

# Rory is thriving and growing in confidence in the calm environment of Torfield School



Jason and Katie Boyd live in Bexhill with their children, Moira, aged eight, and Rory, aged six.



Rory joined Year One at Torfield in September 2017, having previously attended a mainstream primary school.

## Good progress

Jason and Katie are delighted with the progress Rory has made since starting at Torfield School. Katie says: "He has picked up phonics really quickly and he is now learning to share. His social skills are definitely improving and he is a lot more confident and happy. He is getting on well because he is now in a calm environment. The staff are very skilled and we feel confident they know what they are doing. His relationship with his sister, Moira, has improved and they enjoy more happy times together now."

## Anxiety issues

"Before Rory started at Torfield it felt as though we were living under a very dark cloud," Katie says. "I couldn't work and had a knot in my stomach every morning. We now know what we're doing from day to day, but when he was at his mainstream primary school, we couldn't plan anything because he was only accessing school part-time. Rory started school before he was diagnosed with ASD, but we had explained some of his issues to the staff. He has sensitive hearing and found the noise at school difficult to bear and he was constantly full of anxiety. The school would ring as soon as there was a problem and ask us to take him home."

## Impressive school

The family had heard good things about Torfield when Rory was in nursery but wanted him to try a mainstream primary school and hoped he would be able to cope there. Katie says: "When it was obvious Rory wasn't happy, we called an emergency meeting. The SENCO at his school also mentioned Torfield to us and when we went to look at it we were both very impressed. We could tell straight away it was the right environment for Rory. Our application was turned down initially as the local authority wanted to see if the mainstream school could do more to accommodate him. But after we reapplied, the teacher from Torfield came to observe Rory in his school setting and her report was a key factor in him being allowed to change schools."

## Writing skills

"Rory got on really well at Torfield right from the start. He did half days to get him used to it but after the first week was attending full-time. We had tried to prepare him during the summer and the school had given us a transition book, which was very useful. Rory is now a lot calmer in everyday life. He can sit in a circle with other children whereas before he would run off. He can now ride a scooter as they are helping him develop his motor skills. He can read and write some words. The other day he wrote the word 'dog' on our chalk board at home and I was thrilled."

## Proud of achievement

"I like the rewards scheme they have at Torfield. If the children do anything good they are given a smiley stamp. Once they have collected five, they win a prize. The first time he didn't seem bothered but now he is pleased to show me what he has won. He was recently made Star of the Week for being good at meal times every day and it was the first time I'd seen him proud of something he had achieved," Katie says.

## Happy experiences

"Torfield is the perfect school for Rory. It feels calm and welcoming when you go in and we can tell he's having a good experience there because he talks about his teachers and the children he likes playing with. Now, if my phone rings, it is to tell me about something nice Rory has done at school."



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