

Zoe believes Whitton Primary School is doing an **excellent job** of **stretching children** through the use of **innovative** and **fun** learning **challenges**



Zoe and Anton Smith live in Ipswich with their children, Unique, 13, Harmony, 11 in Year 6, Angel, 8 in Year 3, Kingston, 4 in Nursery, Precious, 2 and Eternity, 1.

The obvious choice

Zoe and her sister both went to Whitton Primary School so it was a school Zoe was very familiar with. "It's just around the corner from where we live and I'd continued to hear positive things about it, so it seemed the obvious choice for my family."

Many strengths

Zoe has three children currently at the school and her eldest recently left for secondary school; she's also a parent governor, so she has lots of experience with Whitton Primary School. "I think it's a school with many strengths. Communication is certainly a strong point. They're very approachable and have an open door policy. It's very friendly and welcoming and somewhere the children are happy to be, which is so important.

"I think the thing that stands out most about school for my children, are the teachers. They all comment how much fun learning is at Whitton."

Getting children involved

The Chilli Challenge is a system in place in Maths and English lessons to help the children participate in setting their own learning challenges. Zoe thinks it's a great idea and something her own children really enjoy getting involved with. "The children are asked to rate how they feel about the lesson, and how ready they feel for being challenged, from mild to spicy to hot. It's a good way for the teachers to understand how the children feel about the lesson and a great way for the children to communicate their understanding and comfort levels."

Rewarding hard work and achievements

Zoe adds: "There's a lot of praise and encouragement within the Chilli Challenge from the teachers but ultimately it's about the children feeling comfortable and feeling able to move up to the next challenge in the following lesson."

There's also a house point system in place at Whitton which Zoe has found her children really like. "I think children are quite competitive and enjoy working for the benefit of their team. They're able to gain house points as part of a reward system and the House with the most points at the end of the term gets to enjoy a non-uniform day. The children love it and I think it's a good way to mark their achievements and hard work and to teach them about working together!"

Making homework fun

Whitton Primary School's 'homework take away menu' is another innovative tool Zoe believes the school uses well to engage children in their learning. "It's a clever way of ensuring children are enthusiastic about continue their learning at home. They're given a menu with numerous homework tasks listed, each with a monetary value attached. The children are required to spend a certain amount of money each week by undertaking a collection of homework tasks from the menu. It's a really fun and interesting way of structuring homework, in a way that makes the children feel like they are in control of their learning."

A positive and progressive school

Zoe adds: "I believe Whitton Primary School is a positive and progressive school. It's somewhere my children want to go, which is brilliant, as I believe being happy at school helps to ensure they are motivated to learn. I think their enjoyment of school has a great deal to do with the warm and friendly staff and the way the teachers ensure learning is interactive and constantly engaging and fun."

Children say:

Harmony says: "I like the teachers at Whitton Primary School because they're always setting new challenges."

Angel says: "The teachers are always happy to go over the work with you to ensure you understand it."

Kingston says: "I really like my school because the teachers make everything fun."



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