated visits to the local theatre and a recent trip to France. "The theatre performance was to help us see how a production was put together and afterwards we had to write it all up for an assessment. The French visit didn't just teach us about cooking but was combined with lessons in the language so it was really useful. I like the way Essa combines lessons like this, and gives us the chance to do things differently."

Efficient use of technology

Shehroze's father, Mahmood, is greatly impressed with Essa Academy, too, where his older son, Mehroze, is also a pupil. "Both my sons have been supported in every way by their teachers and they thoroughly enjoy going to school," he says. "The use of technology enables them to access information easily and helps them to complete homework assignments, for example, more efficiently. The staff are always contactable by the boys or myself and invariably respond to queries, even over the weekend if necessary, and I think that is brilliant. Advances in teaching methods offer children so many opportunities and it's wonderful that Essa is using these to the children's advantage; when I was at school we were lucky if we had a calculator!"



An attitude to admire

The boys have their individual talents, with Shehroze a particularly gifted artist, and Mahmood has seen both how their strengths are encouraged and any weaknesses supported. "If ever I have been concerned that one of them is falling behind in any way I have been reassured that they will be given the additional help they might need. The teachers are very approachable and understanding; as an example, when Mehroze underperformed in a recent test, they realised that it was because he was tired after fasting and late prayers during Ramadan, and agreed that he could retake the test on another occasion. This is an attitude I admire."

Seize the opportunity

Mahmood believes that, in order to learn, grow and mature, children need to experience life outside the classroom and has encouraged both Mehroze and Shehroze to take up opportunities wherever they can. "They have been on educational trips abroad with the school, and Mehroze took part in a television programme, demonstrating the use of the iPad as a learning tool. I feel that if you are offered the chance to do something to further your knowledge you should take it, and at Essa Academy my sons are making the most of a remarkable school."

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