Brave boy starting school after kidney removal

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A four year old boy who has undergone five lifesaving operations, including a kidney removal in January this year, is excited to be going to school this September! Starting school for Charlie Hammerton, from Rotherham, is a big step for him and his Mum, Emma. Emma was shocked to learn at her 32 week scan that Charlie had a blockage in his urethra which had caused substantial damage to her son's right kidney and doctors were unsure whether his left kidney would function after birth. At just 15 hours old, Charlie had his first operation at Jessop wing in the Royal Hallamshire Hospital in Sheffield to fit a suprapubic catheter, after which he was transferred to Sheffield Children's Hospital. By the time he was eight weeks old, Charlie had undergone multiple lifesaving operations to stretch his urethra. Charlie was hospitalised again at the Sheffield Children's Hospital at six months old due to a chest infection which led to a collapsed lung, and earlier this year in January, Charlie had to have his right kidney removed.

Despite having undergone five major surgeries, Charlie will be starting at Ryecroft Infant School in September. **Emma says:**

"We take every day as it comes, Charlie is the happiest little boy and makes everyone smile. He is really looking forward to making new friends and wants to be a footballer when he grows up!"

During the multiple times that Charlie was in hospital, his family were supported by The Sick Children's Trust with free 'Home from Home' accommodation at Magnolia and Treetop Houses, two of the charity's ten houses nationwide supporting families with seriously ill children in hospital. **Emma, who has three other children, adds:**

"The Sick Children's Trust's 'Homes from Home' made it so much easier to function as a family, as it meant that when my other children came to visit Charlie in hospital, we had somewhere to go back to afterwards. Having the space to eat, play games and spend time together was so important!

"As Charlie starts this new adventure, I am looking back on how far he has come and want to thank The Sick Children's Trust for its support over the years."

The Sick Children's Trust supports around 4,000 families every year with free 'Home from Home' accommodation. **Ann Wyatt, Treetop and Magnolia House Manager, says:**

"It's lovely to hear that Charlie has recovered well since his kidney removal in January and is looking forward to starting school. From everyone at Treetop and Magnolia – we wish him the best of luck!"

For further information about The Sick Children's Trust, please visit http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/

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