

Nagina cannot speak highly enough of The Brier School, and says the staff have worked magic on young Akmal!



Asif and Nagina Hussain live with their son Akmal, five, in Dudley.

Single transition

Nagina visited several special schools, but The Brier exceeded all her expectations.

“Akmal has microcephaly and delayed development and has been at The Brier since he was four,” says Nagina.

“I went to see three schools, but I liked the fact that the kids go through from primary to secondary school at The Brier, so he will not have to make another transition. I also like the fact that there is a mainstream primary and secondary school on either side and if children get to a stage where they can cope at mainstream school The Brier will help them to move across.”

Negative to positive

Nagina had very negative initial impressions of what a special school would be like.

“When I was told that Akmal needed a special school I was very scared,” says Nagina. “However, when I visited The Brier I came out in tears because it was so amazing. I cannot express how I felt and Akmal loves it too. As soon as he sees the transport vehicle each day he rushes to get to it and it’s brilliant to see him happy, because he used to be very clingy.”

Care and cooperation

The staff are working to help Nagina overcome behaviour problems at home.

“Everything is an obstacle with Akmal at home, particularly with eating and sitting still, but at school he is totally different. The dinner lady said he sits down and eats all of his meals without problems and this made me very happy as it used to really worry me. I think he likes copying the other children, and the school helps him communicate his food choices with stickers and other techniques.

“They sent me photographs of him feeding himself and I couldn’t believe it! I have the picture pinned up at home. I asked if they could encourage him to eat with his right hand because of our religion and they are helping with this. Nothing is too much trouble.”

Fantastic feedback

Nagina receives regular updates about Akmal’s progress.

“Communication is great and the teachers give me amazing feedback. When I hear how well Akmal is doing I think they must have magical powers! The teachers encourage me and provide me with resources to try at home. I know Akmal behaves like an angel at school, which helps me to try and work on his behaviour at home too.”

Amazing facilities

The Brier was purpose built in 2004 and is fully equipped for children with complex needs.



“The facilities are fantastic,” says Nagina. “They even have buttons outside the classrooms, which say the name of the class when pressed. The door handles are all very high so children can’t leave without an adult, and they have absolutely everything children need, including amazing play areas and an outdoor learning facility.”

New milestones

Every time a child achieves something new it is another milestone for parents.

“There are two huge halls at the school, with a middle partition to make them into a single massive hall when needed,” says Nagina. “This is where they held the Christmas production and I couldn’t believe how high the standard was. Every individual matters at The Brier and nobody is ever excluded. Everyone had something amazing to do and for a mum to see this is yet another fantastic milestone.”

A whole new world

“The Brier opens up a whole new world for children with special needs,” says Nagina. “I have been recommending it to so many people because in my personal experience it is amazing. The amount of time and effort that the teachers put into these children speaks volumes.”

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