



Ciaran's Disney Dream in Florida!

Eleven-year-old Ciaran Bell from Ryton recently had his dearest wish to visit Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, granted by Starlight Children's Foundation, the UK's leading wish granting charity for children and young people with serious and terminal illnesses.

When he was born, Ciaran was diagnosed with Johanson–Blizzard syndrome (JBS), which is a rare condition that causes abnormal development of the pancreas, and bronchiolitis, which affects the lower respiratory tract. Sadly, tests and treatments have been a constant in Ciaran's childhood and he has had to spend a lot of time in hospital, receiving intravenous antibiotics.

Although he has already had to endure a huge amount in his young life, Ciaran is a very positive, happy boy. His mum Judy says, *"He takes everything life throws at him and never complains. He gives everything a go!"*

Ever since he was little, Ciaran has been absolutely fascinated by the USA. He has always wanted to go there and, being a bit of a daredevil, he has dreamed of visiting Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, where there are some of the biggest rollercoasters in the world! He also loves aeroplanes, so even the flight there and back would be an exciting adventure for Ciaran!

When Ciaran was referred to Starlight for a wish, the charity asked him to decide what his dearest wish would be and it didn't take this young stateside fan to choose a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Walt Disney World in Florida. He wrote to Starlight and said, *"I would love to go to Disney in Florida because I love USA and big jets and big rollercoasters!"*

His mum Judy said of the wish, *"This wish that Ciaran has asked for would make his dreams come true. It would mean so much to him if this wish was granted as its something we would never be able to give him ourselves."*

Keen to make Ciaran's wish as memorable as possible, Starlight set about planning his magical trip. Full of anticipation, Ciaran and his parents, Judy and Paul, departed on 19th September. They flew from Manchester Airport to Orlando, which was really exciting for Ciaran as the plane was huge!

Starlight had arranged for the family to stay at Give Kids The World, which is an amazing resort in Orlando that offers families the opportunity to make the very most out of their visit to the attractions near by. At Give Kids The World, they had a lovely two bedroom villa, which was ideally located for them to reach all the parks easily by shuttle.

With passes to Walt Disney World, Universal Studios and SeaWorld, Ciaran and his parents had so much they wanted to see and do; they didn't want to waste a minute! It was a truly wonderful week and there were so many highlights for Ciaran; from the thrills of the rollercoasters, to getting to meet some of his favourite characters at Walt Disney World and Universal and even feeding the dolphins at SeaWorld, it was a dream come true for him and his family!

Information

To refer a child for a wish or to make a donation, please go online at www.starlight.org.uk. For every £1 you donate, 92p goes towards helping Starlight's very ill children.

For more information, please contact Henny Vere Nicoll at henny@starlight.org.uk / 020 7262 2881 # 231.

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. Sick 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.