

CELCIS REACH: Liz and Reena | Parents in Partnership at Auchenharvie Academy

Issue 11 | Autumn 2018

Liz and Reena, two parents from Auchenharvie Academy, explain in detail the impact that the Parents in Partnership project has had on them and their children.

Hi, I'm Reena, I am one of the parents at Auchenharvie Academy in Stevenston (North Ayrshire) and I have just completed the Parents in Partnership programme.

Hi, I'm Liz. I have just completed the Parents in Partnership course as well, from Auchenharvie Academy. My child has benefitted from this project because he wants to come to school and he has the enthusiasm. Although he has dyslexia and he has got learning difficulties, he still feels that he is included and he wants to come to school to learn. Homework is a wee bit of an issue still, but we are getting there.

Reena: My son is on the autistic spectrum. Primary school was always quite challenging for him, so he was very anxious coming up to high school. This project has really helped me fit into the school which means that I can support him better. I know his teachers, I can email or phone them and I can put a face to a name and really help him if he has any issues. I think he is more comfortable because I am in and around the school quite a bit, so he sees me. Although, he avoids me. But he knows that I am here if he needs me and I think it has helped him focus more on his education. He is less worried socially, he is less anxious so he can actually concentrate on learning.

My two always make me laugh, so they are like on Tuesdays 'Mum, you have to get up, you need to go to school'. They are very keen for me to get up and go. My daughter is still at primary school, but again, I think they have really benefitted from just seeing me being involved in their education in school and that has encouraged them to take more of an interest.

Liz: My son has benefitted greatly from being in this school, because when he was in primary school, I felt that he didn't want to go to primary, he didn't want to learn, nothing motivated him. Since coming to this school he is happy, he is more relaxed, he is a different child from when he was in primary school, which is great because I have another son who

is coming up this year to Auchenharvie Academy and the influence that he is having on his younger brother has been amazing.

Reena: The surprising thing for me has been how keen the teachers are to be involved, how often they pop down to see us, to ask us what we are doing, the relationships I have built with teachers right across the school and their encouragement encourages us to get more involved. I always felt there might be a barrier of teachers not wanting parents in the school, but I haven't found that at all.

Liz: One of the good things I found was that the Head teacher actually makes you feel really welcome and regardless of where you are in the school, he always speaks to you. And I find it's great joy to go out there in the playground and actually seeing the Head Teacher out in the playground with the kids. Which is truly amazing, because I have never seen that in any school that I have been in. No matter what your problem, or if you have an issue with your child or anything in the school, there is always someone to talk to and we feel included. It is truly amazing.

Reena: We have also built up relationships with other parents, most of us wouldn't have been friends in other circumstances. We are from all different walks of life and we have built up a really good group. I can phone any of them at any time if I have a problem and I know that someone will be there for me. It doesn't have to be an education problem, it can be any sort of problem. It's now a really good support group for parents.

It's brought us all on, we have parents going back to college, we have got parents setting up support groups, it has given parents – all of us – a big motivation and a focus and a purpose, that parenting isn't just about getting your kid to school, it's looking to the future for yourself and as a family.

©CELCIS