



Judith and Norman McIntosh live in Luton with their children Nathalie 25, Hayden 21 and Kieron, 14 in Year 9. Keiron has Down's Syndrome with some speech and language difficulties and complex learning needs.

Judith feels St Luke's School is a superior school whose teaching skills have really helped her son's confidence and social skills to grow.

A fantastic recommendation

Judith and Norman chose St Luke's School for Keiron from Year 7. Judith had wanted Keiron to attend mainstream secondary school but on his first trial day she realised this was not the right environment for him. "The other children were obviously academically way ahead of Keiron and it just wasn't right for him. The local special needs schools didn't appeal, but a friend recommended St Luke's School to us and I loved it immediately," explains Judith.



Learning and growing towards independence

Facilities to support life skills

What stood out for Judith was the way St Luke's School felt like a typical school but with extra facilities like the animals, a fantastic outdoor space for gardening and an area for cooking, all areas aimed at building life skills. "We were shown around by some of the pupils, which I just thought was great!" says Judith.

Amazing improvement

Judith and Norman feel that Kieron has developed a great deal during his time at St Luke's School. They have noticed amazing improvements in a number of areas. "Certainly his confidence has grown. He'll say 'hello' readily now and he has friends at school. His reading and speech have both come on a lot." says Judith. "His skills in reading and writing are improving, which is brilliant to see; and his ability and confidence to communicate has developed a great deal."

Judith believes this growth is due to the adjustments the school has made to benefit Kieron personally. "Kieron's teachers have been able to identify any issues he has and they work with him to improve. I find it really encouraging that they focus on him as an individual, based on how he is responding. They currently give him a phoneme a week to focus on and this seems to work well for Keiron," explains Judith.

Talented teaching staff

Judith believes Keiron's progress is also thanks to the warm, friendly staff at St Luke's School. "Their teaching skills are excellent - they can adapt to all learning needs, but more importantly, they treat the child as part of a family and are so welcoming."

Parent involvement in learning

Judith also has praise for the way the school has involved her and Norman in Kieron's education. "You're always updated on the strategies they are using to educate your child, and they will call you if there are any issues. You feel involved in your child's education - I never felt that way with my two older children," explains Judith. "The teachers will go through things with you quite clearly and you're given an opportunity to offer your opinion, which is wonderful."

A life changing school

Choosing the right school for your child is always an important decision. Judith is firm in her opinion that she has no regrets in her choice and would fully recommend St Luke's to others. "St Luke's School is life changing. They really help children who are disadvantaged by helping them to improve the talents they already have; but they also help them to build confidence for life," says Judith. "St Luke's has a real talent for helping children to develop the skills they need to be able to cope out in the world and have the independence they need to live as adults."

Judith adds: "Kieron is very happy at school. He wants to go and that is so reassuring as a parent. I have worked at special needs schools and I really feel St Luke's School and the way they structure their teaching and take time to get to know the child is far superior. There should be more schools like St Luke's!"

Children say

Kieron says: He likes school and has fun. He loves chips as part of school dinner on Friday!



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