

Val and Jol are happy with the way Bleasdale are helping to bring out the best in Matthew

Val and Jol Wardle live in Cark in Cumbria with their sons, Matthew and Jack, aged 12, who are identical twins. Matthew is a fortnightly boarder at Bleasdale School while Jack attends a secondary school near his home. Matthew has quadraplegic cerebral palsy, is visually impaired and has learning difficulties and complex needs.



Enjoying school

Matthew loves the hustle and bustle of life at Bleasdale and enjoys being taken out on trips and meeting local people. Val says: "He particularly likes going in the hydrotherapy pool at the school and having fun in the water. He enjoys rebound therapy on the trampoline and going in a Liko harness, a special walking harness, to help his posture. It gives him chance to stretch out and helps strengthen his muscles and improve his digestion. He always giggles when he goes in it."



**Bleasdale
School**

Learning Together / Achieving Together

Making progress

Matthew started at Bleasdale when he was four years old as a day pupil and has built up to being a fortnightly boarder over the last eight years. "He began staying one night a week and gradually moved towards being there for a fortnight before coming home for the weekend," Val explains. "Within six weeks of starting at the school he had made progress. Everyone noticed the change in him, even the taxi driver who took him backwards and forwards to Bleasdale."

Working at home

"At the end of each fortnight he will come home for the weekend and we will be able to see from his home/school book what he has been doing. He will bring homework back with him and we will read to him and do activities with him. His intelligence is the equivalent to that of a toddler and so he likes rhyming books and books with repetition. But he gets bored after a while during the school holidays because there is always so much going on at Bleasdale, where they have the staff and facilities to stimulate him," says Val.

Experienced staff

The school follow the National Curriculum but the staff adapt it skilfully to suit the children's needs. Val says: "Matthew really benefits from the 24 hour curriculum. He continues learning in the evenings, but in a different environment from the classroom. We know we can trust the staff to take good care of Matthew. Some children have severe medical problems so they are used to dealing with emergencies. We know that if anything happens to him they will phone us and we will decide together what to do."

Making friends

Part of the fun for Matthew at Bleasdale is being with other children. Val says: "He likes one boy in particular who is very similar to him and there was a lovely picture taken of them giggling together. They also meet other children when they go out of the school. For instance Matthew recently took part in a dance display at Preston Guildhall with children from other schools from the area."

Val is pleased that pupils can stay at Bleasdale up to the age of 19. "After that we are hoping Matthew will attend a college in Lancaster. I know he will be well prepared for it by Bleasdale and that they will make sure it is a smooth transition for him."



Contact us

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