

React

GIVING DEPTH TO SHORT LIVES

Please pass this newsletter on to a friend to help even more children

Newsletter Winter 2025 Issue 61

www.reactcharity.org



Support for Short Lives

Whilst Harrison's Mother, Georgia, knew it was never going to be an easy birth because his twin had passed away in the womb, it proved far more traumatic than anyone could have predicted as she went into labour three months prematurely.

Born weighing only one pound, Harrison spent the next 18 weeks in an incubator as his health remained touch and go.

Harrison's doctors attempted to take him off oxygen once he seemed to be improving but it was then found that he had prolific lung damage, considered to be unsurvivable. The news was unbearable for Harrison's parents and they were resolute in spending every available moment with their beloved newborn.

As Harrison remained an in-patient, an application was made to React to assist with travel costs for Georgia and his Father, Mathew, who had to give up work to be there. React wasted no time in providing this help, which gave the family vital support when it mattered most. React is pleased to say Harrison has made progress since and is now out of hospital.

Harrison

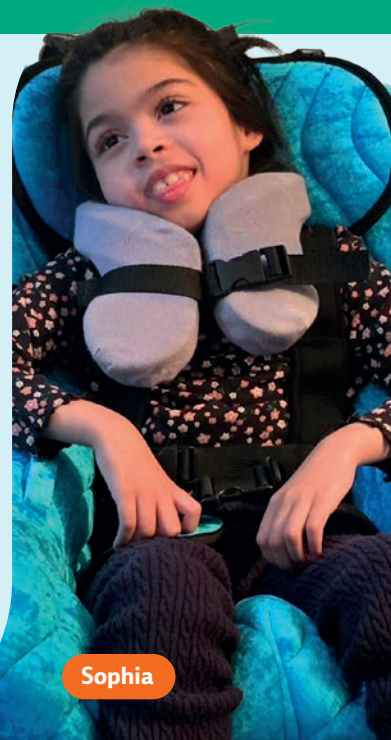
Sitting Through the Storms

Within the first few months of Sophia's life, it became apparent that Sophia was not meeting her developmental milestones. Doctors could not identify the cause, even after an MRI scan.

At six months, genetic testing revealed an extremely rare neurological illness related to her GNAO1 Gene. Since then, she has experienced involuntary movement episodes, known as 'storms'. During these, Sophia's limbs move independently, as if she is running involuntarily.

Now nine, Sophia is on medication to manage her illness, and has a fitted deep-brain-stimulating device. Her Mother Sima said to us: "Sophia can experience a storm at any time so we can only try to look forwards and focus on the present. This can be very difficult, but we do our best to keep her stable and happy. She is a lovely, giggly little girl, who always wakes up smiling even if she has been in movement episodes for the entire night".

Specialist seating is needed to keep Sophia correctly positioned throughout the day and keep her secure during her movement storms. A 'P-Pod' seat was identified by a physiotherapist as a solution, but with no local authority help available, the family were referred to React. Sima said: "The speed with which React came through to help was amazing. Everyone can see how happy and comfortable she looks sitting in the P-Pod and it helps her through the storms".



Sophia

CAN WE HELP?

Do you know a child who could benefit from React's help? For rapid, effective assistance our application form is available to download www.reactcharity.org or call 0208 940 2575 for friendly advice and support.

RAPID EFFECTIVE ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN WITH POTENTIALLY TERMINAL ILLNESS

The Sound of Pedals



The hills were alive with the sound of seven friends making their way across the mountains of Austria in aid of React families this summer.

John Stopford and his friends cycled their way through the iconic countryside, made famous by 1965's The Sound of Music. In doing so, the determined group raised a wonderful £12,414, including generous match funding contributions by John and his employer, Ninety One.

This expedition was the second cycling odyssey taken on by John for React, after he navigated the French and Italian riviéras last year, raising a similarly impressive amount.

React sends a huge thank you to John and the whole group for choosing React children to benefit from such a wonderful display of adventurous spirit.

A Bolder Way of Fundraising

Earlier this year, the Year 9 students of Bolder Academy, Isleworth, competed in the school's annual First Give competition, where classes champion charities for the chance to win a £1,000 donation.

Inspired by React's rapid work providing vital aid to terminally ill children, class 9K kindly chose to represent us. Their passion and inspiring presentation impressed the judges, securing the £1,000 donation. On top of this they raised a further £64.80 through their own fundraising efforts in the build-up to the competition.



React sends a huge thank you to the pupils of 9K for all your hard work and compassionate understanding for our cause.

Tee-rific Support

React was kindly chosen as the Ladies' Captains Charity by Jo Butt for the 2025-26 golfing season at Ashford Manor Golf Club.

Since the very start of Jo's captaincy in April, club members have enjoyed a busy calendar of fundraising events, from raffles and quiz nights, to golf competitions and the extremely popular 'Paint and Sip' events - which allowed the participants to show off their artistic talent, whilst enjoying a glass of tippie on the side!

React sends its heartfelt thanks to Jo and all club members who contributed to the incredible £4,796 raised to date, and putting together such a wonderful collection of events over the course of the year.



Sporting Heroes

Long-time supporters Sporting Bears Motor Club are a philanthropic group of classic car enthusiasts, using their vintage automobiles and sports cars to help disadvantaged children across the country.

The Scottish branch of the club - affectionately named the 'Polar Bears' - recently nominated React to benefit from their Dream Rides event at this year's Moffat Classic Car Rally. Dream Rides gives members of the public the opportunity to experience a ride in a stunning range of classic cars, for example Porsche, Lotus or even a VW Baja Bug, in exchange for a donation to React.

React sends a special thanks to the amazing team of Polar Bears for your fabulous support, donating £1,225 to benefit families in Scotland.

React's BBC One Lifeline Appeal

On 19th October, Richard Clifford presented React's Lifeline television appeal, showcasing the charity's work in living rooms across the country and telling the individual stories of Harvey, Lana and Arthur and their families.

React would like to say a huge thanks to Richard, Debbie Brownlee and the families who not only kindly gave their time to contribute to our appeal, but who told their stories so impactfully and sincerely. We also send our heartfelt thanks to all who watched React's appeal and donated to our campaign, which has been a remarkable success.

If you missed the October broadcast and would like to watch React's Lifeline Appeal, you can do so on our website by scanning the QR code here:



Tough Mudder Troopers

React sends a huge thank you to Frankie Browne from NSOA Roofing and Maintenance in Surbiton, who recently took on the gruelling Tough Mudder challenge in support of our families.

The NSOA Team braved mud, ice, electric shocks, and a whole host of obstacles, showing incredible determination and teamwork to complete the demanding course. Their muddy mission was not just about personal endurance - but raising as much as possible to improve the lives of children who need it most.

Thanks to their amazing efforts and generous supporters, NSOA raised a fantastic £1,085 for React and every penny will go towards providing essential aid and equipment for terminally ill children.

Pure Relief & Comfort

Before his diagnosis, twelve-year-old Alfie was known for his infectious energy, cheeky sense of humour, and love of cuddles with Mum, Dad, and his two siblings. Life took an unexpected turn when, following an MRI scan and genetic testing, Alfie was diagnosed with Adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD), a rare genetic disorder that affects the nervous system.

Since his diagnosis in December 2021, Alfie's condition has deteriorated rapidly. By February 2022, Alfie lost his mobility and by March, he lost his ability to

speak. Now receiving palliative care, Alfie's condition has caused severe scoliosis, impacting his posture and comfort. Heart-breakingly, Alfie's siblings were also found to carry the same genetic condition, something Mum never imagined would happen to her children.

With support of Alfie's Physiotherapist and Social Worker at his local Children's Hospice, Alfie's family submitted an application to React for a Stabilo Grande Support Mattress to support Alfie's posture and enable floor play time with his siblings and comforting cuddles with Mum, Rachael. Rachael described the moment she heard the application was successful as a moment of "pure relief", knowing it would bring Alfie some comfort and support during such a challenging time.

Alfie



Wheels of Freedom

Jack

Following a traumatic emergency caesarean, new-born Jack was given a brain scan which revealed he had suffered a stroke during labour, causing severe brain damage. Jack was later diagnosed with Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome and his mother, Helen, explained to us, that at the time she did not quite understand the impact it would have: *"The initial shock was huge but it was only after the dust settled that we realised the usual milestones would not be met. It was a big adjustment over the first year and he cried constantly throughout that period. Once we learned to live with his care needs things became easier and now, of our three children, Jack is the most laid back"*.

Now aged 11, Jack loves the outdoors, especially visiting a local animal farm. Being in nature soothes Jack and helps ease his seizures, but his wheelchair made access difficult. Jack's physiotherapist suggested outdoor wheels yet with no other funding available, the family couldn't afford them.

With the help of Jack's physiotherapist an application was made to React, and Helen was amazed by the speed of the response: *"We had doubts when we applied and I did not want to get my hopes up, but the application process was so simple, and the charity's response was so quick"*.

Isabelle's Sensory Chair

Isabelle is a very happy and smiley little four-year-old with plenty of sass and a smile that lights up the whole room. After an uncomplicated birth, Isabelle was soon diagnosed with TAPVD, a defect where the veins in the heart are not connected to the right areas, and she was rushed into surgery. It was not long after this that Mum, Laura, held concerns and through her persistence, managed to get a further diagnosis - Hydrocephalus (meaning water on the brain) and so followed another emergency surgery.

Life for the family became filled with hospital visits, feeding struggles, and financial pressures. Isabelle, who responds well to sensory stimulation and loves rocking, had outgrown her toddler chair. Her occupational therapist recommended a Gravity Chair, but its cost was beyond reach.

React, having previously supported the family with a blender, reassured the family that there is no limit on the support we provide. Laura said the moment she saw Isabelle in the new chair was *"incredible"* and moved her to tears, making a *"huge difference to a smiling Isabelle."* The Gravity Chair now provides comfort, independence, and family time together.



Isabelle

Your Gift is Urgently Needed

React is a unique charity responding to the needs of children in the UK who are living with potentially terminal illness. React will provide basic, essential aid and equipment that is unavailable from any other source. Whatever you can give will help. **Thank you.**

Please complete your name and address details below to enable us to reclaim the tax on your donation and keep you in touch with our work.

YOUR DETAILS

Your title and full name

Address

Postcode

Email Date

☐ Please remove me from your database

YOUR GIFT TO REACT

Please accept my gift of

☐ £500 ☐ £250 ☐ £100 ☐ £50 ☐ £25 Other £

I enclose a cheque made payable to REACT OR please debit my MasterCard / VISA / CAF Card / Debit Card (delete as appropriate)

Card number (Security Number)

Start date / / Expiry date / /

Signature Date

If you would prefer to transfer directly to the charity bank account, please see React's bank details below.

MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE WITH A REGULAR GIFT!

By making a regular gift you will ensure more children live with comfort, dignity, and the opportunity to participate in life as fully as possible.

Please pay REACT £ each month/year (delete as appropriate)

Starting on until further notice and debit my account number

Bank sort code

Name of account holder

Signature

To the Manager (bank name and address)

Postcode

Bank Details

Please pay REACT; Barclays Bank, George Street, Richmond, TW9 1JU; Account Number: 00886556; Sort Code: 20-72-33

MAKE YOUR DONATION TAX-FREE

REMEMBER TO GIFT AID YOUR DONATION!

☐ I would like React to Gift Aid this donation and all donations I have made in the past four years. I am a UK tax payer and will tell you of any changes in my tax status or address.

HMRC has asked us to remind you if you pay less Income Tax/ or Capital Gains Tax than the amount Gift Aid claimed on all your donations in that tax year, it is your responsibility to pay any difference.

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM TO THE ADDRESS OPPOSITE.

Winter 2025

Latest News

St Albans Cathedral

React sends its sincere thanks to St Albans Cathedral, for their kind donation of £1,050 as part of their 2025 Mission Allocation, for the benefit of React families in Hertfordshire.

Forest School

A big thank you goes to the Sixth Form Volunteering Team of Forest School, Walthamstow, for putting together a successful school bake sale which raised an impressive £541.90 for React.

Harrodian School

React was kindly chosen to benefit from Harrodian's 2025 School Film Festival, which raised £421 for our families. Our sincere thanks to all pupils, parents and staff at Harrodian who made this donation possible.

NatWest

The team at the Richmond branch of NatWest Bank got together in the autumn and took on a 5k charity walk across Richmond Park in aid of React, raising £1,015 for the charity. A big shoutout to Nataliya and the team for your wonderful support.

Mid-Surrey Bowls Club

React was honoured to be chosen as the benefitting charity for Mid-Surrey Bowls Club's Celebration of Life event, held in tribute to former President Mick Harris, who sadly passed away in 2025. Our sincere gratitude goes to Diana Harris and all Mid-Surrey members for your kindness.

Waitrose Wandsworth

React thanks the team at Waitrose Wandsworth for their generous £625 donation, made as part of the store's 'Healthy Communities' giving campaign. Your support is greatly appreciated.

London Marathon 2026

React has limited availability for its Golden Bond places at next year's London Marathon. If you are a keen runner and would like to participate in this iconic race whilst making a real difference to the lives of terminally ill children, visit the React website today to register your interest.



Donate online today
www.reactcharity.org



Rapid Effective Assistance for Children with potentially Terminal illness

Registered charity no. 802440 (UK) SC038067 (Scotland)



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Website: www.reactcharity.org

React provides urgent basic essential aid to families whose child has been diagnosed with a terminal or life-threatening illness. Donations will be used to maintain or improve a child's quality of life in the weeks, months or years left ahead. Thank you.