

An East Reading Children's Centre ticks all the boxes for a new mum like Sarah



Sarah Dakovic and her husband, Zoran, live in Reading with their fourteen-month twins, Theo and Isabella.

A change in circumstances

Although Sarah has lived in Reading for most of her life and has a wide circle of family and friends, when she had Theo and Isabella she felt the need to cultivate a new social network around the twins and her changed situation. The Hamilton Road Children's Centre has been exactly what she was looking for and given her the support appreciated by any new mum – especially when they have twins!"





"I first took them to the Centre when they were about five weeks old and I was really impressed with the fantastic facilities and by the staff, who couldn't have been more helpful," Sarah says. "Dealing with two babies at once when you're not even used to one can be very daunting but there was always someone to look after one of them when I was changing or feeding the other. It is such a safe and caring environment and I felt I could completely trust everyone."

Part of the community

The first Group Sarah joined was the New Parent Group, where she has achieved her goal of meeting and making new friends locally whilst picking up a lot of the tips and advice so valuable to new mums. "I'd been to a twin-specific group while I was pregnant but because it was further away from home I didn't feel that I was part of a community, as I do at the Centre," she explains. "Also, at the New Parent Group we had talks from the Nursery Nurses and other professionals about the things which were starting to be relevant, like feeding, speech development, health and safety and play ideas, and I found it all very useful."

Sarah was very keen that her children should start to make friends with other local children early on, those who they would be able to grow up alongside and be going to school with later, and also that she herself could meet people with children of a similar age."

A lot of my friends have children but they are at different stages and I found it really helpful to meet people at the Centre who had young babies like mine. Talking to the other mums was very valuable as we were all going through the same things at the same time."

Close friends, close to home

Although initially she had wanted to join a group which was especially for parents of twins, Sarah found it was more important to become part of a local, community-based organisation, and the Centre is only a ten minute walk from her home. "It's so good that I'd probably use it anyway but if I had to get the children in and out of the car to get there it wouldn't be so appealing. It also means that the people I've met at the Centre mostly live close by so it's easier to maintain friendships, and I've got a lovely new set of friends I can meet up with regularly. It's easy to become isolated at home when you have small children but the Centre has been the perfect thing to get us out and become a part of something."

Staying in touch

Sarah has recently returned to work after her maternity leave and was sad that she would no longer be able to take the twins to the Wednesday Babes and Beyond session. "I was really upset about it because it's become a regular feature of the week for me," she says. "Zoran is now working part-time so he takes them instead, but whenever I get the chance to go in the holidays I do; I like to be able to catch up with everyone and to stay in touch. I'm always made so welcome and the staff make such an effort to get to know you, and that is a lovely feeling."

Ticking the boxes

As far as Sarah is concerned, Hamilton Road Children's Centre ticks all her boxes. "It's close, supportive, educational and above all amazingly friendly, a whole package of benefits for a new mum like me. It has given me the chance to create my own personal community and I wouldn't be without it."

For further information contact your local Children's Centre:

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