

Young Harry's got a Blair-faced cheek

DORSET teenager Harry Coath is to play Prime Minister Tony Blair's son Ewan in a controversial new feature film set for worldwide release.

The Bournemouth School For Boys pupil has already filmed scenes for the £5 million movie *The Queen*, which stars Helen Mirren, Michael Sheen and Sylvia Sims.

It is directed by Stephen Frears whose credits include *Dangerous Liaisons*, *Mrs Henderson Presents*, *My Beautiful Laundrette*, *High Fidelity*, *Mary Reilly* and much more.

The Queen recounts how news of the death of Princess Diana broke upon a shocked British public in 1997.

Queen Elizabeth (Helen Mirren) retreats behind the walls of Balmoral Castle with her family, unable to comprehend the public response to the tragedy.

Popular, newly-elected Blair (Michael Sheen) needs to give reassurance and support to the nation as an unprecedented outpouring of emotion follows and he attempts to reconnect the beloved Queen with the British public.

The film draws on scores of interviews with insiders and expert observers for its intimate, revealing and sometimes humorous portrait of a family in crisis, and of a new Prime Minister operating at the height of his powers at a time of extraordinary grief.

It is written by Peter Morgan who says this portrayal of an "interesting and significant part of contemporary history" – an "event that had worldwide impact" is going to "ruffle a few feathers" and "some people will be unhappy".

He stressed it was not anti-monarchist but "this is a different way of looking at it through the eyes of the royal family".

Harry, 13, who attends Swish of the Curtain Drama School, admits he was worried about taking the part when he read the script.

Initially they wanted him to swear – although it was later agreed that the Blairs do not swear – and he was also worried about appearing anti-monarchist.

But after several days filming on location in places like Islington and Rickmansworth – where he had his own trailer with bed and shower and his name on the door, as well as a chauffeur-driven limo to take him to



BEING EWAN BLAIR: Young actor Harry Coath

film shoots, all his worries disappeared.

"I had a fantastic time and I would love to do it all again," he said.

The film is to be distributed by Miramax for cinema release next year.

A DVD and video will also be released.

Oddly enough Harry did not actually audition for this film.

He had gone for an audition for a prequel to *The Silence of the Lambs* where he was to play Hannibal

Lector as a child!

He had made the final stages but after deciding to give the role to someone else he was offered this instead.

Harry's mum Moira said: "Harry is not going to be a thespian – for him it was just fantastic fun and when he is old he will be able to get out the DVD to show his grandchildren.

"He would love to do another film but he will probably end up being a farmer as he loves the outdoor life."

Hilary Porter