

## **TRANSCRIPT: Marley's schooling**

Janice, Marley's mother

Because I was working in a mainstream school and Luke had attended the same school, we decided that Marley should attend mainstream, if possible, and he really coped very well. The other children responded to him and he responded, to a certain extent, to them. He enjoyed the school. He was very happy there.

But then came the time for him to move into middle school and because Marley was still very, very immature and because of his epilepsy, the amount of time he had off school, we just felt that a mainstream middle school wasn't appropriate to Marley.

And it was a very difficult choice, whether we came here for his physical needs or we went to a school for his learning disabilities, but we decided that, for us, his physical needs were his priority. But as he's got older and his general health is stabilised a little more, he was finding that the curriculum here was advancing too quickly for him. He couldn't cope and he became very aggressive, very uncooperative, very disruptive, throwing drinks over people, all sorts of things.

A year ago, he was diagnosed with autism, and with a new head who's very keen to promote good teaching for autism here we felt that, really, this was the place to stay, but up to that point we'd been, really, very close to moving and had even considered teaching at home, which I didn't want to do.

The new head thought that Marley would be better off placed within a class here where a lot of the children do have autistic spectrum disorders and it's made such a difference to our lives. He's a different child, really, at home, and at school, he's actually started to make progress in academic subjects, not just in his behaviour, but we're actually starting to see the real Marley now.