

**Priti has found nowhere else which can give her and her children the warmth and welcome of her local East Reading Children's Centre**



**Priti Mishra and her husband live in Reading with their two sons, Shivaansh, five and Shaashwat, two.**

## **A wide range of opportunities**

Priti discovered the Katesgrove Children's Centre when her eldest son was a year old and has found it to be one of the most welcoming and helpful places she has known during her eleven years in Britain. Wanting to make sure her son had the chance to interact with other children she started taking him to Stay and Play sessions and other Groups, where she was also able to meet other new parents, access professional advice and give her son a wider range of play opportunities than it would be possible to provide at home.



**East Reading  
Children's Centres Team**

***A place we play and learn together***





## Understanding and thoughtfulness

Since her second son was born, Priti has found herself at the Centre most days a week, and is a devoted fan. "I go to everything I can," she laughs. "It is such a lovely place and I have made so many friends, not just with other parents but the staff, too, are so kind and thoughtful that I feel very at home there. They are very caring people and will always give good advice if you have a problem of any kind, or are just there for a chat. It seems that they will go out of their way to be helpful when difficulties arise, such as when I had to visit the doctor and they offered to look after my son for me for a while. They understand what it's like to be a parent."

## A welcome for everyone

One of Priti's favourite weekly sessions is the Welcome Group, which offers health advice and craft activities to families with young children who have recently moved to the UK. "We have done cooking lessons, card making, put together memory albums for the children and lots of other things and because the children are looked after in a crèche it means we parents have a bit of grown-up time together. It's so nice that they think of things which are so appropriate to local people."

## Social skills

As far as the children are concerned, Priti is more than happy with the range of toys, equipment and activities provided, which are not only great fun but educational and stimulating. "We couldn't possibly have so many things for them at home," she says.

"Having access to such a variety of things to do really helps their overall development, but above all they are learning social skills such as sharing and all this will make it easier for them at school. Mixing with children from all sorts of different social and cultural backgrounds is so good for them, and they are learning to speak good English, too; at home we speak Hindi because I want them to know our family language, but they need to be fluent in English as well, and the Centre is the best possible place for them to pick it up."

## A special feeling

There is so much that Priti likes about the Centre which has given her a level of support she hadn't realised was available before she had her children. "The staff make us all feel special, parents and children, and if I had the chance I would be more than happy to work with them there. I can see what a very good place it is, run by people who honestly care about families and understand what they need. I've been able to take courses such as First Aid and Health and Safety at Home, and my husband takes the boys to the Dad's Club once a month. There is something for our whole family, something which we all really appreciate."

## Home from home

Priti looks on Katesgrove Children's Centre at a home from home; somewhere she can take her children to have fun, meet and socialise with other people and create a social network with local families. "It's a place to go where we can forget about the jobs which need doing at home for a few hours but without feeling guilty because the children are in such a good place, learning and being happy. One thing I definitely know is, I don't want to lose my Children's Centre!"

**For further information contact your local Children's Centre:**

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