Hi, I'm Stephen,

I'm just starting at Garin College and there are a few things I'd like you to know about me.

I have Autism, which is an invisible disability. My brain is wired differently to most people and this means that I process and receive information in a different way.

I have an incredible memory and enjoy Dr Who, Star Wars, Lego design & build, travelling (I've been to some cool places) and computer games. I live with my Mum, Dad, sister and 2 cats in Upper Moutere.

Having Autism is a bit like living in a foreign country, where everything is strange. When you were born you learnt to talk and understand people. It just happened, but not for me; and so I have to learn how to do things that you do automatically.

I may not understand what you me an and I can have difficulty having a conversation. If I ignore you or interrupt, I don't mean to be rude, but I'm still learning how to do this.

I have very sensitive hearing to either loud or soft noises; it can really hurt my ears. I'm also sensitive to certain smells, taste and the way things feel. Sometimes I become anxious and stressed because my Autism just gets too much for me.

It would be great if you help me by saying my name "Stephen" before you start talking to me and don't talk too fast. Sometimes I just need to go to a quiet place for a few minutes. If I look like I'm a bit stressed, please can you help me.

I'm really looking forward to being part of this college and making lots of new friends.

Thanks a lot.

Stephen