

QUESTION AND ANSWER

YEAR 7 EXPERIENCES FROM A YEAR 7 PARENT

HOW DID YOU FIND THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS WHEN APPLYING FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL AND WHAT WAS IMPORTANT TO YOU IN YOUR CHOICE OF POTENTIAL SECONDARY?

It was quite stressful to be honest. Lots of opinions, first child – big decision!

Trust in the school was important – trying to find the right ‘fit’ for our child. More than just an academic atmosphere, we were looking for the whole package – pastorally, creatively and academically.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO PARENTS CURRENTLY GOING THROUGH THE PROCESS OF APPLYING FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS?

Listen to your gut. It is very easy to get distracted by other parents, your child’s friends and where they are going. You know your child and have the courage of your convictions to choose yourself and not be swayed by others, if you think it could be the right thing.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE BRENTFORD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS FOR YOUR DAUGHTER OVER OTHER LOCAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN YOUR AREA?

We felt it ticked most of our criteria – no school is perfect!

We felt, as a girl, she could concentrate and be concentrated on, without distractions of a mixed school. We felt the focus was on how to teach girls. We liked the ‘empowerment’ of the BSFG ethos to make girls strong and independent. (this came also a lot from the headteacher)

DID YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR DAUGHTER GOING TO A GIRLS ONLY SCHOOL INITIALLY?

Yes slightly, as all girls can potentially be a bit ‘mean’ sometimes in theory. Also that she would miss out on being able to mix with all sexes especially as she was also doing Guides and all girl gymnastics too at that time.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE SUPPORT YOU RECEIVED FROM BRENTFORD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS ON THE IMPORTANT TRANSITION PROCESS FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL?

Very good. It was extremely hard to be fair as COVID had an impact, so this obviously changed her experience. But they tried as hard as they could. We always felt communication was open and honest and they communicated virtually as much as they could.

WHAT IN YOUR VIEW ARE THE STRENGTHS OF BRENTFORD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS SO FAR?

They have been there. It has taken our child some time to settle for various reasons (lockdowns mainly and the stopping and starting which was beyond the school's control) but the support we have had from the staff has been exemplary – every time I have raised any concerns they have been addressed swiftly and competently.

YOUR DAUGHTER IS ABOUT TO START HER SECOND YEAR AT BRENTFORD WHAT HAS BEEN THE HIGHLIGHTS OF HER FIRST YEAR HERE AND HOW HAS SHE SETTLED IN?

It has been a very different and difficult year for any new starter because of COVID and she really hasn't been able to have the full school experience as yet.

She was delighted to receive the postcard from the drama department which came to home – and also very pleased to be told she was top in reading due to the number of library books she had borrowed.

This final term, particularly after some light intervention from school, she has finally clicked with some friendship groups and is in a much better place. I feel it has taken time, but she has now settled and is looking forward to year 8, where hopefully everything will improve as the pandemic eases.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SCHOOL AND HOW MUCH IMPACT DO YOU THINK THE LEADERSHIP VISION HAS ON THE PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR DAUGHTER?

Leadership seems strong. Issues seem to be dealt with quickly. I think the female empowerment message is good and certainly needed in these tumultuous times.

Communication has been great and we have felt involved all along despite the challenges of this year.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER THOUGHTS OR COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES SO FAR WITH BRENTFORD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS?

Very positive experience so far, especially in light of the current and ongoing situation. I feel the school has supported our daughter to a very high standard, in incredibly challenging times.