



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

TILLY & MIRABELLE PURYER *case study*



We love all our students here at the VICI Language Academy and none more so than five-year-old **Tilly and her little Sister Mirabelle**, who has just turned three. I think the staff are just as proud as parents Simon and Emma Puryer of their children's progress on our Linguist Masters Programme. *We let Mrs Puryer take up the story...*

I had seen VICI in Bartholomew Street and remember them being in the library once and then, after Tilly had done French at nursery we did a bit of research and the VICI Language Academy came up.

It's been great; Tilly started when she was about three-and-a-half and she really enjoyed it. Mirabelle started a couple of months ago so she was a lot younger than when Tilly started. But with Mirabelle being familiar with Tilly going in she was quite keen to start as well.

I don't speak French and well, my husband likes to try, but we both feel that in light of our failed attempts at language learning we were just really keen that the girls will start young and it wasn't a big scary prospect. We wanted it to feel natural to them.

It has helped them build their confidence. They do a lot of activities – ballet and swimming so it has been really good in the respect that the children have the



commitment; Tilly still enjoys it a year and a half later and she goes three times a week.

Tilly has really enjoyed having Mirabelle join. Tilly, being the older sister, is helping Mirabelle when she gets it wrong and it has been quite fun that they can do it together.

When Tilly began at VICI she was on the Positive Start programme and has since moved on to the Masters and Mirabelle has

become so familiar with the academy and loves the graduation ceremony they do twice a year. So Tilly would get her certificate and Mirabelle asking, 'Why can't I have one?'

Mirabelle was already so familiar with the teachers, the academy and Tilly's bits of French at home, that she just went straight on to the Masters Programme. I was a bit worried because of her being quite young but she has settled in fine.

We do joke Mirabelle was speaking French before she was potty trained!

Yes and they do make it fun with the different things that they do. They go three times a week so there has to be something different to keep them excited about it so they are obviously doing a great job in that respect. We don't have any complaints about going to French so that is good!

We do joke Mirabelle was speaking French before she was potty trained as we are struggling with that but she is learning French! I was honestly concerned if she was old enough to learn French and clearly she is. We get a few surprises of what she comes out with. We will ask 'what colour is this?' and she will come out with it in French. She will say 'Merci' and 'Bonjour' unprompted. It's obviously at the forefront of her mind.

It is lovely to think we have given them the exposure and the experience of learning French because it isn't a common thing, they are very lucky to get the experience of the Academy. I must say it all started at nursery and lots of people do, but half an hour a week isn't enough exposure to learn the language. So obviously what VICI does is great.

I could see them learning other languages there too. Being exposed so young means language isn't going to be an intimidating thing for them as they get older, so to be introduced to another language it would be great to think it would be great and to keep it up.

My husband and I would like to be bilingual but we are not so we are living vicariously through our children! However when they enjoy it so much you cannot feel guilty!



*Creating True Linguists
within our Community*

