

Jordan's Journey*

Amberwood Lodge, Dorset

Specialist Residential Service for Adults with Autism and Learning Disabilities

Jordan's history

Jordan has a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, learning disabilities, complex needs and behaviours that challenge. He attended a residential school which came to an end when he turned 18. His parents felt that residential care was the most appropriate setting to support him into adulthood. They searched numerous towns and counties looking for a home where they felt their son would benefit.

Amberwood Lodge supports adults with autism and already had several residents who were school leavers like Jordan. His parents felt that with the coastal location and peers of a similar age, Amberwood Lodge was the best route for Jordan.

When Jordan came to us

When Jordan moved to Amberwood Lodge, he was unsettled with behavioural issues. He had a poor relationship with food and eating problems, which were very concerning for his family. Jordan didn't want to engage with the staff team or in any activities and wanted to spend a lot of time in his room.

He found it particularly difficult to understand the concept of sharing. If he found that other residents had used items that he enjoyed playing with, he would become very distressed and would cause damage to the home. He wanted everything his way and at times this proved difficult for everyone including the other residents.



Jordan's care

The speech and language therapist and support staff spent a lot of time working with Jordan especially at mealtimes to improve his diet and relationship with food. Understanding his likes and dislikes was important and they gave positive encouragement and feedback with each meal.

The progress was slow as they didn't want meal times to become distressing for him, but being positive, persistent and understanding they helped meals to become less of an issue. The team put in place an approach of '5 more spoonfuls', then '10 more', until Jordan was eating everything on his plate. With close reassurance from those who have an understanding of his eating difficulties (making his food more easily consumable), Jordan now manages to finish his meals.

Support staff spent a lot of time getting to know Jordan to build a good relationship with him. Being positive, finding humour and being understanding on a day to day basis helped Jordan overcome anxieties that may have manifest. By taking away the triggers for his anxieties the team noticed a massive improvement in his challenging behaviours, which in turn also resulted in a reduction in his self-harming.

With Jordan feeling less anxious and being able to trust the team he became more tolerant of other residents borrowing his possessions. He still has certain items that he keeps for himself, but staff are able to support all residents to co-exist with their varying needs for a happy and relaxed environment.

It was a lengthy process to gain the trust and understanding of Jordan. However, the team worked hard and were proactive in ensuring all his needs were met in all aspects of his care. Jordan began to understand that staff can be a significant and integral part of his life.

Jordan today

Jordan is now at a healthy weight with more energy and understands that mealtimes are an important part of the day; he is able to eat alongside the other residents and staff. He enjoys going on walks with the team and he has been able to go on a short holiday with staff and other residents and had a great time. Through the hard work, Jordan has is a relaxed and extremely happy person.



Jordan keeps close contact with his family and is looking forward to going on the annual summer holiday with them

*Name has been changed to protect his identity.

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