

Potter's reel

AFTER spellbinding performances in several local productions, budding actor Marc Hendrey from Southbourne is hoping to bring a little magic to the silver screen after landing his first big break - a small part in the keenly anticipated Harry Potter movie.

Shooting has already started on Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone... and Marc is expecting his call to the film set any day now.

"They haven't told me very much about it at all. I haven't even got a script, but that's probably because I'm only an extra. This is definitely what I want to do and it's got to look good on my CV when I go for other jobs," says 15-year-old Marc with typical confidence.

Such is Marc's focus that he barely entertains the possibility that he won't succeed - only when pushed does he say he wouldn't mind being a fire-fighter like his dad, Michael.

"I'm not really interested in behind the scenes stuff. I'm a show-off, I love the attention. I have to be in front of the camera, and I reckon comedy is the easiest - I love having a laugh and making people laugh, that's the best." Marc attends Southbourne-based Swish of the Curtain theatre school. Through the school's link with the Red Roofs agency in Maidenhead, Marc and several of his fellow students were invited to an interview for parts in the Potter picture.

He may well find himself on set alongside stars such as Richard Harris and Maggie Smith, as well as Harry himself, played by feature film newcomer Daniel Radcliffe.

Not that Marc is starstruck, of course. "I'm really looking forward to it now. The stars are just doing a job like me. I thought the book would be a bit childish, you know, all these wizards racing around casting spells on each other, but it's not like that at all. It really gets into the emotions of the characters. I couldn't put it down and I've read the other three books as well."

As dedicated as he is to making it as an actor, Marc is a young carer registered with Bournemouth Social Services and devotes a lot of his time to looking after his proud mum Kim who has suffered from fibromyalgia since the birth of her daughter, Lauren, aged four. (Marc also has a brother, Alex, who's seven.)

Marc manages to find time to surf,

skate and play computer games or surf the internet chat rooms, as well as holding down a part-time job at Battistini's restaurant in Bournemouth.

Kim says: "Marc is brilliant at home. He looks after his brother and sister and, when I'm really bad, he helps lift me. I tell him he has got to work hard on his GCSEs as well but we love what he does with his acting and he's good at it. He's a good-looking boy as well, but he says he wants the career first, then the babes! He's really ambitious because even before he joined Swish of the Curtain a year ago he was writing off to auditions on his own."

Marc got down to the last 10 hopefuls before being rejected by the Royal Shakespeare Company for its West End hit *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and also auditioned for the Channel 5 serial *Family Affairs*.

As a two-year-old he starred in a nappy commercial for Turkish television but didn't rediscover the acting bug until a couple of years ago. As to where his talent comes from, there is no real family history of theatre - except Kim's cousin who was the Hovis boy in the famous TV commercials of the 1960s and 70s.

This summer he starred in an educational video about teenage issues and is currently in rehearsal for Swish of the Curtain's production of *Swiss Family Tree* at the Barrington Theatre from February.

"I want to go to Brockenhurst College to do their theatre studies course as I've heard it's really good. I need to get my GCSEs sorted out."

Chris Witham, production manager at Swish of the Curtain, is pleased that some 20 students have been selected to appear in *The Philosopher's Stone*, which opens in cinemas next Christmas. The younger ones have already filmed

scenes at Harrow School and he expects the older ones will go up in December or January for scenes at Leavesden Studios, near Watford.

"Marc has certainly got what it takes and is one of the most motivated students. He is very good-natured with the other students and passed his last exam with honours but the sad fact is that with all the effort, ambition and ability in the world, it is still 50 per cent luck," says Chris. For all his confidence though, Marc has been known to keep his public appearances a bit quiet. Kim recalls how she was told by friends and neighbours how good he was in a play she never even knew he was doing. "Oh Mum," shouts Marc. "You can be so embarrassing when you come along; and anyway, that was only a school play... and I was a train!"

NICK CHURCHILL
● Marc
Harry Potter
on p10

role of honour

MARC will not be without friends on the set of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone as several of his friends from Swish of the Curtain are also on the film. They are:

Dominic and Adam Smith, 11 and 13, from Southbourne; Yvette Earley, 10, Southbourne; Alex Feltham, 12, Christchurch; Kyleigh Burton, 13, Southbourne; Yolanda Vincent, 13, Southbourne; Charlotte Talbot, 13, Southbourne; Samantha Riley, 14, Queens Park; Natasha Guscott, 12, Bournemouth; Sophie Prescott, 13, Southbourne; Christine Rogers, 14, Christchurch; Francis Smith, 11, Blandford; Edward and Lydia Fowler, 11 and 9, from Wimborne; Adam Jessop, 14, Highcliffe; Charlie Douglas, 9, Southbourne; Luke Rabbito, 16, Highcliffe; Victoria Haynes, 17, Southbourne.

■ Swish of the Curtain can be contacted on (01202) 43389

