



## Happy memories of her own early schooldays made Jennifer choose Church Hill Infant School for her daughter



Jennifer and Steven Howarth live in Syston with their daughters Clementine, five, and Henzey, three.

### Bringing back happy memories

Church Hill Infant School was one of two to choose from when Jennifer and Steven were first looking around and, while she has nothing negative to say about the other option open to them, it was Church Hill which got Jennifer's vote. "I adored my own primary school and when we went to visit Church Hill it instantly brought back memories for me," she says. "It reminded me so much of my first school and how I loved it and I wanted that experience for Clemmie. When the Headteacher showed us around, everything she told us was all about the children; she didn't quote statistics at us or emphasise results, but she made me feel that all that mattered was the pupils. That has always been the case throughout the two years that Clemmie has been there."

## Focus on the child

Jennifer's first impressions have been reinforced by instances such as Parents' Evenings. "It is quite obvious that Clemmie's teachers really know and understand her completely and it's lovely to feel that they take her as seriously as we do. I was also impressed that they have a very enlightened approach to teaching, such as the way they recognised that Clemmie's interest in drawing could be used to encourage her reading and writing skills. When she first started school, all she wanted to do was draw and paint but because her particular interests were applied to other lessons, she started to take just as great an interest in those subjects as well. I have seen just the same happen with my nephew, who is in Clemmie's year, and although he's very different from Clemmie he is responding equally as well as she." Jennifer believes that this is why, despite being one of the youngest in her year, Clemmie is achieving above target for her age.

## A swift and effective response

Understandably, her daughter's welfare and safety are of prime importance to her parents and, again, Jennifer is completely reassured on both counts. "There have been only two occasions when I have raised minor concerns and both times the issues were resolved very quickly and very effectively," she says. "These were instances of things which will occur at any school but I was very happy with the swift and positive response. All the staff, from the Headteacher down, are approachable and helpful and I feel I can always have an informal chat when I drop Clemmie off or pick her up in the afternoon, rather than having to make an appointment. There is a homely and caring atmosphere about the whole place which really appeals to me."

## Fresh air, fresh opportunities

The homely atmosphere is strengthened by the layout and presentation of the school itself, Jennifer believes. "I love the spacious and bright classrooms and the fantastic outdoor space. They get the children outside as much as possible and make it a learning opportunity; they might do sums in chalk on the playground, for example, as well as being able to run around in the fresh air. We keep a pair of wellies there to cover all eventualities!"



## A creative and inspirational approach

Crucially, Clemmie really loves her school and that fact, Jennifer believes, will support her ability to learn. "It is a creative and inspirational approach to teaching and which engages the children's interest and enthusiasm. Even though Henzey is a very different kettle of fish to Clemmie I am absolutely confident that she will get just as much out of Church Hill as Clemmie is doing. We have recently moved a bit further away to a village which also has a very good infant school but I wouldn't consider changing from Church Hill. Clemmie is happy, settled and doing very well indeed and it will be a natural progression for Henzey as everybody there already knows her so well!"

## What parents want for their children

Ask to sum up her feelings about Church Hill Infant School, Jennifer has little hesitation: "It's exactly what a primary school should be, where children are allowed to be children and given the chance to retain their innocence for as long as possible." A sentiment with which most parents would agree.

## Children say

Clemmie says: "I love my school and my teachers. We learn things everyday!"

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