

How working together can support families and transform lives

Introduction

Daniel has chromosome deletion isodicentric 15, related global development delay, associated epilepsy and physical difficulties. His family were struggling to cope and recognised that he needed more structure than they could offer, so he was placed at Sunfield. It was a difficult decision for his family, but their journey demonstrates the positive impact of working together.

Background

Daniel was placed at Sunfield in 2010, at the age of 8 years old. He presented with numerous issues, related to his conditions, including: problems with sleeping at night and requiring melatonin to aid sleep; difficulties with balance; the need for a buggy for transitioning; poor communication skills; passivity and lack of motivation. He joined Sunfield on a 52 week care and education placement, with integrated psychology and therapy, including Speech and Language Therapy, Music Therapy and Occupational Therapy.

The Journey

Throughout his time at Sunfield, Daniel's care, education, psychology and therapy teams have worked closely with each other, and his family. Daniel has continued to maintain good relationships with his family. Although they find it difficult to deal with the physical challenges Daniel presents, his parents and extended family members see him regularly and his parents support his medical appointments. Sunfield's care staff also had the pleasure of supporting Daniel to attend his sister's wedding.

"Sunfield has given Daniel the opportunity to be himself in a safe and happy environment," says Daniel's mother. "He is growing all the time, in his awareness and the choices he makes. He is given full support from school and the residential setting. He thoroughly enjoys his Music Therapy and OT sessions. These services are vitally important to Daniel, as it gives him the confidence to be able to express himself - making him more settled and happy. We've noticed that all the hard work during the school day is also supported and carried on in Oak House - the staff in both settings are 100% committed to Daniel. Without this, he would not be able to take part in all the extra circular activities he so enjoys.

"As a family, we feel that Sunfield has made a huge difference to our lives. It was very difficult to let go of Daniel, but the support we have received from Sunfield has reassured us that it was by far the best decision we could have made. Sunfield will give Daniel every opportunity to reach his full potential."

The Conclusion

At the age of 12 years old, Daniel now regularly sleeps through the night without the need for melatonin. If he does wake, he is redirected back to bed, where he returns to sleep. He effectively uses key TOBI's to communicate key needs, has become more assertive in expressing his likes and dislikes, and is responding well to a detailed sensory diet.

His physical development has also improved, and he is gaining increasing independence. He has a specially designed chair which has a positive effect on his posture. Daniel now only uses a wheelchair when he is with his family, and no longer needs one at Sunfield. In fact, he now enjoys long walks and riding on a tricycle!