

# Case study

## Ollie – Age 12

*Ollie was born with a congenital anomaly called Proximal Femoral Focal Deficiency (PFFD) and Fibular Haemelia of the right leg. Ollie and his family have decided not to have any surgery during his childhood.*

**Ollie is a twelve-year-old boy with infectious energy. He loves being around people and taking part in a wide variety of sports. He's also reflective and passionate about communicating to schools the best ways they can help children with limb difference.**

Ollie was born with Proximal Femoral Focal Deficiency (PFFD), a rare congenital defect that can affect the pelvis, particularly the hip bone and the proximal femur, causing one leg to be shorter than the other. For Ollie, this means he is missing his hip, femur and fibular bone in his right leg.

Up until the age of six Ollie used a standard prosthetic, which he found very heavy and tiring. As an active and sociable child, it meant he couldn't take part in sports day or many of the games that his friends played at school, making Ollie feel excluded and frustrated.

Ollie had a moment of sudden revelation while watching athletes using blades at the Paralympics, something he'd not seen before. Just a few months later, he asked Father Christmas for a blade. Ollie's mother fought to get Ollie an activity blade and her perseverance paid off because Ollie became the first child to be prescribed an activity blade on the NHS. Since then, NHS funding has been secured for multi-terrain use and sports prosthetics for children, something LimbPower worked with the Department of Health to achieve. Returning to school with his new blade meant that Ollie was able to join in physical playground games for the first time, unlocking new opportunities to not only be active but to also feel more included socially.

As Ollie has got older, he has some interesting insight about school for children with limb difference. Although his condition is physical, Ollie's experience is that the biggest challenge facing many children like

him is self-confidence. He advises parents to look out for the broader ramifications that this can create, such as affecting school-work or not wanting to go into school. He also urges teachers not to be afraid to ask a child diplomatically what they are both able to do and comfortable doing. Striking the balance between being over-protective and allowing them to do too much is hard for schools, but with good communication with children and parents, Ollie believes this is possible.

As Ollie's confidence has grown, he has started to take part in sport regularly, including wheelchair rugby and wheelchair football. Having participated in the LimbPower Games over a number of years, Ollie has tried a wide variety of sports, particularly enjoying sitting volleyball, wheelchair basketball, cricket and tennis. However, it's hand bikes and rock climbing that he's discovered a real passion for, as well as the opportunity to meet and have fun with children that he can instantly relate to.



**Limbformation**

