

**Kelly lives with her sons, Oliver, aged 22, Kieran, aged 13, and Jamie, aged 10, in Bracknell. Jamie has autism spectrum disorder and sensory processing disorder.**

## **Jamie is now making steady progress with the help of the dedicated staff at Kennel Lane School**

### **Improved communication**

Kelly is very satisfied with the progress Jamie has made since starting at Kennel Lane. She says: "He's still non-verbal, but if he wants something he can now show you using a communication board. He will point to the words 'I' and then 'want' and then what he wants. We have a communication board at home like the one at school and it's a lot easier than when you had to guess his needs."

## Caring teachers

“Jamie will now tolerate adult-led activities and can be taken to do something, even if reluctantly, which is progress. He will undress himself and tries to brush his own teeth, whereas at one time he couldn’t. There is no area where he hasn’t made progress. I can’t ask for more from the staff at the school than they already give. They love Jamie, and everything they do for him, they do with love. When he achieves something new, they are as excited as I am. We are currently potty training and it is a team effort between me and the school and we are sharing information between us.”

## Good first impression

Jamie started in the nursery at Kennel Lane when he was 3. Kelly says: “He had been assessed and I had been told that mainstream education was definitely not an option for him. Kennel Lane was the only special school in this area, but fortunately, we lived near it and when I went to look round, I loved the school.”

## Enjoying activities

“I have never had a problem with Jamie not wanting to go to school. He is constantly active and loves climbing and the staff have to give him a sensory diet throughout the day. He has things to do and then will have breaks for physical activity before going back to learning. He enjoys activities such as putting his hands in foam or doing water play, but they have to be careful not to over-stimulate him.

## Loving books

“Jamie can’t write yet, but can make marks with a pen. He can’t read but he loves books and magazines. He loves animals, particularly chickens and ducks, and if I let him choose a magazine to buy, he will look at the pictures and then choose a magazine about animals. He will sit and look at a book or magazine with lots of words in it, just to see the pictures.

## Choosing the best option

“My older sons are also on the autism spectrum but they both went to a mainstream school and my eldest son did well in his GCSEs. However, I know that a mainstream school would not have been suitable for Jamie. I would tell any parents considering Kennel Lane to visit the school, see how the children are being taught and talk to the other parents. The first step is accepting that a special school is the best option for your child. It’s a difficult journey to make, but you can learn from other parents who have already been on it. The only respite I ever have from looking after Jamie is while he’s at school, where I know he’s in good hands and I am very grateful for what they are doing for him. You can see that the staff at Kennel Lane all love what they do.”



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