

# FEEDBACK FROM FAMILIES

## Parent of Grade 3 Student

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My son started at Heritage Academy in third grade when we were posted in from Greenwood. He is now in Grade six, and he is doing much better in this school. He completed the SMT program, and we believe it really helped advance his reading. While he is not reading at the average grade 6 level, he works very hard and enjoys going to school. The strong support he gets from the staff has made a big difference to his independence and confidence level. This has allowed him to break many of the barriers he had been facing in his previous school. The school works hard to promote acceptance among peers, and I am very thankful that we decided to send him there. While my son is in primary and I don't have a lot of experience in the High School program, I can say that all the students were very engaged in talking about their Science Fair projects (which the whole school participated in). There is no question that my son has benefitted greatly from this school, and I have no problem recommending it. M.R.

## Parent of Grade 6 Student

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I am more than happy to share some of my observations of changes in my son since enrolling at the school last September. I don't know what the reason(s) are for which you are considering Heritage for your child, but my primary reason was that Matthew (my son) is dyslexic, was struggling in regular school, and was not showing appropriate progress in some core areas. He loves to learn, is a sponge for contextual learning, but was hitting a wall at school. Ironically, I am a teacher who was fully employed in a different jurisdiction (outside Ontario), but we relocated for this school year in order to give Matthew a better learning environment.

Heritage has a very positive environment that deals very openly and directly with put-downs, bullying, and disrespectful behaviour. The classes are very small, and therefore allow the teachers to give my son the support he needs. It is a relief just for starters to find staff who are knowledgeable about different learning styles, and who have the infrastructure and means to support my son without dumbing down the content. He is also enrolled in SMT tutoring, a program that I learned about and began to implement with him even before we moved. It has been very successful so far for him, and has given him progress and confidence in his reading and writing. He is still below "grade level" in both reading and writing, but has shown immense improvement where there had been little to none for the years from K-grade 4. I fully expect that after another year, he will have gained even more ground. His particular reading and writing levels are recognized by his teacher in the form of individualized spelling dictation requirements, and level of writing expected in assignments.

I will stop here, as I am not sure what questions you may have, or whether your child shares the same kinds of needs as my son does, but I invite you to call or email me if you have questions. You could also talk to Matthew if you like... I can't be at all sure whether the school would be right for your child, but I can tell you that this year for my son has been highly successful, and a complete departure and fresh start from his prior school experiences. E.O.

# FEEDBACK FROM FAMILIES

## Parent of Grade 10 Student

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To whom it may concern;

Our son, Oliver, has just completed his first semester of high school at Heritage Academy. During this period we have immediately noticed a huge improvement in Oliver's' understanding of his work assignments. Consequently, Oliver has reacted very positively and is learning his subjects with great enthusiasm.

Oliver is receiving assistance from his teachers when necessary in order to complete and understand his work. This positive learning environment has been extremely positive for Oliver. Consequently, Oliver is no longer afraid of those tough subjects. Besides learning and understanding his school work Oliver is also enjoying a very positive social life at Heritage Academy. We attribute this to the very positive school culture.

We are deeply grateful and appreciative to Heritage Academy for the great work and unabated effort offered to Oliver. We only wish we had discovered Heritage Academy earlier.

To those parents who are considering sending their children to Heritage Academy please rest assured that your kids will be receiving the best education that can be delivered. The teachers and staff members at Heritage Academy, especially Mrs. Cheryl Ward, are courteous, respectful, understanding and extremely professional.

Mrs. Cheryl Ward, the director of Heritage Academy, sets the very high standard for this institution of learning.

We are truly pleased and grateful to everyone at Heritage Academy. We will be glad to speak to any parent who wish to learn more about our positive experience.

Sincerely J. M. & P.M.

## Parent of Grade 11 Student

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My son is going to be going into Grade 11 at Heritage and he started there in Grade 9.

It has been our experience that the school and teachers are totally dedicated to the students and truly care about the progress of each and every student. The principal and staff are always available and responsive to any questions or concerns. My son is not all that interested in school (he is 16) but this past year the teachers and principal worked together with him to ensure that he passed his year – they spent extra hours with him after school and before school to assist him with projects and completion of same. The small class size and enriched program, combined with the excellent staff, makes for a great school.

# FEEDBACK FROM FAMILIES

## Parent of Grade 5 Student

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My daughter is in grade 5 at Heritage having moved there last year as she was really struggling and was being bullied. After the second day she told me she felt like she'd `come home` - she felt so comfortable and she was like everyone else. She is very intelligent, but also very dyslexic and in the past she has felt like she either gets no help or is treated like she is stupid. She loves Heritage and her confidence and standard of work improved immediately! She now gets 20 spelling words correct with no help from me and they aren't all simple either. The best thing is no more homework battles!

My other daughter is also dyslexic and has been really struggling. I was initially reluctant to move her as she has so many friends at her school. Anyway, I have been so delighted with the school and it is such a pleasure to see my daughter happy and making progress, that I am moving my other daughter into grade 3 at Heritage.

If you have reached the stage of even thinking about it, your daughter probably needs it ... I know it takes a lot to make the move, but seeing the children relaxed and happy in a learning environment that truly looks after their needs whilst recognising their intelligence is wonderful! I am a teacher myself and I know that in most classroom situations we have no way of really meeting the needs of bright children with dyslexia or some other form of specific learning disability. This affects their self esteem. I was totally amazed at the difference in my daughter in only a few days when she felt valued, respected and not alone!

## Parent of Grade 9 Student

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Our son, has just completed his first semester of high school at Heritage Academy. During this period we have immediately noticed a huge improvement in his understanding of his work assignments. Consequently, he has reacted very positively and is learning his subjects with great enthusiasm.

Besides learning and understanding his school work he is also enjoying a very positive social life at Heritage Academy. We attribute this to the very positive school culture.

We are deeply grateful and appreciative to Heritage Academy for the great work and unabated effort offered to our son. We only wish we had discovered Heritage Academy earlier.

To those parents who are considering sending their children to Heritage Academy please rest assured that your kids will be receiving the best education that can be delivered. The teachers and staff members at Heritage Academy are courteous, respectful, understanding and extremely professional. We are truly pleased and grateful to everyone at Heritage Academy.

# FEEDBACK FROM FAMILIES

## Parent of Grade 8 Student

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We credit Heritage for making a huge change in the life of our daughter. Our daughter has attended Heritage since she was in grade five. Before Heritage she attended a public catholic school, and although she was working at grade level, it was with a fairly significant effort, and in addition to her school time, homework time, also took four hours of tutoring a week. From grade one to four, we watched our daughter, who is quite shy and reserved, retreat before our eyes. The school told us that they couldn't provide additional resources for Kaila as she was working at grade level, and that she was unmotivated and we should be more realistic in our expectations of her. She became withdrawn, lost interest in other activities, hated school, began hanging around with the other girls who hated school, and we were at a loss. Even after being diagnosed with dyslexia, the school wasn't able or willing to accommodate her because, after all, she was working at grade level.

Luckily we literally stumbled upon Heritage as another parent from our school moved their daughter there and decided to take a chance, we felt we had little to lose. Our daughter is now an active and motivated student –reading will never be her passion or love, but her capacity to read and write is substantially improved. And, her substantial abilities in math have finally been recognized. The accommodations that Heritage makes for its students are seamless – the kids see and accept the variety of accommodations as part of the normal day. The SMT program, which she just completed really helped her to feel more confident reading, and also more understanding of what she has a harder time with. She now understands that her dyslexia is just one facet of who she is. She is confident, secure in who she is, and very active. Things that were unimaginable for us just a few short years ago, when we had a daughter who was withdrawn, sad and literally, as awful as it is to say, felt that she was stupid.

One of the biggest differences that I see between the public system and Heritage is the teachers – not necessarily the quality, some teachers at my daughters old school were as motivated and keen as the teachers are at Heritage. But, Heritage's small class sizes mean that that the keen and enthusiastic teacher that you meet in September, isn't starting to struggle in November, and exhausted and burned out by February. They continue to look for new ways to motivate and encourage the kids, and the kids continue to be motivated and happy to be at school.

Our decision to move our daughter to Heritage was one of the smartest decisions we've made as parents.

# FEEDBACK FROM FAMILIES

## Parent of Grade 8 Student

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Building a solid base in the early years really pays dividends. While waiting does the opposite, its a game of catch-up which may seem endless at times. If you have the opportunity start early and those early successes will really pay off. School will remain fun and interesting and your child will thrive. Our daughter is in her second year at Heritage having started in grade 8 so we have seen both the elementary side and high school. The things that comes to mind for me are: 1. The focus and dedication of the teachers: They know how to deal with many types of children with all sorts of challenges. They really work well with the students and their is a mutual respect that is a pleasure to experience.

2. The spirit of the school: Cheryl sets the tone and the school is a warm and welcoming place. The events held throughout the year are full of fun and virtually every student participates and seems to really enjoy themselves. We get regular updates by email and that shows us what each class is doing throughout the year.

3. What they do works: Our daughter has made considerable progress in both math, reading and writing. She has nearly finished SMT program which, I understand, is part of the regular curriculum for the elementary students. Academically she has done well.

In closing, I regard Heritage as a school that works and lets many children with all sorts of challenges thrive and develop. My Grandfather use to say the best investment for a child is their education. He use to say "You can take it with, it can't be lost or stolen, it helps you secure employment and can help you enjoy so many things throughout your life". With young children in mind, getting a real boast at the outset of their years at school is something parents don't get a second chance at. I think you are very much ahead of many others.

Heritage is both a good and special place to start your child's education journey.

Sincerely, Dr. M.B.

# FEEDBACK FROM FAMILIES

## Parent of Grade 5 Student

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My son is dyslexic, was struggling in regular school, and was not showing appropriate progress in some core areas. He loves to learn, is a sponge for contextual learning, but was hitting a wall at school. Ironically, I am a teacher who was fully employed in a different jurisdiction (outside Ontario), but we relocated for this school year in order to give him a better learning environment.

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