

## **Looking Back**

I started school when I was five years old but the only problem was that I wasn't ready yet so I was held back in nursery. This was because I was born with difficulties with learning and concentration. These difficulties affect me throughout my days and even to this very day I have trouble understanding instructions which means I'm progressing slower than everyone else. Nobody knows this because I'm too proud to admit I find life difficult. This pride leads to me being misunderstood as most of my teachers, both primary and secondary, believed that I wasn't trying and that I'm still not trying when I actually don't understand. My classmates didn't know and still don't to this day, so I didn't know how to interact with them, which leads to loneliness. Because I was held back I was a whole year older so I was singled out further.

Despite my problems with making friends I did have a few friends known as the dinner ladies. It might sound really sad and pathetic but they were very good to me and helped me get through primary, along with some of my former teachers. They all moulded me into a decent pupil.

My best moment in school was in primary seven when I wasn't picked for our houses tug-of-war team for the tournament at sports day. This was good because every other year I was included and we won but when I wasn't included, we lost, which made me feel like I mattered to the team.

My worst moment was in first year in secondary school as I had to get an operation to take out an ingrown toenail so I was out for two months and had to catch up on all that work. A few weeks later after I came back from the operation, my other toe needed the same operation so that was another two months off. This made my first year hectic for work. Despite being able to relax all day long I was still heavily frustrated about returning to school and having to catch up four months of work, but I had all the support from my family and the few friends I had, so I managed to get through it all.

Going into secondary wasn't that bad, apart from the operations, but when I was in school I was so alone and quiet that nobody noticed me so nobody picked on me. It was funny because some of my friends used to call me 'The Invisible Man'. What made it even funnier was that a band called 'Theory of a Deadman' made a new song called 'Invisible Man' so it was named my theme for a while. This made me kind of spooked because I was given the nickname just a few days before this song was released so it was a little bit freaky. Even though I got the nickname I was still as unnoticed as I was before.

Third and fourth year were really difficult because those few friends that I had all moved away to different schools, one by one. This annoyed me greatly, but despite losing my friends they were the best years of my life because I passed all of my exams, or at least the ones that mattered to me. This meant that I had done the unthinkable by doing what other children with my difficulties couldn't do. I was completely happy because I achieved something I didn't think I could achieve. I got

all the support I needed and a little bit more and with that kind of support I can do anything.

Going into fifth year is really weird because whenever I see someone from primary in a blazer I feel strange, because after four years they have all grown up. All I want out of this year is the same as always and that's to improve and overcome my lifetime difficulties. Although my difficulties will be with me my whole life and I can't lose them, I can fight them and control them. I know that at the end of my life I can look back and that I've done it, I have lived my life. That's what I'm fighting for, my dream end of life. When I say 'dream life' I don't mean flash cars and loads of money, just a normal life. I think I will achieve this because I've got this far, so why not go further?

I think my school life from day number one has been an obstacle which has helped me by challenging me to go that extra distance and fight back against fate. School for me has been a moulding process, changing me from a child with difficulties to a respectable and capable human being. Overall, school might have been a rough ride for me at the time but now I believe that it's really helped me out and I feel that it's ironic that someone with learning difficulties learned just as much in school as everyone else did.