



Starlight takes to the skies to entertain 400 poorly children and their families at the 16th annual Starlight Popham Escape Day

On Thursday 16th August, Popham Airfield in Hampshire was transformed in to an amazing open air wonderland for 400 seriously ill children from hospitals and hospices across Hampshire and the South of England at the 16th annual Starlight Popham Escape Day.

The event, which aims to provide a huge number of poorly children from the local area with a day packed with once-in-a-lifetime experiences, was run by Popham Airfield Manager Dick Richardson and his team together with Starlight, a national charity that brightens the lives of seriously and terminally ill children.

During the day, the young guests were able to go sky high in an incredible range of aeroplanes and helicopters and zoom around in hovercrafts and racing cars and on motorbikes. For the children that prefer a more gentle pace, hummer limos, a double decker bus and even a fire engine offered rides around the airfield, while animal lovers enjoyed pony rides and making friends with the inhabitants of Popham's pop-up petting zoo!

There was also a host of face painters, magicians and entertainers to make the day really stimulating for the children and their families. The annual event at Popham Airfield is part of Starlight's wider entertainment programme and is just one of the ways that the charity brightens the lives of over half a million poorly children in the UK every year.

Neil Swan, Chief Executive of Starlight Children's Foundation, said, "The annual escape at Popham Airfield is one of the highlights of Starlight's hospital entertainment programme and each year it brings a great deal of fun, laughter and distraction to very ill children from across the South of England. The 16th Popham Escape was bigger and better than ever and we are hugely grateful to Dick Richardson and his team for hosting such a magical day."

Dick Richardson, Manager of Popham Airfield, said, "We always look forward to the Popham Escape with Starlight and it is a great pleasure to see the airfield filled with hundreds of smiling faces. Many of the children that come are having a very tough time indeed and we are delighted to help give them and their families a very special day out together."

Information

For media enquiries, please contact Henny Vere Nicoll at Starlight Children's Foundation on 020 7262 2881 / henny@starlight.org.uk.

**To make a donation or refer a child for a wish, please visit www.starlight.org.uk.
For every £1 you donate, 93p goes towards helping Starlight's very ill children.**

Starlight grants once-in-a-lifetime wishes for seriously and terminally ill children, restoring the magic and fun of childhood and giving the whole family happy memories to share, whatever the future holds.

Starlight also creates entertainment in every hospital and hospice throughout the UK. Poorly children go to Starlight parties, laugh their way through pantomimes, go out on Starlight Escapes, play games and watch films on the Starlight Fun Centre, and enjoy the toys and puzzles of the Starlight Distraction Box. Happy children respond better to treatment and Starlight helps children to forget about their illness and simply have a bit of fun.

Patron: HRH Princess Alexandra

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