



Natasha believes the staff at Hope School are wonderful and is so grateful to them and their Family Works course for turning her family life around

Natasha Byrne lives in Thackley. She has four children: Shaun, 16, Adam, 11, Rhiannon, nine and Billy, four. Adam joined Hope School in 2013. He has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Natasha describes Adam as a very caring boy who finds it difficult to express his feelings and to manage his emotions. "When Adam was in mainstream school he found it hard to control how he felt. He'd use lots of attention seeking behaviours both at school and at home, but moving to Hope School has really turned things around for us," says Natasha.

Family works

"The school provides a course called 'Family Works' and it really does work! It's been a huge help and has really turned our family life around!" explains Natasha. "It teaches important skills to help you see things from your child's perspective and to empathise, which can be hard when you're dealing with challenging behaviour."

Natasha has found the course incredibly valuable and has appreciated the support network it has also offered. "You get to discuss coping strategies with other parents and you realise you're not alone. The staff are really supportive and knowledgeable too," says Natasha. "As a parent of more than one child it can be hard to spend quality time with each child. The residential trip at the end of the course was an amazing way to spend time just with Adam and both of us got so much from it! Learning the right skills to manage Adam's behaviour has been magical!"

Brilliant support from considerate staff

Natasha is very enthusiastic about the level of support offered to the children at Hope School. "One of the things I particularly like is the small class sizes. It provides the opportunity for closer supervision and support," says Natasha. "What really stands out for me is the school's willingness to understand and appreciate how each child is feeling. They use a traffic light system which sits in front of each child. They can then press a green, amber or red light depending on how each task is making them feel and staff can respond appropriately. I think it's brilliant!"

Teaching independence and values

It's this attention and consideration to how each child feels that Natasha believes is responsible for the changes she's noticed in Adam. "After six or so weeks at the school, I noticed Adam was a lot calmer and more respectful. Don't get me wrong, he still has some bad days, but he's grown up so much during his time at Hope School. He's more independent and has progressed in leaps and bounds," says Natasha.

A consistent and balanced approach

Hope School like to work with parents and Natasha has been grateful for the consistent



approach this has brought. "They're always happy for you to let them know how things have been at home. They promote working together to manage behaviour. If something happens at home that I think may upset Adam at school, I can call and let them know and they do the same for me," explains Natasha.

"They use a time out room to provide an opportunity to calm down and for reflection and this has worked well with Adam at home too. I think it helps that we are both using the same techniques. Any disruptive behaviour is then forgotten about and each day is treated as a new day!"

Always approachable

Natasha adds: "I know the staff are always happy to listen, to offer support and to help us to improve any situation. They respect each child as an individual and they treat them that way."

"I honestly can't fault Hope School! It's been the changing point for Adam and our family and I am so grateful to them."

Children say:

Adam says: "I enjoy my time at Hope School. The staff listen to me and they care about how I feel."