



*Claire and Tony Dodman live in St. Albans with their children Rhys 25, Scott, 22, Kyle, 19, and Jeorgia, 16. Their son Scott is hearing impaired and attended Knightsfield. He loved the school so much, he has returned as a teaching assistant.*

## Claire and Scott believe Knightsfield School's positive approach to education and additional needs is life changing

### A 'can do' attitude

Scott was diagnosed as hearing impaired at the age of five years old. He has a moderate hearing loss and dyslexia; as a specialist teacher in dyslexia Claire was thrilled to find Knightsfield School for Scott. "Once I'd found Knightsfield, I was hooked on it! The school has an excellent ethos which teaches children that their hearing impairment does not define them and does not stop them from being who they want to be."



**Knightsfield  
School**

**Specialist Sensory Academy**

## Supportive with additional needs

Claire feels the school has a real talent at looking at individual strengths and weaknesses and addressing them to make children into well-rounded individuals when they leave. "I needed a school that would acknowledge that Scott not only had hearing problems but that he had additional difficulties because of his dyslexia. We found teaching staff supportive in getting Scott's dyslexia formally diagnosed and in supporting us through that process," explains Claire.

## Teaching staff that care

As Scott now works at Knightsfield School, Claire is aware that little has changed in terms of the staff. "I think it says a lot that so many of the staff that were there when Scott was a pupil are still there now. I think it indicates a happy and positive environment and staff that care about their roles," says Claire. "I always found the staff approachable and genuinely interested in Scott's welfare and they were always very good at communicating with me; I think a good level of communication is important in helping parents and teachers to work together."

## Igniting self-belief

Scott won an award for maths in Year 9 and Claire remembers how proud he was of that achievement. "Because of his dyslexia, maths came more naturally to him. We found the school was very good at recognising achievements and hard work and it was a real boost for Scott; it ignited his self-belief."

## Preparation for moving on

Another aspect that Claire found worked positively for Scott was the integration with the neighbouring mainstream school. "He really enjoyed attending lessons there and integrating with hearing children; I think this was really good in preparing him for moving on to further education.

Claire adds: "Knightsfield School wants only good things for their children. They provided a brilliant balance between consistency of care and good teaching."

## Positive ethos

As an educational professional, what impressed Claire was how staff never placed any inhibitors on Scott in terms of his ability. "They got Scott to think outside of the box about what

he wanted for his future and what was possible. That positive attitude has really stayed with him."

Scott has fond memories of his time as a pupil at Knightsfield too. "They pushed me to be the best I could be," says Scott.

"I always felt they cared for me the way my family would. My English teacher worked hard with me to get me through my GCSE and all the staff really helped me to believe I could do whatever I wanted to if I put my mind to it.

## Continued support

When Scott moved on to higher education, he appreciated the continuing support he received from Knightsfield. "Having the use of a note taker and on-going specialist support was great."

Scott is now studying at the University of Hertfordshire for a degree in Sport Therapy and has returned to Knightsfield School as a teaching assistant on placement. He is working on a one to one basis with a pupil who has mobility needs. "The school really helped me and it's been enjoyable to be back in the family and to be a role model to the children.

Scott adds: "The extra support that Knightsfield School gives makes you believe in yourself; it's life changing!"



**Specialist Sensory Academy**

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