

Case study

Violet – Age 8

Violet was born with Symbrachydactyly. A congenital limb anomaly, which for violet means four of her fingers are missing on her left hand. She calls it her magic hand.



Limbformation



At just eight years old, Violet has mastered several skills including playing sport, gardening and cooking. Like many children her age, she enjoys sleepovers and being with her friends. Yet what stands out about Violet is her determined and charismatic character, propelling herself to try new things and motivating those around her.

Violet was born with Symbrachydactyly, a limb difference that she calls her 'magic hand'. Symbrachydactyly is a congenital hand anomaly and for Violet, this means that four of her finger bones are missing in her left hand. Instead, she has small nubbins of skin where her fingers would have developed. This wasn't picked up in ante-natal scans, so it was a huge shock for her parents and those early weeks after her birth were full of tests, research and worry. Reach, the charity that helps children with upper limb differences has been especially valuable for the family because Violet regularly meets children like her and it provides a support network of people for her parents.

The challenges that Violet describes overcoming: riding a bike without stabilisers, putting up her hair and tying her shoelaces are ones that many children of her age will relate to. Violet's perseverance is clear to see and she pushes herself to meet many challenges, enjoying tennis, swimming, basketball and PE. She describes not being able to paint her nails, nor being able to have 10 fingernails painted when she goes for a manicure with her Mum, as frustrating.

Violet's friends are very important to her. When they first meet, they're very interested in her 'magic hand' and will often ask questions that Violet will answer, but she says "they soon forget about it".

Violet's ambitions reflect her wide-ranging interests and accomplishments. She would



like to be an astronaut when she grows up but is also interested in becoming an actress, a poet or an author. For the time being, she urges children with an upper limb difference and their parents not to worry and that it will "just become a normal part of life".