

The Brier School is helping Elliot to cope with a world that he doesn't understand



Carly Powell lives in Amblecote, Stourbridge with son Elliot, 10.

Love at first sight

As soon as Carly visited The Brier she knew it was the right school for Elliot.

“Elliot was diagnosed with autism when he was three and The Brier was recommended to me by a teacher at his enhanced nursery who said it was the best school in the area,” says Carly. “We went and looked around and fell in love with it immediately. The head teacher knows every single child by name and understands and encourages each child as they go past. I realised that if there is something the staff can bring out in a child they really will, they are so lovely.”

One to one

Understanding the importance of play is an important goal for Elliot.

“Elliot doesn’t understand the world around him or how to interact with people,” says Carly, “Educationally he is doing well, but he doesn’t know how to share, or understand that other people might have feelings. He also doesn’t see the point of playing. The staff work very closely with him and try to encourage him to take turns and to understand play. He is currently working with a little boy that has more severe autism than he does and his job is to wait for this little boy at the end of the day and help him to carry his bag, which helps Elliot to realise that he doesn’t always have to come first.”

Staff-pupil ratio

Small class sizes and a high ratio of teachers benefit children like Elliot.

“There are only 12 children in his class and three teachers,” says Carly. “The staff put a lot of effort into every child. Each class has a main teacher, a teaching assistant and at least one child is likely to have a personal teaching assistant as well.”

Life experiences

Social experiences and chances to interact are beneficial to all children.

“The school takes the children on lots of trips,” says Carly. “They are going to the theatre next week and recently studied the Tudors and paid a visit to the Tudor House where they dressed up in Tudor clothes and experienced what life was like. They’ve also been to the Glass Cone in Stourbridge and painted little Christmas decorations. The school tries to follow the national curriculum but adapts it to suit the needs of each individual child.”

Fun and games

Children can enjoy a variety of afterschool and lunchtime clubs and sports.

“Elliot loves trampolining, playing football and the outdoor gym,” says Carly. “Educationally his favourite subject is IT because he absolutely loves computers, but



Elliot says: “I like doing ICT and PE. My teachers are nice.”

there is an IT club at lunch time twice a week and he goes to that as well.”

Great progress

Carly is delighted with how far Elliot has come and thinks that his future is bright.

“I’m really pleased with Elliot’s progress, and he has done things that I never thought he would be able to do.

“He was completely mute when he started and didn’t talk until he was five years old, but now he can interact and chat away with the teachers. He also wouldn’t sit down and try normal food but now we can go out for a meal and sit down and eat like a normal family. He has come such a long way and I would recommend The Brier to anybody. Elliott would not be the child he is today without that school.”

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