



Christmas comes early for seriously and terminally ill children at Starlight's Christmas Party at Downing Street

The Chancellor of the Exchequer and his team at 11 Downing Street have been helping Starlight Children's Foundation bring a little festive cheer to a group of seriously and terminally ill children.

On Wednesday 10th December, forty five young guests were invited with their families to a magical Christmas party at No 11 Downing Street, which was hosted for a fourth year by Rt Hon George Osborne MP and Starlight, which grants wishes for seriously and terminally ill children and provides entertainment in hospitals and hospices across the UK.

This year's party theme was based loosely on the popular children's film Frozen and the state rooms at No 11 Downing Street were transformed using beautiful baubles, tinsel, glitter bows and garlands in lovely shades of blue, white and silver. The Chancellor of the Exchequer welcomed the children and their families to Downing Street and wished them a Happy Christmas, before encouraging them to take part in some festive games and arts and crafts. Father Christmas was on hand to give each guest a present before they tucked into a delicious tea.

The party was opened by Pixie Lott who was able to sneak in a little early with one or two young guests. In addition to a host of entertainers, there were also lots of special guests in attendance, including, Starlight Ambassador's Geri Halliwell and Nigel Marven, who brought along Esmeralda the giant tortoise, Strictly's, Jake Wood and his partner Janette Manrara, members from McBusted, Professor Green, Ella Eyre, XFactor singing sensation Lauren Platt, children's comic double act Rich & Dom and Cbeebies presenters, Stefan Gates and Katie Thistleton and giant bunny Mim-Mim from the hit CBeebies series Kate & Mim-Mim.

Rt Hon George Osborne MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer, said, "The Starlight Children's Christmas Party at No 11 Downing Street is a highlight in our calendar and one that I look forward to every year. I am so pleased that we can host the party and brighten the lives of some very poorly children and their families. We are also very lucky to have the support of so many celebrities who make this day very special for our young guests. It has been wonderful for me to be able to spend time with some of these remarkable children."

Actress and Starlight Co-Founder Emma Samms said, "This is such a joyous occasion at what I know is a difficult time for the families. Being able to forget about their illness and treatment even for a short time must be huge relief to the children. We are immensely grateful to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his team for hosting the party and for their continued support of Starlight.

Pixie Lott said, "This has been a very special day for me to attend Starlight's Christmas party at No 11. I absolutely loved meeting all the young guests and seeing them have such fun when I know they are going through so much at the moment."

Geri Halliwell, Starlight Ambassador said, "This has been a very special day. This is one of my favourite parties to attend and it is a pleasure to meet such a remarkable group of young people and to hear all their stories. They have all been through so much so I hope they have all enjoyed today as much as I have."

Nigel Marven, Starlight Ambassador said, "I was delighted to be able to be part of Starlight's Christmas Party hosted by the Chancellor. I hope the young guests enjoyed meeting Esmeralda and some of my other animals. I really enjoyed meeting everyone and hearing about their stories."

**For more information on Starlight Children's Foundation, visit
www.starlight.org.uk.**

Information

For press enquiries about Starlight Children's Foundation please contact Janet Lindsay on 020 7262 2881 #230 or email janet@starlight.org.uk.

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.