

New Fosseway School encouraged Jordan's love of photography, in which he obtained a GCSE

Jackie and Ian Drake live in Knowle, Bristol with their son Jordan, 20 and daughter Gabrielle, 18.



From boy to man

Jordan left New Fosseway School at the age of 19, having attended since he was four years old.

"Jordan has Down's syndrome and initially went to a mainstream nursery, but I fought hard to get him a place at New Fosseway," explains Jackie. "I visited the school and was very impressed with it. I thought it looked lovely and would be perfect for him."

Individual needs

All children are unique and their individual needs are catered for at New Fosseway.

"It's a great school with lots of excellent facilities," says Jackie. "The staff are able to cater for the individual needs of all the children. Over the years the staff have been incredibly helpful with Jordan and have also supported me."

"Speech is one of the hardest things for Jordan and the school helped him so much with things like Makaton. They also arranged for me to do some Makaton courses at the school, which was really helpful."

Making friends

Attending school from the age of four to 19 enables students to develop strong friendships.

"The school really encourages friendships and Jordan has made lots of friends," says Jackie. "He enjoyed going to after school clubs, particularly the sports ones and liked playing football and riding the bikes at lunch times. Jordan left this summer to go to college and he really misses the school and everyone there."

Developing skills

Opportunities to interact with children at mainstream school are encouraged.

"One day a week Jordan went to The Bridge, which is a mainstream school with links to New Fosseway," says Jackie. "Whilst there he studied photography as he really enjoys taking photographs and when he achieved a GCSE in this we were all incredibly proud."

Communication

Jackie enjoyed reading Jordan's school home diary every day to find out what he had been doing.

"Communication is excellent and I particularly like the fact that the teachers write down what the children have been up each day," says Jackie. "This is brilliant, especially for a child like Jordan whose

communication skills are limited. Now that Jordan is at college and I don't have his diary to look at each day I really miss it."

Fond farewell

The school celebrates the achievements of pupils when they leave.

"New Fosseway was a big part of our lives," recalls Jackie. "When Jordan left he attended a special leavers' assembly and prom and it was lovely to see him looking so smart and happy, dressed up in his suit and a bow tie. I am very proud of how far Jordan has come over the years."

Warm and friendly

Jackie highly recommends New Fosseway and says: "It's a very good school and if I had my time again I'd definitely send my child there."

"New Fosseway is warm and friendly and the staff are absolutely wonderful. They really go out of their way to do what's best for the children. They put on some fantastic events and shows during the year and try their best to make everything extra special. Jordan was in Mama Mia this year and last year he was in Grease. Jordan used to be quite reserved but getting involved with things at New Fosseway has really helped him to develop confidence."

Jordan says:

"I love all my friends at school. I also like sport, playing football and going on the bikes. A policeman came into school to help us learn to ride the bikes and it was great!"

