

Lewis has flourished and developed his talents in the cosy environment of Bristol Gateway School



Anna Rattenbury lives with her son, Lewis, aged 13, in the Montpelier district of Bristol. Lewis, who has been diagnosed with attachment disorder, has been a pupil at Bristol Gateway since he was 11 and is now in his third year at the school.



Impressive start

Anna thinks Bristol Gateway has been an excellent choice for Lewis. She says: "I have been really impressed with the school so far. Since starting there, Lewis's behaviour has changed a great deal. He's now one of the model students and has learnt how to channel his aggression. He is growing up to become a lovely, young man and much of that is down to the school."

Lack of understanding

Anna said when Lewis was at his first primary school he didn't like to participate in certain lessons. "He used to run out of the class, hide from people and generally become aggressive towards staff and pupils. After five years of this behaviour the school had made very little effort in helping him and thought of him as a trouble maker. He ended up getting expelled as they could not cope. He went to another primary school who were a bit more understanding. It only took them a year to get him correctly diagnosed and statemented."

Woodstock's good work

Lewis was in Year Five when he started at Woodstock. Anna says: "The turning point came when he went to Woodstock because they encouraged him to do well. I was very keen for him to move up to Bristol Gateway so that they could continue Woodstock's good work."

Small classes

Anna believes Lewis has thrived at Bristol Gateway because it is a warm, friendly environment and class sizes are small. She says: "Lewis didn't enjoy being in a large class when he was at a mainstream school. There are six children in his class now and he gets a lot of attention. He is now doing well educationally. His levels have gone up a lot in most of his subjects because he has been working hard."

Riding lessons

Lewis loves art and has become very good at it. Anna says: "He has had his talent encouraged since starting at Bristol Gateway. He also enjoyed going horse riding after school and has passed his Grade One horse care exam."

Weekly trips

Anna likes the points system run by the school. She says: "They give points for good behaviour and take points away for bad behaviour. You need so many points to go on the end of the week trip and if you don't have enough points you can't go. It shows the kids they need to behave well. Lewis has flourished with this system and has hardly ever missed an end of week trip. He has gone to lazer quest, swimming, fishing and to a theme park. They take them to really nice places."

Friendly staff

All the staff at the school are fantastic, says Anna. "They are always warm and welcoming to us and I get a phone call every week to tell me how Lewis is doing. If they've got a problem they'll tell me about it and I'll talk to Lewis at home and we'll work out what we are going to do about it. But there have been very few problems since he started there."

Improved behaviour

Anna has to pay for taxis to take Lewis to and from school but believes it is worth the money because Bristol Gateway have done so much for him. She says: "I can see a huge difference in him since he started. He is friendlier to me and more placid at home and helps around the house a lot more. It has been a long journey for Lewis and myself and I would like to thank all the staff at Bristol Gateway for their support."

Children say

Lewis says: "I love art lessons and catering."



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