



**Kestrel House
School**

Elijah



“It’s a calm, quiet, homely atmosphere which he responds to very well. He’s a happy boy now.”

Elijah’s Mum

Elijah was diagnosed with autism at the age of four. He started his school life at a mainstream primary but couldn’t cope and would spend some lessons under the desks. His Mum believed the staff didn’t seem sure how to cope.

His family believed the best learning environment for Elijah would be an autism specific school.

They were given three schools to consider, and his mother knew that Kestrel House would offer her son the most appropriate learning in the classroom and opportunities with activities and trips in the wider community.

Two years after his ASD diagnosis, he was awarded a place at Kestrel House School by Haringey Council.

Elijah's Mum, Jackie, tells her family's story:

"Elijah is very comfortable in his classroom now and he has his own specific area of the classroom with his desk and his own area. The clear routine at Kestrel means Elijah is aware of what is expected of him and he is certainly learning more.

"The classroom is quiet and calm and there are only a small number of children in his class, so Elijah is now very happy at school. That makes me happy too."



On site therapy support

"He likes the staff and he is receiving one-to-one support in speech and language. I'm very happy with the staff: Elijah has made good progress with his speaking and that means he can interact more with the family at home.

"He has also accessed the occupational therapy at school which has helped his progress a lot.

"At home he'll sit down with us rather than want to be on his own. He'll come to the cinema with us to watch a movie and he'll sit happily and quietly and he's fine.

"I like the fact that Kestrel House School takes the children out and about on activities: he has been rock climbing, horse riding, and swimming and he loves it.

"He's chilled and laid back now which is good.

Celebrating Diversity & Culture

"I love the fact that Kestrel House celebrates diversity and culture within the pupils and within the staff. There are lots of events at school, such as open days and parties which gives us an opportunity to meet and talk to other parents.

We're from all walks of life but we all have one thing in common - a child with autism, and that gives us a bond.

"We can share stories with each other and learn from each other which is very useful and comforting. We are a very friendly bunch of parents and it offers support. The staff are all very helpful and friendly too.

"The teachers have told me that he is interacting well now with other pupils in class and Elijah is starting to make friends, which is wonderful. His friend Jamal has brought him a birthday card and Christmas card and they'll always make sure they say goodbye to each other at the end of the school day.





Up to date, well resourced facilities

"The school is well resourced: the facilities are all up to date.

They have a wonderful sensory room and Elijah uses the interactive white boards for his learning.

He'll know what to do, and he is doing well with the technology.

Calm, quiet homely atmosphere

"Kestrel House has a calm, quiet, homely atmosphere which Elijah responds well to. He doesn't cope with noise and this is comfortable for him.

"The learning is appropriate and they'll have interesting initiatives for school such as a guide dog for the blind being brought in.

"One of the local mainstream schools sends small groups of children to Kestrel and it's wonderful for them to interact with each other. It's beneficial to children from both schools.



Helpful, approachable staff

"The Headteacher and the staff are all very accessible. I can speak to her about any problems I might have; and she will always offer an appropriate strategy to help me with Elijah at home. Recently he was waking constantly at 3 o'clock in the morning, and she offered me good advice about how to deal with that. It's reassuring to know that the staff will help me with any concerns I have at home. Nothing is too much trouble for them. They'll sort it out.

They'll help me and advise me and I have to learn to follow what their strategies are. I know I mustn't be too soft on him!

"Elijah doesn't cope well with change, and he is really getting used to being there. I hope he can stay there for the rest of his school life, until he is 16. I don't want him to have to change schools again: it would be too much for him."

"I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone at Kestrel House for what they're doing for Elijah. Thank you very much - particularly to the Headteacher and to Lina, who's our Parent Liaison Officer.

"They've supported us, as a family, right from the beginning and they've made a huge change to Elijah. He's a happy boy and that makes me happy."

Jackie, Elijah's Mum

Elijah's School Progress Report: EXCELLENT

	Arriving at Kestrel 2012	2016
Cognitive, Learning & Abilities	Elijah's attention and listening skills need to be developed: he is able to sustain his attention to a self-directed activity for a few minutes before moving on.	Elijah likes looking at books and engaging in learning activities. He is able to follow simple and familiar classroom routine instructions. Elijah has shown progress across the curriculum and continues to be intrigued by activities presented to assist his learning. He shows enthusiasm towards new activities and resources.
Communication	Elijah made frequent sounds to communicate and had only a few simple words. He could only react to his name some of the time. He was not able to follow verbal instructions outside of his routine.	Elijah uses single words to communicate, but is increasingly using two words or short phrases. He is able to use facial expressions to portray whether he is happy or sad.
PEM	Elijah liked to be around familiar adults and could tolerate being in the company of small groups of children.	Elijah is a sociable boy who, at times, likes to be with other children and is beginning to show more interest in playing with his peers. He is able to engage in simple and constructive play in the playground during unstructured times.
Sensory	Elijah was often lethargic and tired, choosing to lie down in the classroom setting. He needed support with his toileting skills. He could use basic cutlery, preferring to finger feed. He held a pencil with an immature grip.	Elijah is an active boy who enjoys physical activities including swimming, horse riding, dance, & yoga. He is demonstrating a steady increase in motor planning and body awareness and is more at ease with trying out new activities in the playground. He holds a pencil and paintbrush appropriately. He feeds himself using a fork and spoon.