

Polly's children have discovered an exciting new life in the Old Country with the help of Summerfields Primary Academy



Happy co-incidence

The Barden family moved back to the UK three years ago after twelve years living in New Zealand. The timing of their return was designed to fit in with when the girls were due to start formal education so looking for a primary school was at the top of their list.

Co-incidentally, friends in New Zealand had previously lived in Royston and had sent their own children to Summerfields Primary Academy and for Polly that was recommendation enough. "I took their advice on trust and now I am absolutely thrilled that we did so," says Polly. "It was always going to be something of a culture shock for my son, who had already spent three years at a tiny school, but apart from a few wobbles at the start he adapted quickly and well. His teachers were aware of the fact that he might find some things a bit strange at first but they helped him to integrate and feel at home."



The right results

There are many things that Polly especially likes about Summerfields, not least amongst which are the welcoming atmosphere and the child-focused approach which, she believes, helps the children to engage so well with learning.

The great outdoors

Having been used to a fairly rural outdoor life, Polly's two youngest children thoroughly enjoy the chance to take advantage of the grounds at Summerfields, where they can play in the mud kitchen and woodland and even have lessons in the 'outdoor classroom'. "The school likes to get the children outside as much as possible and even provides protective clothing for them so they don't come home dirty. The allotment is a lovely idea and the fruit and vegetables the children help to cultivate. My daughter was very proud of the potato she brought home – unfortunately it wasn't quite enough for a family!"

Little things that make a big difference

Polly believes that it is the little extra things that make a school special; whether it's involving the children in events such as the Harvest Festival, making decorations for the Christmas Tree, or practical issues such as finding ways to help parents. "The Too Good To Go scheme is a brilliant idea," she says. "Parents donate items of uniform they no longer need and they are sold to other parents to raise money for the annual pantomime. A lot of thought goes into these projects and it all helps to bring the school together as a community."

Welcome home

Polly's youngest children love their school, as does Polly. "It's been a great find and has welcomed us back to England in the best possible way. There are some things I miss about New Zealand but we came back primarily for the quality of the education and have not been disappointed."



Children say

"I enjoy writing, painting and going into the allotment. In the allotment we made birdfeeders that we put in the wildlife area to help feed the birds this winter."

"I have made lots of friends at school and I like playing with them. I enjoy doing creative activities in class such as salt dough skeletons. The best thing is having ipads to help us in our lessons."



Smile and Learn

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