



Sunita believes that a happy child is more likely to achieve academically, and her daughter is proving the point at Church Hill Infant School



Sunita Bhal and her husband, Raveen, have recently moved from London to Leicester. Their daughter, Anoushka is five years old and has recently joined Church Hill Infant School.

Inspiration to learn

Sunita has a very specific attitude to childrens' education, which is that if they are happy and are inspired to learn then they will do so. In Church Hill Infant School she has found a place which she feels is in tune with her beliefs.

Sunita felt that the life they were living in London, surrounded as they were by museums, cultural activities and a wealth of exciting opportunities was more than enough to entertain and educate Anoushka and decided therefore to defer her formal education for a year. It was only when they moved to Leicester that she felt Anoushka needed the stimulation of school and it was Church Hill which she believed had most to offer.

"We looked at several schools but it was always Church Hill that Anoushka liked best," Sunita says. "It felt right for us all - with the happy family atmosphere I wanted for her, and an emphasis on the children's wellbeing. I firmly believe that children need to be happy and comfortable in their school environment so that they will develop a passion for learning. I would never want my child to feel pressured to achieve but to be inspired to do so; that way she is more likely to reach her full potential."

Encouragement

Even though Anoushka joined Church Hill at Foundation Level a year later than most, within a very short time she had caught up and is already achieving as much as, if not more than, Sunita would have expected. "Anoushka had a slightly different early education as she didn't start until a bit later than usual but Church Hill was effective in integrating her into the school. Although she was a late starter to a classroom-based environment, she has not missed out in any way; at Church Hill she has flourished and is so happy there. For me, happiness and achievement go hand in hand and that shows in Anoushka's achievement to date."

Enthusiastic and caring

Several things about Church Hill stand out for Sunita, including the bright and spacious classrooms and the extensive outdoor areas. She also likes the way in which the younger children are gently introduced into the rest of the school by sharing its facilities and by having lessons with other teachers. "I like the idea of the children interacting with adults other than just one class teacher as it helps them to form relationships and to get on with different personalities and teaching styles. All the teachers are very enthusiastic and caring, and that attitude rubs off on the children."

The key to learning

Sunita is convinced that a happy educational experience is the key to learning. "As far as I am concerned, a child's emotional welfare comes first. They need to feel comfortable with their classmates and their teachers before they can move on to academic achievement and what I love about Church Hill is the relaxed relationship the pupils have with the teachers. There are clear boundaries in terms of behaviour and respect but Anoushka knows that the staff are approachable, friendly and always ready to listen."



An excellent start in life

The child-focused attitude at Church Hill is, believes Sunita, the key to its success. "They really consider what is best for the children emotionally as well as academically, and how that will impact on their future life," she says. "There is a very effective interaction between the children and their teachers and the pupils know that the staff are friends as well as mentors. They are also made aware that good behaviour is a very important part of the school's ethos, and that plays a major part in making Church Hill an excellent early learning environment."

Children say

Anoushka: "It is the best Superschool I have ever seen. I love getting my homework as it is lots of fun to do. Being a School Councillor makes me feel very important and it is so nice to help. My teacher is great and gives me lots of ideas on how to do my work and she makes me happy."

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