Francis House Children's Hospice launches new video

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A film featuring families from Greater Manchester who receive respite care and support from Francis House Children's Hospice, had its first screening recently at a Hollywood themed ball held at The Mere Resort and Spa, near Cheshire.

More than five hundred guests attended the black tie fundraiser, which annually raises more than £100k, and were the first to view the moving film produced by Manchester based Doodledo Motion.

One family who feature are the Brookshaw's from Ashton-Under-Lyne.

Mum Andrea, emotionally describes the morning almost four years ago, when the eldest of her three daughters Isabel, awoke in a critical condition.

"Isabel was fine up to being seven-years-old. A normal kid going to primary school and just about to do her Sats in year 2. She just woke up one morning and couldn't breathe, couldn't talk, couldn't move," said Andrea. "She went to A&E and was put on a ventilator for 16 days."

Although no formal diagnosis was given, it was suspected that Isabel had suffered a serious inflammation of the brain. She remained in hospital on a rehabilitation ward for 6 months with Andrea by her bedside.

"I remember one day they turned up with a wheelchair for her. I just thought it was for while she was in hospital, I had no idea it would be a long-term thing."

In spite of their desperate need, many families find it difficult to accept that their child could be eligible for the help and support from their local children's hospice.

"We looked around Francis House and it's not what you think it would be like at all, all you hear is laughing, it's a really happy place. You forget it's a hospice, it's just somewhere that we all come to as a family and we make lovely memories."

Isabel now 11, has regained her sight and is learning to eat again.

The video is presented by Coronation Street actress Sally Dynevor. She describes filming at Francis House as a 'privilege'.

"I am very pleased to be taking part in this video," she said. "Every time I come I meet children who are very poorly, but here they are supported with their families. It's a wonderful charity and I'm just so pleased to be part of it."

It is hoped the video will inspire others to get in touch with the charity and support it. The video can be viewed at www.francishouse.org.uk/video

The charity relies on public donations to fund 88% of its income.

Based in Didsbury, Francis House supports over 1200 people at any one time from across Greater Manchester, including Stockport, Oldham, Rochdale, Bury, Manchester, Salford and Trafford.

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