



Littledown  
School



Lorraine and Darren Stevens live with their son, Taylor, aged ten, in Slough. Taylor joined Littledown Special School at the age of six after being excluded by his mainstream primary school because of behavioural problems. He has eight older brothers and sisters.

Taylor is deriving benefit from the **varied strategies and therapies** used by the **caring staff** at Littledown School

#### Helpful teachers

Taylor loves being at Littledown and refers to the school as his second family. His Mum, Lorraine, says: 'He is really benefiting from the attention he receives from the teachers and he is now making good progress academically. He is good at Maths, although he gets anxious about it, he loves science and he is an excellent reader.'

#### Settling in

'When he joined Littledown, Taylor settled in well straight away, which was a relief to us after the difficult time he had been having at primary school. He was excluded from his mainstream school because of his aggressive behaviour and because he wouldn't conform, although we have still not been given a definite diagnosis of his problems,' Lorraine says.

## Learning techniques

'How well he performs at school can be different from one day to the next and is dependent on his mood. Some days he really has to be coaxed to put pen to paper and yet on other days he is fine. He does art therapy and he is taught anger management techniques to help him manage his aggression.'

## Calming massage

Lorraine goes into the school along with the family support worker to participate in Taylor's anger management sessions. 'We do board games that have been designed around his emotional feelings and puppet play. Sometime we just play a simple card game while we chat. We talk about different situations and scenarios. It is very good for Taylor and teaches him to be more in touch with his feelings. The staff use different strategies with him when his behaviour becomes challenging. Sometimes they will just stop what they are doing and come and give him hand massage to calm him down,' Lorraine says.

## Rewards system

Taylor responds well to the points system the school use to reward good behaviour and hard work, Lorraine says. 'When he first started at the school I thought it was harsh to deny the children the chance to go on trips out with their classmates if their behaviour hadn't been good. But now I can see that it really works. It is an incentive for the children to try to behave well and meet their own targets and I can understand why the school have to maintain firm boundaries.'

## Encouraging talent

'When he has gone on the trips, Taylor has particularly enjoyed bowling and going to a wildlife centre to see the animals. He is prepared to have a go at anything and try all the different activities. The staff will adapt the curriculum to suit the needs of the individual child and encourage any talents that they may have. They are brilliant for raising the child's self esteem. I have every confidence in the staff and I know that Taylor is learning a lot more than he would be doing if he were still in a mainstream primary school,' Lorraine says.

## Family fun

'I have also taken part in the family fun events run by a teacher with the Family Support worker. They have been really rewarding and, along with other families, we have joined in with team building, bonding and a variety of games after school. The events have helped build relationships between the parents and the carers.'

## Making progress

'Looking ahead to secondary school, I don't think Taylor is ready to be reintegrated into a mainstream school yet, but I am really proud of the progress he has made up to this point and I certainly haven't ruled the possibility out,' Lorraine says.

## Children say

Taylor says: 'I like all the staff at Littledown and really enjoy the rewards afternoons.'

