



## **Libby meets TV star Dani Harmer!**

Eight-year-old Libby Berridge from Lilbourne near Rugby recently had her dearest wish to meet her favourite television star, Dani Harmer, granted by Starlight Children's Foundation, the UK's leading wish granting charity for children and young people with serious and terminal illnesses.

In October 2012, Libby was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, which is a life-threatening cancer of the white blood cells. As a result of her illness, Libby has been undergoing a gruelling two and a half year course of chemotherapy treatment, which is horrid for her and has meant lots of time in hospital.

Despite the challenges that Libby has faced, she has been continuously brave. She never complains and takes the illness and everything that comes with it in her stride. She is a very bright, happy and polite little girl, who, according to her mum Sam, has *"just the right amount of cheek"*!

Libby has lots of interests and hobbies, including doing girly things such as dressing up, clothes and make-up, arts and crafts, watching films, horse-riding and quad biking. Although it has been really tough for Libby to miss out on lots of things during her treatment, watching her favourite programme, Dani's Castle, always cheers her up.

Libby was referred to Starlight for a wish by one of the play specialists at Northampton General Hospital. Libby has been through a great deal and, when Starlight's wish granters heard how brave she has been, they were delighted to offer her a Starlight wish.

When asked her what her dearest wish would be, Libby told Starlight that she would like to meet Dani Harmer, the star of her favourite programme, Dani's Castle. Dani has had a really exciting career, starring as Tracy Beaker in the self-titled CBBC programmes, dancing in the 2012 series of Strictly Come Dancing and appearing on stage in many theatre productions. Currently Dani is touring the UK with Richard O'Brien's Rocky Horror Show as Janet, one of the stars of the show.

Starlight contacted Dani, who said she would be absolutely thrilled to meet Libby and a day was set for Libby's special wish. Libby was so excited to be having her wish granted and she couldn't believe that she was going to meet Dani. In order to get the very most out of her meeting with the star, Libby carefully prepared a list of questions for Dani.

Libby's mum Sam told Starlight, *"This wish would mean the world to her and it would be a well-deserved treat as she has taken illness and all that goes with it so much in her stride. She has humbled us all."*

On Thursday 10th October, Libby and her parents, Sam and Ben, older brother Max, aged 13, and older sister Harriett, aged 10, were collected from home by a chauffeur driven Bentley and driven in style to The Belmont Hotel in Leicester, which is where the meeting with Dani would take place.

Libby had been bought a lovely new outfit especially for the occasion and she felt very special and excited when she arrived with her family at the hotel. Dani then arrived and immediately made Libby feel very relaxed – they were soon chatting away like old friends! Enjoying a delicious afternoon tea together, Libby was able to ask all her prepared questions and lots more and Dani told Libby and her family about her time as Tracy Beaker and on Strictly Come Dancing.

It really was such a special meeting and Dani was so friendly and kind. By the end of the afternoon, Libby was beaming from ear to ear! They had lots of photos taken together, which Libby has loved showing to all her friends.

*After the wish, Libby's father Ben said, "Starlight has made my little girl extremely happy. It could not have come at a better time, we are having such a positive patch at the moment, Libby is back at school and her energy levels are up, now with her Starlight wish she is on cloud 9! It was wonderful to sit and watch her beaming all afternoon! Thank you to everyone who made Libby's wish happen!"*

### **Information**

To refer a child for a wish or to make a donation, please go online at [www.starlight.org.uk](http://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](mailto: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.