



## School Ski Trip for Joel with Cerebral Palsy - Davos, Switzerland - February 2019

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Photo copyright Michael Preiser - SDD

**A Mother's dream to see both sons doing something together comes true...**

***"As a family, our dream was for Joel to join his brother on the annual school ski trip. Joel has Cerebral Palsy he has enormous enthusiasm for life and attends a main-stream school in Derbyshire (UK). Without your help Catherine, this would not have been possible! - thank you" Jodie Rogers (mother of Joel)***

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## Background story:

Until now, the school had not included any student with special needs but with the support, advice and encouragement from Ski 2 Freedom's founder, Catherine Cosby, this dream became a reality. The adventure began for the Rogers' family when Jodie contacted Ski 2 Freedom Foundation via their on-line enquiry form.

**Enquiry:** *I would like to speak to someone with regards to supporting my child on a ski trip through school. Not sure if you offer this support and advice but look forward to hearing from you.*

Gower Travel Company, who arrange school ski trips, also contacted Catherine for further advice. Eventually, after many discussions and supporting information provided by Ski 2 Freedom about the therapeutic and life-enhancing skills to be gained from this type of activity, the school Governing Board agreed to allow Joel to participate on the ski trip to Davos in Switzerland.

However, there was an extra expense factor to be considered, as Joel would require a specialist ski instructor plus adapted ski equipment in order for him to be on the ski slopes. This was not going to be affordable by Mrs. Rogers and, although Joel would pay the same cost as his brother, there was a short-fall. In these circumstances, especially given the extraordinary determination for her son to not be excluded, and as Joel was so excited about it all, the Foundation was able to provide a small grant to cover a significant part of the private ski lessons, through our **Tobell Family Fund – Making Dreams come True.**



Without this Fund and the support of the Tobell Family, young people like Joel would have difficulty being able to feel inclusive and part of what, for many is considered a normal school ski trip.

However, Ski 2 Freedom Foundation believes that it should be normal practice for a school or educational establishment to be inclusive to all its students. With preparation, planning and, if necessary the support and advice from us about the ski instruction then funds could be raised to ensure full inclusivity not exclusion from a school trip. The rewards, not just for the student, but for other friends and for the school are priceless!

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## Post Ski Trip Report from Mrs. Rogers

On her return to England from Davos, Mrs. Rogers was outstanding in her support for Ski 2 Freedom and how we had enabled her son to make this trip.

*“Joel had been so wanting to go on the Highfields School annual ski trip with his brother (it would be his first time also) but this had never been done before. After contacting Catherine Cosby (Founder) of Ski 2 Freedom Foundation, she was so reassuring and, as determined as Joel and myself, to help make this dream come true.*

*Joel had an amazing time and really enjoyed it! He is really keen to go skiing again! As a family we now have happy memories and I have lovely photos of both my sons together on a joint and inclusive school ski trip – something I never thought would happen. I went as Joel’s carer and loved being in the mountains – Davos is a beautiful place and everyone who works there were so friendly. Michi Preiser (ESS Davos) was amazing and the owner of the Youth Hostel (Jugendherberge Davos) where we stayed was also super-helpful!*

*Without your help Catherine, this would not have been possible!”* Jodie Rogers (mother to Joel)

It was undoubtedly of great beneficial success not only to the family but for Joel’s self-esteem and confidence that he was eventually included.

Mrs Rogers met with the Chair of the School’s Governing Body on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019, who was left very emotional at what this inclusive trip had meant to the family, and in particular to Joel. One would like to hope that other children with special needs who attend Highfields will be treated more inclusively in the future for school trips....

### Contact details:

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