12 year old pageant finalist uses platform to help families with seriously ill children in Newcastle hospitals

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A 12 year old student from Walker Riverside Academy in Newcastle has been named an ‘inspiration’ by charity The Sick Children’s Trust following her continued efforts to fundraise and raise awareness for its ‘Homes from Home’.

Charlotte Bradley, from Walker in Newcastle, is a finalist in the Royal Sapphire Pageant and part of her duty is to provide support to charities. Since joining the pageant in 2019, Charlotte has chosen to support The Sick Children’s Trust which gives families with a seriously ill child in hospital a place to stay. In Newcastle it runs two ‘Homes from Home’ Crawford House located at the Royal Victoria Infirmary and Scott House located at Freeman Hospital.

Despite a global pandemic bringing the world to a halt, Charlotte’s determination to fundraise for The Sick Children’s Trust, alongside a number of other charities including Sepsis UK and Autism UK, has flourished. Recently, Charlotte completed The Sick Children’s Trust’s Sit-Up challenge undertaking 900 sit-ups throughout April. This raised £113 bringing Charlotte’s fundraising total to over £1,000, enough to support a family at Crawford House for 35 days. In addition to this, over Christmas and Easter, Charlotte organised benefit bags – bags full of items such as snacks and toiletries – for families staying at the charity’s ‘Home from Home’. **Charlotte said:**

“Being a finalist in the Royal Sapphire Pageant is a lot more than wearing a tiara, it’s a lot of hard work. I feel like everybody should have the opportunity to live equally and they should have the same opportunities. I want to try to give people the same opportunities I’ve had.

“I know so many people who have used Crawford House and when I visited and spoke to the families it was amazing and the best thing I have ever done. I could see where all my work was going and how much it meant to the people who need Crawford House. When I found out it costs the charity £30 to support a family for a night, I just wanted to work harder and get more money in.”

Charlotte and her mum, Marie, are currently busy organising their next fundraising event, Movie Mania, which will be taking place on Saturday 21 August at Jubilee Club in Walker. Tickets are just £3 and include entry, a raffle ticket and hot dog and guests are asked to arrive as their favourite film star. **Marie added:**

“Charlotte knew that she wanted the biggest part of her fundraising to go to a local charity and Crawford House is one of the chosen charities for the pageant. It’s surprising how many people we know who have been supported by The Sick Children’s Trust’s ‘Homes from Home’ in Newcastle.

“Charlotte’s using her platform to shout about Crawford House from the rooftops. We spoke to a few families who said they’d turned up with nothing and had travelled for miles which is why Charlotte wanted to do the benefit bags. Her and everyone at the pageant have such a good work ethic and I am so proud of everything she is achieving.”

The Sick Children’s Trust ‘Homes from Home’ are located just a few minutes’ walk from the children’s wards. It costs The Sick Children’s Trust £30 to support a family for one night which gives them so much more than just a roof over their heads when their child is in hospital. £30 gives them someone to talk to, and a calm place to rest with their family. **Andrew Leadbitter, Crawford House Manager, said:**

“Charlotte is an inspiration to everyone here at The Sick Children’s Trust. She has shown such determination and remained smiling despite the last year being challenging for everyone. We are so grateful for her support, as we know all the families are who have benefited from her fundraising and gifts. Thank you, Charlotte, for everything.”

To find out more about The Sick Children’s Trust, please visit sickchildrenstrust.org.

To find out more about Charlotte’s fundraising visit: www.facebook.com/lottiepageant/

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