



# St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School

*Let God's love shine in our lives, as we care, share and learn together*



Joanna Jankowska and Pawel Jankowski live in Balby with their sons, Michal, aged seven, and Szymon, aged four, and their daughter Maja, who is three months old.

## Michal and Szymon are making **fast progress** in the **happy atmosphere** at St Francis Xavier Primary

### Learning language

Although the family speak Polish at home, Michal and Szymon have come on with their English in leaps and bounds since starting at St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School. Mum Joanna says: "Michal, who is in Year Two, now speaks perfect English. The mothers of some of the other children have said they didn't even realise he was Polish. I am also impressed with Szymon's language skills now he has started at the school. He has begun to speak English with the other children and is learning new words every day."

### Catholic faith

"We are a Catholic family and so the faith side was a priority for us when we chose the school but we are also very happy with the way our boys have progressed there. I can see what a tremendous job the staff do each day, both from the point of view of a parent and in the course of my work as a Learning Support Assistant at the school," Joanna says.

## Settling in

"The school has a very friendly atmosphere and both Michal and Szymon were looked after when they first started and settled in well. The teachers were kind and the boys felt comfortable being left with them. It feels like a safe environment in which to leave your child. All the older children are kind and friendly towards the younger ones and play with them in the playground," Joanna says.

## Extra support

"The educational side is brilliant and there is plenty of support for children from different countries who have English as an additional language," Joanna says. "There are Learning Support Assistants in the classrooms to help all the children, both those of other nationalities and English children who need extra support with any barriers they experience to their learning. Not all children are at the same level and some need help with understanding what they are doing in reading, writing or Maths."

## Challenging work

Joanna is pleased that children working at a higher level are given more challenging tasks and helped to progress as well. "For example, Michal is very good at Maths and so his teacher challenges him with more difficult work. I am really happy about this as a parent. Michal loves going to school. Every year he says the teacher is his favourite. He has never had one he didn't like,

they have all been kind. If Michal has done particularly well, his teacher will leave me a message. When he does something good in Maths she shows him that she is proud of him and is constantly helping him to move forward."

## Literacy and numeracy

Szymon is also making good progress and now knows all his letters and numbers. "I used to be a teacher in Poland and I know that Polish children don't usually reach that stage until they are six or seven. They are still just playing in the nursery. But at St Francis Xavier there are different areas for different subjects, such as Maths, writing and reading. There is also a beautiful outside area for the children with bikes and dressing up clothes to play with," Joanna says.

## Clubs and activities

"In the long break at lunchtime there are plenty of toys and equipment for the older children to play with outside. Sometimes the school invite people in to teach them football and rugby skills," Joanna says. "The school also take them on regular trips. Recently they went to a farm where they were able to talk to the farmer and touch the animals. They also have a wide choice of after school clubs, doing activities such as baking, reading for pleasure, sports and art."



*Szymon says: "I always want to go to school."*

*Michal says: "I like school because my teacher challenges me with hard work."*



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