

Karen has appreciated the way that Hawthorns School has effectively and sensitively addressed her sons' particular needs:



Karen lives in Ashton-under-Lyne with her daughter, Sophie, eleven and her twin sons, Jack and Frank, nine. Jack and Frank have been attending Hawthorns School since they were four.

Jack and Frank are non-identical twins who were born prematurely. They have a condition called Nystagmus which affects their vision, and Global Developmental Delay; Frank has also Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) and is in remission from Leukemia.

The best environment to nurture capabilities:

With all their needs, Karen was understandably anxious about the boys attending Hawthorns School. They both had language and communication difficulties and Frank was receiving treatment for Leukaemia. "Before they started, we met with everyone involved in Jack and Frank's care and the staff at the school, which was great and really helped ease my anxieties. I instantly got a warm feeling for the school," says Karen. "I felt very reassured that it was the best environment for them to go into to have their needs met and their capabilities nurtured."



Happy, contented and progressing:

Karen knew almost straight away that her boys were enjoying their time at Hawthorns School. "Even though they couldn't tell me about their school day in words, I knew they enjoyed it. How they behaved at home after their school day told me they were happy," explains Karen.

"When the boys are unhappy, I know about it! Jack and Frank are definitely happy at Hawthorns School. And the staff have got my boys to a level further than I thought they would have been able to," says Karen.

A fantastic support system:

Jack and Frank have had a lot of behavioural and emotional needs during their time at Hawthorns School. Karen speaks very highly of the level of support and the flexible approach the family has received throughout: "The staff put a care plan in place for Frank. Even when Frank was ill, nothing was ever too much trouble," explains Karen. "They liaised with specialist staff about the care he needed which made me feel reassured that I could entrust his care to the school. They never made me feel that I couldn't send him in to school. I knew that if he was well enough to go in, they would take very good care of him and would always communicate with me," says Karen.

Always willing to listen:

Karen is incredibly grateful to the school and the staff for their approach to Frank and Jack's care. "You can speak to anyone, including the Headteacher and everyone is willing to help and to offer their support. They listen! They're very patient and very well equipped," says Karen. "They have a fantastic support system in place which, I cannot fault. The help that they give you, the level of understanding and their ability to deal with delicate situations is amazing."

Each child considered an individual:

Karen feels that her boys are always looked upon as individuals and offered care and support that matches their individual needs. "Even though Frank was very ill when he first started, Jack has never been put in the background because of that. They are both just as important. I am very grateful to them for the care and attention they offer to both boys."

"The staff have always considered them as individuals with individual needs. They've done their absolute best to address these," explains Karen. "The school has helped with a referral to an outside agency for specialist behavioural therapy to support Jack with his emotional needs. In the interim they're offering counselling sessions within school. I always feel the school has the best interests of both children at heart."

An excellent school that genuinely cares:

Karen adds: "It's an excellent school. It's been very apparent to me that they genuinely care about the children. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend Hawthorns School."



Children say:

Jack says: "I like that you can make friends and that you can learn. The teachers help me and listen to me. My favourite thing about school is going!"

Frank says: "School is very good! I like listening. I like learning. I like phonics."