

Lola wanted a Faith school for her children, and she also has faith in how St Luke's addresses challenging behaviour



Lola Ogunsakin lives in Newham with her son Samuel and daughter Hannah. Samuel is six years old and in Year 3 at St Luke's Primary School, where Hannah is shortly due to start in the Nursery.

Cause for concern

St Luke's school takes a pride in offering much more than a good early education for local children. Nowhere can this be seen more clearly than in the all-round support it gives to parents and families who have issues other than academic achievement to concern them, as Lola discovered when Samuel started at Nursery.

"Samuel had real problems concentrating and found it difficult to sit still or to do what was asked of him," she explains. "He was disruptive in class and would constantly interrupt the teacher; and I had similar issues with him at home. I often had to go into school to talk to his teachers and the situation was obviously a major worry to us all."



St. Luke's
C. of E.
Voluntary Aided
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Nursery School

Every child, every chance

Most schools will at times encounter children with behavioural difficulties and may occasionally decide that they are not equipped to deal with the challenge; however, St Luke's believes that children should be given every chance to benefit from the calm and consistent influence of professionals such as their Family Support Worker, who has worked with Samuel since he first started school. "It is important to give children boundaries and to maintain these so that they know what is and is not acceptable," she says. "We always try to get to the root of the problem and find out why they behave inappropriately so that we can better understand how to address the issue. We also try to help them to understand and modify their behaviour, using a mixture of sanctions and rewards to reinforce the message."

Effective approach

In Samuel's case, he was given a Behaviour Diary, in which a record could be kept by both Lola and the school. "Samuel was told that if he was naughty we would write the incident in the Diary," explains Lola. "He really didn't like it and wanted to make sure it would be stopped, and it was one of things which really started to help." Other sanctions included being taken out of class for short periods until he calmed down but not, says his Family Support Worker, being left outside in the corridor: "That is not something we would do. Instead, if a child is being disruptive we put them in another class for a while, away from their peers and friends they know well so they are less likely to act up. We don't have a magic wand but we do have a lot of experience and what we do is generally effective."

Lola would agree with this, and says how much progress he is making. "I have had several meetings with Samuel's teachers and they have been so kind and supportive, and very patient. I absolutely agree with how they handle bad behaviour and I try to do the same things with him at home so he knows that we are all on the same side."



He knows that he will be praised when he does something good and that there will be a punishment if he misbehaves, such as missing out on a school outing. I know he really wants to be a good boy, and with the help of St Luke's he is getting there."

Bringing family and school together

Samuel was offered a place at the Breakfast Club to help him settle down before school starts, as well as at the Saturday morning Barmy Breakfast Club, to which parents are also invited. "The Saturday breakfast is a nice way to bring the family together and a chance for parents to informally discuss any concerns with the staff," says the Family Support Worker. "We like to maintain a close relationship between school and home and this is one way of doing that."

Strong support

With such strong support from the school, Lola is confident that Samuel will overcome his problems and start to make the most of what she believes to be an excellent school. "I am very impressed with what St Luke's is doing for us. I wanted a Faith school for my children but I needed something more as well, and I cannot thank the teachers and support staff enough for their efforts."



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