

Samuel and Matthew are both flourishing now with the help of the specialist staff at Hatton School



Gemma and Mark Segal live in Redbridge with their sons, Samuel, aged nine, and Matthew, aged seven.



Samuel, who has social communication difficulties, attends a mainstream primary school but has outreach support from Hatton School and Special Needs Centre. Matthew is non-verbal and has been diagnosed with ASD. He moved from his mainstream primary school to attend Hatton School when he was in Year One.

Different needs

Gemma and Mark are delighted with the different levels of support their sons receive from Hatton School. Gemma says: 'With good outreach support from Hatton, Samuel is now comfortable and happy at his mainstream school and making good progress. Matthew is a bright boy and has come on really well since he started to attend Hatton full time. We are really pleased he now wants to communicate with us more.'

Outreach support

'Samuel found aspects of school life very challenging when he was in the infants so Hatton Outreach worked closely with the school to support him and he is more confident now and coming on well,' Gemma says.

Academic progress

'Samuel is doing well academically, he loves school and is a happy boy. He has made some friends but still likes being on his own sometimes. He has a very good memory and he loves lists and data. He is good at Maths and his reading comprehension is coming on well. He used to be very anxious but he has changed a lot. He is bright and he's a real character. He will need support to make the transition into secondary school because it will be a big change, but I am confident Hatton will have a programme to help him.'

Good move

Matthew started at the same mainstream primary school as Samuel and also had the support of an outreach worker from Hatton but it wasn't enough for him,' Gemma says. 'He coped with reception but was still non-verbal and as the year progressed it became obvious that his sensory and language needs would be better met at Hatton School due to its facilities and staff. He went to Hatton full time in Year One. As soon as we took him in to visit we could tell he would be really happy there and he literally ran in on his first day.

Practical help

'Because he is non-verbal, Matthew uses PECS to communicate. He is a bright boy but his speech just hasn't come. He can also now communicate using an iPod and show us what he needs. Since being at Hatton he definitely wants to engage with us and communicate with us more. Hatton have really helped us with toilet training him and because Matthew was fussy about food, they have worked hard to help him explore different textures.

Seeing progress

'Matthew knows his letters and numbers and can read and write now. The staff tell us what progress he is making when we go to a meeting and we come out really happy and positive. Even our friends can tell he is progressing. Matthew is now happier to stay in the room with us when we are spending time with our friends, whereas before he would find it too much and want to be in his own space,' Gemma says.

Calm environment

'Each child is treated according to their individual needs at Hatton. There are eight in his class but it is calm, which suits Matthew, and they all get a lot of attention. He has a sensory timetable to follow and he likes soft play, the dark room, the splash pool and the sensory room. He also likes being outdoors. We can tell he feels safe and happy at Hatton and he loves to jump on the minibus each day to go there.'



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