



Julie and John Alexander live in Gateshead with their sons Nathan and Kieron who are ten and 12 respectively.

As a mother and an academic Julie knew what she wanted for her children, and she has found exactly that at Riverside Primary Academy

A Passion for Education

Julie has a passion for education. Working in university at post-graduate level she is well-placed to assess the quality of teaching she wants for her children, and this she believes she has found at Riverside Primary Academy.

“Working in higher education perhaps makes me even more appreciative of the importance of early education,” she says. “The Baby and Toddler Group I took Nathan and Kieron to at Riverside was excellent and gave them a wonderful foundation to build on before they started Nursery and school. The close links that the Toddler Group had with the school made the transition seamless and easy for them, and both my boys have benefited massively. They are bright boys and their early start at Riverside has, I have no doubt, nurtured their talents and abilities in the best possible way.”



“Going to the group also gave me a feel of what the school was like in terms of a learning environment. I observed how welcoming, pleasant and approachable the staff were and the children’s work on the walls throughout the school shows how proud they are of their pupils’ work and achievements.”

A Positive and Impressive Difference

Julie was herself a pupil at Riverside Primary Academy, remembering it fondly as a friendly and caring environment which holds lasting and happy memories. Although the school has changed since then, any changes have been only for the better. “Although quality of education is very important to me, pastoral care is even more of a priority as far as my children are concerned and at Riverside, quality and care go hand in hand. It has always been a good school but the high-calibre and broad-structured curriculum it now embraces since the change to Academy status has made a very positive difference, one which impresses me a great deal.”

The league tables and Ofsted Reports that Julie checked she found impressive but mainly it was the overall atmosphere she liked above all. “I wanted to be sure that Kieron and Nathan would feel safe and well looked-after and it was obvious that the children were indeed happy and secure, surrounded by teachers who were really engaged with their pupils.”

Support for Every Child of Every Ability

Both Kieron and Nathan have been identified as academically talented but this does not mean they don’t get the additional appropriate support they need. “Gifted children need just as much input as the less able ones and at Riverside Primary Academy every child is given all the attention and help they need,” Julie believes. “I have seen for myself how my boys’ friends have flourished as much as they have themselves, through the encouragement to believe in their own abilities and the desire to learn. I love the way that lessons are brought to life through educational visits to museums and places of interest and how things like this help to fully engage the children in their education.”

A Wonderful Progression

Academic achievement is only one aspect of early education, and Julie has been delighted with her sons’ overall development, especially in terms of Kieron. “Kieron was quite timid and shy as a young boy but his confidence has greatly increased in the years he spent at Riverside and he has moved successfully to secondary school as a mature, ambitious and focussed young man. His overall progression has been wonderful and I credit Riverside for much of that. His teachers had belief in him so he had belief in himself and that is something they do for all the students – showing them their potential and helping them achieve it.”

Building on Potential

Potential in more ways than purely academic: Julie is impressed by the standards of behaviour demonstrated by the pupils at Riverside Primary Academy. “Apart from appearing happy and content, the children are polite and well-mannered, qualities which are expected and rewarded and which make the school such a pleasant place in all respects. For a well-rounded education and start in life, I could not have wanted anything better for my sons.”

Children Say

Kieron: “The school is a very friendly place to be and the teachers are very passionate for education. They really helped me to develop and mature as the years passed by”.

Nathan: “Teachers are kind and excellent at teaching us. We learn something new every day. They keep us motivated and encourage us to believe in ourselves”.



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