

Special buggy makes all the difference to four-year-old

By IAN LLOYD HUGHES

FOUR-YEAR-OLD Jake Gresty loves to do all the things that other boys of his age do – but his life has been far from plain sailing.

When a new baby is born, every parent's wish is that their child will be healthy and strong. But every year many families are faced with the devastating news that their child has been born with a potentially life-shortening illness.

For Peter and Anna Gresty, of Prion, Denbigh, this situation sadly became reality when their new born baby boy was diagnosed with a congenital heart defect only three days after his birth.

"Doctors suspected something wasn't quite right with Jake and when he collapsed at only three days old it was terrifying," said Anna. "They rushed Jake to Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool and it was there that they diagnosed him with a complex cardiac condition."

Life-saving heart surgery taking over 13 hours was required and after over 4 months in hospital Jake was finally allowed to return home for the very first time. However, it was not long before Jake was again admitted to hospital.

"When Jake came home for the first time we were absolutely delighted but he was still very poorly and we knew that it would not be long before he was readmitted for further surgery. This again meant an extended stay in hospital and although he spent 1st birthday in hospital, he finally came home on Christmas Eve for a few days," said Anna.

Jake, now aged four, has gone from strength to strength and loves to take part in the activities boys of his age do.

Brave Jake's fight with heart condition



CHARITY HELPS OUT: Specialist all-terrain buggy helps four-year-old Jake Gresty, who suffers from a complex heart condition, feel like a normal little boy again.

Life is not all plain sailing and the effects of his condition means activities he can take part in are often limited.

Anna said: "Jake is a happy boy with a great sense of humour and he loves playing with his friends in the school playground. But he gets tired very easily and needs to rest a lot more often than other children his age. His friends are amazing and always make allowances for him when they are playing but when we are out around our home, such as taking the dog for a walk, a pushchair is Jake's only option."

For many families this would be a perfectly practical solution but for the Grestys, a standard pushchair was completely unsuitable for anything other than a trip to the shops, as their home is in a very remote, rural area, almost entirely surrounded by fields.

Knowing it was essential for Jake to not miss out on these vital family activities, his parents applied to the national children's charity React, who were pleased to provide Jake with the specialist all-terrain buggy he so greatly needed.

"The new buggy is absolutely amazing and Jake doesn't miss out on a thing. He was very disappointed when he couldn't go out, especially for walks with the dog, but now we can take him out wherever we go and when he is feeling tired he can just climb back into the new buggy, something he simply couldn't do before. The buggy has given him so much independence and has made him feel like a normal little boy again. Jake really doesn't see himself as different from any of the other kids now. Thank you React."