

# Walking tall after beating back pain

By Dan Churcher

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A WOMAN whose curved spine and excruciating back pain made her fear she would be confined to a wheelchair now hopes to become a PE teacher.

At the age of 12 Isabelle Frost was diagnosed with scoliosis and told her pain was caused by her spine rapidly curving to the right.

Miss Frost, 28, of Newbury Road, Newark, had always been very sporty and had a particular interest in trampolining.

Scoliosis affects about 4% of the population and if left untreated can lead to fatal heart and lung problems.

After many x-rays and appointments with specialists Miss Frost, a former Magnus Church of England School pupil, was told she would need surgery.

She was told the nine-hour operation would involve the insertion of metal rods either side of the spine, before being fused solid.

Miss Frost wanted to teach sport but knew that if she had the surgery it would be impossible for her to be involved in contact sport again.

She became depressed, discharged herself from hospital and attempted to live as normal a life as she could.

When she finished her A-levels she went to university and completed a teaching degree.

By the age of 25 she was so desperate to

stop the pain that she was considering having the operation.

It was at that point that she came across Scoliosis SOS.

The clinic, founded and run by scoliosis sufferer Erika Maude, has brought relief to hundreds of others.

It has branches in Suffolk and London.

Miss Frost spent four weeks at the Suffolk clinic learning about her condition and discovering specific exercises that would ease her pain and prevent further progression of the condition without the need of an operation.

Since leaving the clinic she has started an Open University course in the psychology of young children.

She is hoping to teach PE at a local school.

Miss Frost, who has worked at the Magnus school as a teaching assistant, said: "My experience of attending the clinic has been nothing but positive.

"One of the most amazing things was how the therapists' enthusiasm and understanding meant all my apprehensions disappeared on the very first day of the course.

"I have gained more than I could possibly put into words. I am no longer in pain, which means I am much less tired. For the first time in 15 years I feel like I have control over my condition.

"A few weeks on from this treatment I am still overwhelmed by the difference it has made.

"I have the confidence to be much more open about my scoliosis as I no longer feel that it is something to hide."



MISS ISABELLE FROST