



St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School

Let God's love shine in our lives, as we care, share and learn together



Lidija and Hamzeh live with their son, Daniel, aged six, and daughter, Emily, aged five, in Bassacarr.

Daniel has **benefitted** from all the **special care** and support given during his time at St Francis Xavier Primary School

Help and advice

Lidija and Hamzeh are grateful for all the help Daniel has been given since he started attending the nursery at St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School at the age of three. Shortly after he joined the school Daniel was diagnosed with severe autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). His Mum Lidija says: "It was a big shock to us at the time but the school have supported us in every way that they could. Daniel could not speak and was struggling to understand what people said to him. The school were very helpful identifying what Daniel's barriers to learning were. They also provided us with advice and information on autism."

One to one care

"We did not expect Daniel to be diagnosed with this but we found it was helpful to be able to talk to the teachers about his condition," Lidija says. "Daniel has one to one support in school to help him develop the skills he needs to do things for himself. The school keep us informed any time there is a change in Daniel's behaviour and we do the same."

"He has speech therapy at the school and now he has started putting a few words together, which is encouraging. The school have also made changes to the building in order to accommodate Daniel."

Special facilities

"Daniel does not like to speak and it seems as though he does not understand why he needs to speak. Usually Daniel will hold your hand and take you to see what he is asking for, such as a drink or to watch television. He will show you what he wants because he can't tell you. The school show Daniel pictures so he can point to what he wants and now he sometimes adds a word as well. They have done everything they can to look after Daniel and other children like him. The school has had built a special room where Daniel can go to calm down when he is upset about something. If there are any problems and the school thinks we can help at home they will advise us what we can do," Lidija says.

Safe place

"We have regular meetings with the school to discuss the situation and they invite specialists in to help us, too. Daniel loves opening and closing doors and he likes to run and he is very fast. When Daniel runs around he will not stop. He has no danger awareness and if he sees a locked door he tries to figure out how it opens and closes. The school have done everything they can to make the place safe for him and have put in a special gate,

which is kept locked to keep him safe," Lidija says. "Daniel likes doing puzzles and there is a special corner in the classroom where he can play. He likes games and building things out of Lego. He will not choose to draw, but if I ask him to draw something for Mummy and give him paper and pencils, he will do it."

Moving on

"We are now waiting for Daniel to move to a special school because St Francis Xavier cannot continue to meet Daniel's growing educational and safety needs as he gets older. They have done a brilliant job but they cannot do any more and the time has now come for Daniel to move on to a new school with specialist provision," Lidija explains.

Continued support

"The school have done everything they could for Daniel. At the beginning we didn't know anything about Daniel's condition and the school have helped us a lot and provided us with information so we can understand it," Lidija says. "I would definitely recommend St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School to other parents. They have done a brilliant job for Daniel and us. If they could have continued, I know that they would have, but they are now supporting us by helping us move Daniel to another school where his developing needs will be able to be met more appropriately."



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