

Lynne was looking for a school that would **motivate** and **encourage** her sons in their own individual **interests** – and she has found it at Sandbach School



Sandbach School
Opportunity, Achievement, Excellence



Lynne and Cameron Neil's two sons – Harvey, 14 and Oscar, 12, have been students at Sandbach School since Year 7.

Weighing up the options

Finding the school in which you are confident that your children will thrive is not an easy task and there are many considerations. As relative newcomers to the area, Lynne and Cameron were able to look objectively at all the local schools but still had inevitable concerns when she and Cameron finally decided on Sandbach.

"Having weighed everything up, Sandbach came out on top of our list largely because it is a single-sex school, which was

something we felt was an advantage as far as our boys were concerned," she explains. "It also has an excellent reputation for its extra-curricular opportunities and this was a major factor in our decision. My only real worry was that their primary school was not one of the Sandbach 'feeder' schools and that they would miss the organised transition process, but having talked this through with one of the teachers, I was given sensible and effective advice. Both boys settled in very quickly during their first term and we were impressed about how seamlessly they felt themselves part of the school community.

Both Harvey and Oscar have, through being encouraged to pursue and develop their own personal interests, slotted in very well amongst their new classmates."

Inclusive and nurturing

Lynne's only other possible reason for concern was the fact that Sandbach has a very strong sporting ethos and neither boys are keen sportsmen. However, this has not proved to be an issue. "Sandbach is a very inclusive and nurturing environment with cultural and creative opportunities given equal emphasis to sport," she says. "I was particularly reassured by the very strong Music Department and this has especially helped Harvey to find his niche at the school." Harvey has played the clarinet since primary school and has now been supported to take up the saxophone. He is a member of the Wind Band, the Clarinet Quartet, the Saxophone Group, the Junior Big Band and has ambitions to progress further still.

A love of literature and learning

As far as Oscar is concerned, his love of reading has allowed him the chance to become a member of the school's team of Librarians. "Oscar likes nothing better than to spend his time in the library and he jumped at the opportunity to apply for a role there. He had to go through an application and interview – another good learning experience! – and is not only there to issue and receive books but to help in events such as World Book Day and author visits, and to advise other students in their reading choices. At the moment, it is his perfect day job!"

Focus on the individual

Lynne has no concerns that these particular interests interfere with Harvey and Oscar's academic performance, with both the boys making strong academic progress. "They both did well at primary school and I really hoped that momentum would carry

on in high school," she says. "That has undoubtedly been the case, with the bonus that they have been able to focus additionally on their own individual interests. Although Sandbach School is noted for its sporting achievement, it is not elitist in that way and thoroughly values those students who show an interest in many other disciplines."

Motivation

The advice given to Lynne when she first approached Sandbach School was 'encourage your children to make the most of the extra-curricular opportunities' and, having done so with great success, she would endorse this view. "The school does not push children into anything but if a student shows an interest, he will be supported, encouraged and offered every chance to shine using the skills and abilities he has. This attitude is empowering and I am sure, the key to helping children to make an all-round success of their education."

An unparalleled education

It is telling that both Harvey and Oscar have 100% attendance records at Sandbach, proof indeed that it was the right choice of school. "There are other very good schools in the county but Sandbach has been the one which gives our sons an unparalleled secondary education and the opportunity to develop their personalities and interests. I am glad that we listened to our instincts rather than worrying about things which turned out not to be important."

Children say

Oscar: "I enjoy going to the Library. It's like a second home and I like being part of the Library community."



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