



# As an ex-pupil of Heathlands Shabina has happy memories of the school, which offers the best of care for her sons

## Moving from mainstream

Shabina's eldest son used to go to a local mainstream school with a good deaf unit, but when this closed the family were forced to find a new school for him. From personal experience Shabina knew that Heathlands would provide her children with a perfect education.

"Both of my sons now go to Heathlands as day students and they absolutely love it," says Shabina. "As a child I came here myself so I didn't hesitate in sending them as I knew that they would be happy there. It's a brilliant school and my sons are both really happy and doing well, which makes me happy too."

Shabina Kuesar and her husband live in Watford with their sons Ali Akbar Shah, 13 and Ali Asghar Shah, seven.



Heathlands School

Nursery, Primary & Secondary Provision, Day & Residential



## Improving communication skills

Although Ali Akbar was doing quite well at mainstream school, Shabina is delighted with the progress he has made since coming to Heathlands.

"Although the boys were signing and using BSL before they came to Heathlands it was important to me that they were happy and confident in using this and that they become the best that they can be," says Shabina.

"My eldest son is now in Year 8 and my youngest is in Year 2 and I am so happy with how much they are learning here.

"My youngest son started at the school when he was four and his signing and communication have really improved. Both boys receive a lot of support from the staff at Heathlands and I have noticed that their confidence has grown so much. They are both doing well and Ali's maths and English have really improved."

## Finding a second family

Shabina's parents are hearing and she experienced first hand the frustration of being unable to communicate fluently with them. This made her determined to ensure her boys learned the skills that would help them to communicate their feelings.

"As a child of hearing parents I had a lot of communication problems," explains Shabina. "This was very difficult, but when I came to Heathlands it was like I had found my second family. Everybody was so positive and I was able to sign with everyone. I have such happy memories of being at Heathlands.

"When my boys were younger they used to go to a local play group where they were the only deaf children

and nobody signed and I know that felt quite isolated at that time. At Heathlands they have deaf peers, which means that they can socialise and communicate easily, and they love going to school every day - just like I did. In fact they get very upset if they even have to miss a day!"

## A very happy school

Heathlands has undergone many improvements to its infrastructure and facilities in recent years, and Shabina is delighted that both of her boys are able to benefit from these.

"Although I recognise many of the buildings from when I was a pupil here myself, I can see that there have

been big improvements at the school and the facilities are excellent," says Shabina.

"I would definitely recommend Heathlands to other parents. It is fantastic. I had such a lovely time when I came here. It helped me to grow in confidence and I wanted to pass that happiness and confidence on to my children. Heathlands has done that.

"Next year Heathlands is celebrating its 40th anniversary and I'm really looking forward to meeting some of my old teachers and friends. I still miss being a pupil here, and if I could, I would love to come back!"



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