



Krissi and Phil Palmer live in Abbots Langley with their sons Luke, six and Zak, two.

## Krissi was told that her son was naughty and disruptive, but Kingsway Infant School has proved everyone wrong

### Serious concerns

Each morning and afternoon, Krissi can choose between a 25-minute walk to school or a ten-minute drive but she does not for one moment grudge the petrol or shoe leather. Kingsway Infant School has, she says, so transformed her son's life that the extra time and cost is worth every penny.

Teachers at Luke's previous nursery school had told Krissi that they thought he was 'different' and whilst Krissi and Phil recognised that he was strong-willed and boisterous they had not worried about him until then and it was only when she started to get complaints from the school that Krissi began to get seriously concerned. "It got to the stage when virtually every afternoon his teacher would tell me something else about how he'd been disruptive and difficult and was upsetting the other children," she remembers. "When I picked him up he would come home angry and unhappy and we couldn't understand what was wrong as we had never had problems like this with him before."

## Desperation

On the verge of desperation, over the next few years Krissi took Luke for assessment by a range of specialists to check for possible autism, and for the hearing loss which also affected his balance and co-ordination. "Autism was ruled out but it was found that his hearing was very poor and now we realise that it was this which was the main cause of his behavioural issues," Krissi says. "When I went into his classroom to watch and see the problems for myself, I found that he had been made to sit by himself at the back of the room because apparently he'd been naughty but what became quite clear was that he was bored because he couldn't hear what was going on so he just did his own thing, for which he was effectively punished."

## Never give up

Krissi explains that she did everything she could think of to work with the school but that, although she was reluctant to uproot him, in the end she felt she had no choice. "I felt that my son had been labelled as a bad influence and I believe the school gave up on him," she says. "It was Kingsway Infant School which has turned everything around for us, and I will always be incredibly grateful."

## Transformation

Meeting with the Headteacher at Kingsway Krissi explained the situation, appealing for a place even though they were outside the catchment area. "The Head listened to me, told me that they would make no promises but that they would do their very best to support Luke and within a very short time he was transformed. The change in him has been quite amazing: he had been underperforming but was now meeting all his targets; he had been shy in front of other people and now he was asking for a part in the school play. He used to come home angry and sad but now he wants to join in with everything and loves his school life - he is a different child."



## Understanding and enthusiasm

Krissi believes that it is the understanding and enthusiasm of the teachers at Kingsway which has effected this remarkable change. "They realised that his previous behaviour was mainly down to the fact that he couldn't hear properly, so he had felt left out and couldn't understand why he was getting into trouble," she says. "With the appropriate support he has flourished, and his teachers have worked with us so that we can continue to help him at home. They have been totally on our side, very committed and very professional, and we have never looked back."

## The milestone

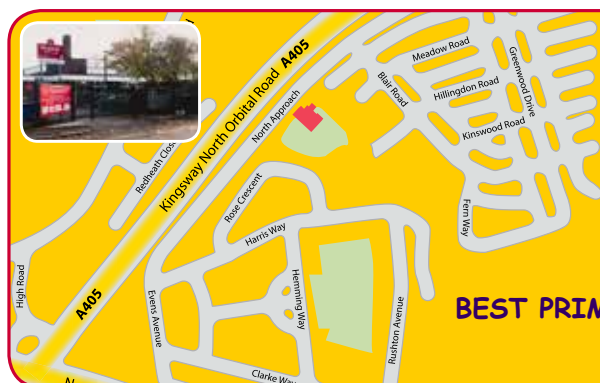
The impact that Kingsway Infant School has had on her family is, says Krissi, incalculable. "We went through three years of nightmare. I was desperate until we were lucky enough to find somewhere which had the resources and the willingness to see Luke as a child who had something to offer, rather than as a troublemaker. It has been the milestone which has changed our lives so much for the better."

## Children say

Luke is in complete agreement and says:

"I like it at Kingsway Infants School because it has the best playground and its fun at playtime. I like maths and doing adding up. My teachers are nice because they help me sometimes if things are hard."

"I think my teachers care about me and my friends a lot and always help us."



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