

Emma believes that the understanding and support from King's Hedges Educational Federation have helped her son more than any other school might have done



Emma and Chris Appleby live in Cambridge where their three children are all enrolled at King's Hedges Educational Federation. Thomas is ten, Lily, six and Molly is four years old.

### Fond memories

King's Hedges happens to be very close to where Emma and Chris live and Emma has fond memories of it having visited when her mother used to work there. It is very nice, therefore, that her own children are likely to look back at the school with equal happiness as, says Emma, they can't wait to get back after Half Term! "They are all very happy there and Lily even comes home and plays Schools with Molly, so she is obviously enjoying the whole experience. They all talk about what they have been doing that day when they get back every afternoon and I have never had any cause to worry about their safety or welfare."



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## Valiant efforts

As Lily is doing very well indeed in her studies, and even little Molly is starting to be able to read and write, Emma's only concern has been for Thomas. Although making valiant efforts to keep up, he has some learning difficulties which only came to light a few years ago when his teachers noticed he was struggling. "They suggested that he should be assessed to find out what the problem might be and arranged for this to be done. Eventually, it was shown that he has dyslexia, speech and language delay and short-term memory loss and that, although he was able to cope with mainstream education, he would need additional support."

## Dealing with practicalities

This was the beginning of a lengthy and sometimes frustrating process but the school helped Emma and Chris greatly through the business of obtaining a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) for Thomas so that he would benefit from one-to-one classroom support when necessary. "If not for the school's support we would have found it hard to know where to begin," says Emma. "Apart from the fact that it was distressing for us to know that Thomas had these problems we also had to deal with the practicalities and I was so grateful that King's Hedges knew how to go about it all."

## Sensitive approach

Emma was also glad at the sensitive way the school has handled the situation. "I didn't want Thomas to be stigmatised by being constantly taken out of the classroom for special lessons and it is much better for him to be able to work alongside his friends. Although he does have individual speech and language therapy sessions, at all other times he's in class and just one of the others like the rest. I'm sure that this continuity and the presence of a dedicated Teaching Assistant has made a big difference to his enjoyment of school."

## Encouragement

As with most children, there are subjects which Thomas is not particularly keen on and he is inclined, says Emma, to grumble when they are planned for the day. On the other hand, he is mostly keen to please his teachers and so tries to do his best. "When he does well he is so pleased with himself and his confidence has improved a lot because of the progress he has made. He is actually a very intelligent boy, just with some issues which have held him back but at the moment I am happy with the way he is being encouraged and supported."

## Overcoming hurdles

Thomas's next hurdle will be the transition to secondary school but Emma is confident that, again, King's Hedges will be there to help them through the process. "I am sure that, when the time comes, they will be on our side to make certain Thomas gets into the right school. All the teachers have been very understanding, very helpful and always approachable whenever I have needed advice. For a parent who has a child with additional needs, it's good to know that a school like King's Hedges is there to help so effectively."



King's Hedges Educational Federation  
Northfield Avenue  
Cambridge  
CB4 2HU

Telephone: **01223 518330**  
Fax: **01223 506014**  
Web: **[www.kingshedgesprimary.org.uk](http://www.kingshedgesprimary.org.uk)**  
Email: **[office@kingshedges.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@kingshedges.cambs.sch.uk)**  
Headteacher: Mrs Josephine Angel



If you are interested in enrolling or, would like to look around, please feel free to call us on 01223 518330 and arrange an appointment.

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