

The Local Basildon Newspaper

Well Done George!

A TEENAGE actor who has a rare medical condition has beaten stiff competition to win a place at the prestigious National Youth Theatre.

George Keeble, 14, of Westcliff, secured a place at the London-based theatre, whose alumni includes Southend Oscar winner Dame Helen Mirren, after auditioning against 4,400 other performers.

The Cecil Jones College pupil suffers from a condition called ectodermal dysplasia, which means he struggles to control his body temperature or grow hair and teeth properly.

But the young actor said having this condition gave him the urge to get on the stage to show the world he was just like anyone else.

He said: "When I am performing my condition doesn't hold me down. I can be anything I want to be and I want to show everyone that.

"I think having the condition does help me get into characters because I see myself as a bit different from others, therefore I find it easier to break other characters down and become them."

During the audition, George had to prepare a monologue for the judges and he said the help he received from a local theatre group helped him nail the audition.

He said: "I was a bit nervous, but before the audition I did some sessions with the guys at Purple Goat Theatre Company to help me prepare. "They helped me out with what to do when I was in front of the judges and I was really confident when I had to perform."

Laura Keeble, 33, George's mother, said she was really proud of her son's success particularly as he auditioned with some strong contenders. She said "It was the first time George has ever been on such a big audition and there were a lot of other young actors there who had far more experience than him. But he was really relaxed when he went up to do his part. When we got the news George had been accepted we were all just blown away."

Dylan Tate, one of George's coaches, said: "George was really good to work with. "He was very mature about the whole thing and I think he is a great talent. I hope he goes far."

News travels far - Elizbieta Blum who recently set up the Polish ED Group wrote to me "Thank you for such a warm welcome. We are very pleased that we belong to such a great family. Your organization gives us support, but you also inspire us to act - we received the wonderful news of George Keeble. Our congratulations!

