

Two very different children, one very special school - Shelley has found that King's Hedges Educational Foundation addressed both her children's needs



Shelley and Djamel live in Cambridge with Shelley's children Zoe and Brandon and their own daughter Kheira who are 13, 9 and 2 respectively.

### A good local reputation

Shelley is quite happy to admit that she chose King's Hedges Educational Foundation for Zoe mainly because it is virtually opposite where they live. However, the convenience of the location takes second place to what she describes as the brilliant support she has been given with both Zoe and Brandon and she has nothing but praise for the school.

"Obviously, I knew other people whose children had been to King's Hedges and who had been very happy with its approach and performance," she says. "Personal recommendation is always a good thing to be guided by and certainly Zoe still has fond memories of her time there so we were right to listen to local knowledge and what has worked well for Zoe has been even better for Brandon."



*Excellence achieved through care, creativity and challenge*

## Competent and sensitive

In Brandon's case, things didn't go quite so smoothly. Diagnosed with a mild form of autism whilst he was at nursery he also suffered a severe physical illness which affected him in many ways. "We knew that Brandon was capable of coping with mainstream education and were happy that King's Hedges was prepared to take him on," remembers Shelley. "On the other hand, none of us were prepared for the fact that he really hated going to school and the first three years were very, very difficult but at no time did King's Hedges give up on him. His teachers almost had to coax him through the door but they knew what they were doing and were extremely competent and sensitive in the way they dealt with the situation."

## Every step of the way

Special measures were put in place specifically to address Brandon's condition. He was given a designated 'quiet' space in the classroom for times when he was feeling stressed and was allocated a Teaching Assistant to give him one-to-one support whenever necessary and he has, says Shelley, flourished under this treatment. "The school coped brilliantly, understood his needs and helped me to get his Statement of Special Educational Needs in place so he would have the appropriate support. Although it took quite a while to get him settled, the school were there for us every step of the way and by degrees he was integrated into the general classroom with the other children. The teachers also helped me a great deal in how to address some aspects of his behaviour and they have taught me a lot about how to manage certain situations. I have been very impressed with their dedication."

## A nurturing environment

Brandon has adapted so well that he is now not only very happy at school but achieving close to target for his age. Zoe, too, did very well academically as well as being a keen participant in many of the school's extra-curricular lunchtime clubs and after-school activities. "What pleases me is that King's Hedges has managed to fully address the needs of my two very different children," says Shelley. "Zoe has had lots of opportunity to try some unusual hobbies, such as learning to play the ukulele amongst others!"



And of course Brandon had his own particular issues but both of them have been nurtured and enjoyed their time there, even though it took a while for Brandon. Other schools might have decided he was too difficult to manage but thankfully King's Hedges believed in him."

## Looking towards a bright future

Shelley naturally has concerns about Brandon's imminent move to secondary school but is confident that she will get the back-up she needs from King's Hedges. "Between us we are already looking into options for Brandon so that we can make the transition as smooth as possible for him. I am so sorry that he will have to leave a school which has done so much for him, but I do believe that they have done as much as they possibly can to help him cope in the future and for that I am extremely grateful."

## Children say

Zoe: "King's Hedges is a place to have fun whilst learning a lot and that they set me up for secondary school perfectly."

Brandon says: "The teachers are funny and the food and snacks are yummy!"

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.

*Excellence achieved through care, creativity and challenge*