



Seven siblings from Romania have been helped to succeed in the caring Christian atmosphere of Ballymena Primary School

Jacob and Marieta live in Ballymena with their seven children, Benjamin, aged 14, Ioana, aged 13, Sarah, aged 12, Daniel, aged 10, Maria, aged nine, Matteo, aged five, and Elisi, aged four.

Supportive staff

Jacob and Marieta will always be grateful for the kindness the staff at Ballymena Primary School have shown to their children. Jacob says: "All the staff went above and beyond to support our children after they started while they settled into the school and learnt English."

Good reputation

Jacob, who works as a chef, and his wife, Marieta, moved their family from Romania to live first in the south of England and then Northern Ireland, where they had relatives. They now feel at home in Ballymena. He says:

"We chose Ballymena Primary for our eldest three children after we arrived, because we were living on the same road as the school and it was so close to our house that it was an easy journey. We had also heard good things about the school from friends and neighbours."

Language tuition

When Benjamin first started at the school at the age of seven it was hard for him as he spoke only Romanian and didn't know any English, Jacob says. "The teachers helped him to settle in and learn English and he went on to do very well at the school. Benjamin is now at post-primary, where he is a top student.



He is studying for his GCSEs and is in the top sets for his subjects, because of the good start he had at Ballymena Primary. He put in extra hours to learn English and his teachers helped him a lot."

Inspiring teachers

Ioana also had no English when she started at the school at the age of six and she too received very good care from the staff, Iacob says. "Her teacher helped her settle in and she soon felt really at home at Ballymena Primary. When Sarah started at the age of five, she liked Ballymena Primary so much that she came home and said: 'Daddy, I want to be a teacher,' because she had been inspired by the staff who helped her. Our eldest three children are all doing well at post-primary school now."

Inclusive environment

Iacob and Marieta like the way Ballymena Primary make sure all children feel included, whatever their backgrounds, and encourage them to respect each other. He says "Our youngest four children are all flourishing at the school now and have made lots of friends. Daniel is doing well academically and likes playing football and enjoys the after school clubs. Maria loves being with all the friends she has made there. She also likes playing football and is doing well in all her subjects. Matteo is very happy and has also made a lot of friends and likes playing football, and Elisi is enjoying learning through play. The children all speak English at home now as well as Romanian."

Important values

Iacob and Marieta are happy with Ballymena Primary because of the high calibre of the staff. Iacob says: "When you ring up to ask about something, everyone is always helpful and kind. You can tell everyone wants to do their best to help the kids. We are a Christian family and we are pleased that Ballymena Primary is a Christian school, where they are teaching the children good values which will guide them through life. Great opportunities are available for everyone and all children are made to feel welcome and included at the school."

Children say

Daniel says:

"I like playing football at school."

Maria says:

"I enjoy learning different subjects at school."

Matteo says:

"I like going to school to see all my friends."

Elisi says:

"I like playing with the children in my class."



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