

WE GIVE TWO

## OUR

Scots on  
contest  
shortlist

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**EVERYONE** reckons their mum is special ... but those shortlisted in the Tesco Magazine Mum of the Year contest are quite extraordinary.

The only two Scots are Lynsey Findlay, 36, and Lyn Falconer, 42.

Selected from hundreds of entries, they have shown the kind of love, care and dedication which Tesco are looking for in the mum who will be named the winner next February.

To celebrate these Scots mums getting as far as they have, we invited Lynsey, Lyn and their families to a special photoshoot and makeover where we found out just why they have been nominated for the Mum of the Year competition.

## LYN'S STORY

**THE mum of three was nominated by her 10-year-old son Ross.**

He became one of the youngest people to have a pacemaker when he had life-saving surgery at just five days old.

Two weeks later, he needed more surgery when the pacemaker failed, then two more operations when he was two.

Ross decided to nominate his mum after he had more surgery this year to replace his pacemaker once more.

He said: "She stood by me when I was in hospital and I am quite grateful for that."

Lyn, who works for the Scottish Public Pensions Agency, knew nothing about Ross's nomination until he asked her for a stamp so he could post his letter. The mum,

WONDERFUL WOMEN A GREAT NEW LOOK

## AMAZING MUMS



**HAPPY FAMILIES:** From left, Ted, Amy, Lyn, Ross and Christie Falconer, and Lynsey, Abi, Ian and Kerr Findlay

who lives in Galashiels with husband Ted, Ross and daughters Amy, 17, and Christie, 14, said: "He went with his grandparents to Tesco to get an application form, wrote his letter and the first I heard of it was when he asked for a stamp."

"I asked him what he wanted one for and he showed me the letter. "He was talking about how I stayed with him when he was in hospital. It brought tears to my eyes."

"It was quite overwhelming. It was such a sweet letter. It made me feel proud."

Doctors realised there was something wrong with Ross when Lyn went for a scan 32 weeks into her pregnancy.

Doctors had wanted the scan because Christie was only three pounds when she was born and had what they thought was a viral infection.

Lyn said: "We were expecting

everything to be fine. But when we got this scan, his whole body was black and covered in fluid because his heart wasn't pumping properly."

"They thought there was something wrong with his heart and that I should pack an overnight bag because I would need to go to Yorkhill Hospital in Glasgow."

"I was still there five weeks later because they discovered that Ross had a really low heartbeat."

"A baby's heart should be around 150 beats per minute but Ross's was only 47."

"They told us he would need a pacemaker almost as soon as he was born. It was a shock because you just think of old people having pacemakers, not babies."

Doctors wanted Ross to stay in the womb as long as possible so he could be strong for the operation.

But six weeks before his due date, his

tiny heart started failing and Ross was delivered.

Five days later, he was fitted with a pacemaker. Lyn said: "It was caused by neo-natal lupus, which is extremely rare."

"It turns out I have lupus antibodies and it was those which affected Christie as well. Ross also had problems with his liver and blood."

Then two weeks after the pacemaker was fitted, it failed.

Lyn said: "We were just about to come home when I walked into the ward and there were all these monitors around him."

"It was just the worst time. He went downhill from there and became really ill."

"I know Ross is nominating me but it has always been a family effort and everyone has given us so much support."

"If it wasn't for that scan at 32 weeks, I don't think he would have been here."

## LYNSEY'S STORY

**THE modest mum-of-two can't really understand why she was nominated.**

The 36-year-old, of Livingston, says she is just the same as anyone else.

After all, she is just an ordinary mum bringing up Kerr, nine, and Abi, four, running a home and taking care of all the administration needs of the business she runs with husband Ian.

It just so happens Kerr has autism and that Lynsey has also dedicated a lot of time and energy to help raise huge amounts of money for his special-needs school, Pinewood, in Blackburn, West Lothian.

Only Lynsey was surprised when her mother-in-law, Isabel Findlay, nominated her for Mum of the Year.

Lynsey said: "Isabel phoned to tell me I had been shortlisted. It was so out of the blue, I didn't know what to say."

"I think a lot of it was about the fundraising for Kerr's school. But Isabel says she wrote about things going back 10 years so she may have mentioned that my mum died seven years ago and it was only a year later that Kerr was diagnosed."

"I couldn't quite believe someone had read Isabel's letter and thought I deserved to be shortlisted."

About 18 months ago, Lynsey and another parent started raising cash to build a playground for Pinewood pupils.

Lynsey said: "At breaks, the children just wandered around this empty space."

"Everyone knew their development and learning would be enhanced if they had things to play with."

They raised well over £100,000 - £50,000 of which came from the People's Millions after a campaign for public votes.

She said: "It was the highest vote any Scottish project has had in the five years People's Millions has been running. We won £50,000 but by that time we had already raised £65,000, so we built a fantastic playground. It is lovely to see what a huge difference it has made to the children."

Lynsey is now helping to raise cash for a £35,000 school minibus and is also on West Lothian Council's school selection panel.

She added: "Kerr might have special needs but he is a dream to look after. He is a content and happy wee boy."

• For more about Tesco Magazine Mum of the Year, click on

## YUMMY MUMMY:

Beaded chiffon dress  
£70 @ Debenhams,  
black shoes £30 @  
Barratts, black satin  
jacket £29.50 @  
Marks & Spencer

**LADY IN RED:**  
Satin dress with  
beaded neckline  
£65 @ Next, shoes  
£30 @ Debenhams