

Shaheen and Mudassir believe Hawthorns School offers a happy environment with staff who are very talented at nurturing individual strengths:



Shaheen and Mudassir Zaeem live in Droylsden with their twin sons Adeed and Aseef, ten. Adeed has delayed development and started at Hawthorns School as a non-verbal four year old.

Future hopes:

When a child starts at Hawthorns School, the parents are given a paper leaf and asked to write what they would like their child to achieve during their time at the school. The leaf is hung on the Hopes and Dreams tree at the entrance to the school. As the pupil approaches the end of their time at Hawthorns, the leaf is revisited and a photograph of the child is placed on a butterfly beside the leaf.

Shaheen remembers being asked to do this and thinks it's a lovely to mark your child's progress. "Adeed's speech has always been the biggest problem for him so we wrote on that leaf about our hopes for him to develop some language skills. He still has a year left at the school but we are thrilled that he has come such a long way during his time at Hawthorns School. They have supported him with speech therapy throughout. From not speaking at all, he now loves singing and performing, which I think shows how far he has progressed and the skills of the staff."



Working together:

For Shaheen and Mussadir, the skilled staff are a real strength of Hawthorns School. "They are very approachable, friendly and incredibly helpful. But they are also incredibly skilled in working with children with special needs. Whenever we've met with them, they have always told us what aspects they are working on to help Adeed and they have always done their best to work with us as a team," explains Shaheen. "To help Adeed with his speech, they encouraged us to use symbols with him at home and provided us with the same set they were using at school, as well as teaching us to sign. I think working together in this way has made it much easier for Adeed to grasp the skills he needs to develop his language and communication."

Getting the best from each children:

In addition to the the skills and approachability of staff, Shaheen loves the way they relate to the children. "They are really very good and it's clear to see that Adeed has a good relationship with them," says Shaheen. "They use a whole school reward system where children are rewarded with stars so they know they have worked well at school and they encourage parents to do the same at home. I think the school has the perfect systems in place and the right staff to work with children with special needs. They know how to get the best from them."

Small group activities to encourage growth:

Shaheen believes the group activities on offer at Hawthorns School have really helped to develop Adeed's social skills. Shaheen explains: "Adeed was very quiet originally and didn't like to join in, but the school offers lots of group activities which have helped Adeed develop his skills in this area. We've seen some wonderful changes. He's very happy there and has lots of friends now, which is brilliant to see."

Recognising individual strengths:

In the school's summer show last year, Adeed's growing confidence earned him a part singing and dancing on the stage in front of an audience. Shaheen explained "Adeed loves music and singing! It was wonderful that the school recognised this. It really showed how much his confidence has grown and it was good to see the school recognising his capabilities in this area and giving him something to do that he enjoys so much!"

Shaheen adds: "It's amazing to see how Adeed has progressed. Hawthorns School is a very good school. We are really very happy with it!"



Children say:

Adeed's favourite thing about school is: "My teachers!"