

Football mad Kayleigh can't bear to lose a minute of extra time at The Brier School



Tina Williams lives in Brierley Hill with daughter Kayleigh Gibson, 10, and sisters Samantha, 12 and Victoria, six.

Structured environment

Kayleigh is thriving in the structured routines and happy environment that The Brier provides.

“Kayleigh has learning disabilities and had some behavioural issues so after her assessment I was keen to find a suitable special school for her,” says Tina.

“Kayleigh needed a highly structured environment, which The Brier provides and it is also the most local to us. When Kayleigh was four I went to look around and thought it was great, but I also liked the fact that she could stay on until she was 16, so she wouldn't face any further upset from moving later on.”

Clean and dry

Many children at The Brier require specialist help with toilet training.

“When Kayleigh first started she was still in nappies and also had behavioural issues,” recalls Tina. “I found it all quite challenging, but within weeks of being at The Brier she was out of nappies during the day. The staff worked really hard with her and although she used to have to change three or four times a day she is now doing very well. The staff give out certificates and awards for good behaviour and have special assemblies, which the children love.”

Working wonders

Tina is delighted at Kayleigh's progress and the independence she is gaining.

“Kayleigh absolutely loves going the school,” says Tina. “She gets on really well and is much more independent - it is doing wonders for her. She gets to do various jobs such as being toast monitor at the breakfast club, and has also been a playground monitor, which she loves. She's in the choir and they do so much with the children that I'm really pleased.”

Family feel

Small class sizes and a good sense of community create a very homely feel.

“The Brier is quite a new build and the classrooms are really nice,” says Tina. “I think there are 14 children in Kayleigh's class, but when you go into the school all the older children know the younger children and they all look after each other, which is great.

“Kayleigh loves to go to school and gets very annoyed if her transport is late because she doesn't want to miss out on anything!”

Football crazy

The Brier has many indoor and outdoor play facilities, but the football cage is Kayleigh's favourite.

“Kayleigh loves all sports, but football is her favourite and she loves going into the football cage to play,” says Tina.

“The schools have special events with other schools from inside and outside the borough, and Kayleigh recently went to Wolverhampton to take part in one, which she loved. She has made lots of friends although they are mainly boys who play football!”

A helping hand

Tina is keen to recommend The Brier to other parents.

“I would definitely recommend the school,” she says. “The head teacher and the staff are really good, and always helpful. They like to keep you informed about what is going on and are always taking the children out and about on bus rides and helping them to develop social skills so they are not stuck in school all the time. For example when they recently did a gardening and agriculture project the school took them to the garden centre and the kids loved it. It's a fantastic school!”

Kayleigh says: “I like to go to school and be a great helper. I also like to show the new children around the school so they are not frightened.”



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