



FOOTSTEPS CARE

Welcome to our Footsteps Care newsletter for November!

Here you can find out about our updates, recognise accomplishments, and highlight forthcoming activities as the year draws to a close.

We also continue to commemorate our 20th anniversary this month, looking back on two decades of community and caring.

It contains useful information, news from the services, and helpful reminders to keep you informed and engaged.

We appreciate everyone's commitment and anticipate a successful year-end.

As always, thank you for being a part of the Footsteps Care community, and enjoy this month's read!



OUR MISSION

Working together to create one home, one family.

OUR VISION

We endeavour to ensure every child and young person in our care feels respected, happy, safe, loved, valued, and cared for.

We provide a homely environment which supports children and young people to build on their skills and abilities enabling them to develop greater independence and confidence to take them into adulthood.

We are empowering children and young people with learning disabilities and additional support needs to overcome obstacles and reach their highest potential, whilst promoting welfare and wellbeing.

VALUES

Family, Compassion & Empathy, Safety & Security, Nurture & Empower, Passion, Opportunity.

Our company values are the core principles that define who we are. We aim to create a healthy culture, within a long-lasting, successful, motivating, and safe home, where we embrace diversity and uniqueness.

We celebrate great teamwork and foster an atmosphere of respect, support, positivity, and kindness.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Dec 3 – International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Dec 21 – Winter Solstice

Dec 24 – Christmas Eve

Dec 25 – Jan 2 – Hanukkah

Dec 25 – Christmas Day

Dec 26 – Jan 1 – Kwanzaa

Dec 26 – Boxing Day

Dec 31 – New Year's Eve

LENNOX CHILDREN'S CANCER FUND



We are proud to share that we have supported the Lennox Children's Cancer Charity again this month by hosting a fun fundraising event: Guess the Name of the Bear! A big thank you to all our staff who participated and contributed to raising funds for this incredible cause. After many guesses, it was revealed that the bear's name is Olu! Congratulations to Marios, who was the lucky winner!

In addition to this, we had the honour of presenting Marios with a special gift in recognition of his hard work and dedication in supporting one of our young people during their transition from our children's home family to our supported living service. Thank you, Marios, for your dedicated commitment and approach to supporting our special young man to have seamless transition to our adult service. It is greatly appreciated.

JAY'S CAUSE TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR PROSTATE CANCER

We are incredibly proud to celebrate Jay's advocacy work in raising awareness about prostate cancer and campaigning to lower the age of routine screenings. His efforts aim to ensure earlier detection and treatment of this life-threatening disease, potentially saving countless lives.

Jay's work and dedication were recently recognised on a grand scale. He was honoured with an invitation to St. James's Palace, where he had the privilege of meeting HRH The Duchess of Chester. During this special occasion, his campaigning was both acknowledged and commended. Adding to the honour, Jay also had the chance to meet former Prime Minister Sir John Major and enjoyed evening tea at the palace. Jay, we are immensely proud of you! Well done!

Signs and Symptoms of Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer can develop without obvious symptoms in the early stages, making awareness important. Here are some common signs and symptoms to watch for:

- Difficulty starting urination.
- Weak or interrupted flow of urine.
- Urinating often, especially at night.
- Trouble emptying the bladder completely.
- Pain or burning during urination.
- Blood in the urine or semen.
- Pain in the back, hips, or pelvis that doesn't go away.
- Painful ejaculation.

If you or someone you know experiences any of these symptoms, it is important to consult a healthcare professional as soon as possible. Early detection saves lives.

CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Our management teams have recently participated in a variety of training programmes, webinars, and conferences which have expanded their knowledge and skill sets. These experiences have given them strategies and insights, which they are actively implementing to drive positive outcomes through our teams and homes.

One of the standout events was a conference featuring inspirational speakers. Managers shared positive feedback, describing the conference as 'inspiring, informative and thought-provoking'.

A highlight was hearing Fatima Whitbread's story of spending part of her life growing up in care. Fatima is a Javelin world champion, WR holder, and Olympic medallist, and her story resonated deeply as she shared what helped her, what leaders can do to develop resilience, and passionately spoke of her current mission to create brighter futures for children in the care system. Her story certainly left a lasting impression on us all.

These opportunities for growth and expanding knowledge are invaluable to our managers and teams.

HEALTH & WELLBEING SUPPORT

All staff members have access to the Care first Zest platform provided by My Possible Self.

The platform offers fully confidential Health and Wellbeing Support Services, including 24 hour fully confidential telephone counselling, with an interactive health and wellbeing management portal.

RECRUITMENT

We currently have full time support worker roles available in our Goodmayes & Leyton.

If you know someone who would like to join us, please direct them to our website where they can download an application pack to complete and return to

applications@footstepscare.net

STAFF HANDBOOK

Please take the time to read through the staff handbook which can be found on our system, in each office and on our website.

The staff handbook contains all the HR policies.

WEBSITE

Our website is regularly updated.

To access information about the organisation, commitment to safeguarding, important contact details, newsletters and the gallery, please follow the link below.

<https://www.footstepscaregroup.com>

NEWS FROM GOODMAYES ADULT SUPPORT

The month of November has been a busy month for our young adults. They have certainly been busy and there has been much excitement for the two new arrivals.

This month we have enjoyed Our regular fitness sessions which continue to bring energy and laughter to our weeks. The Zumba classes have been full of rhythm and fun, while yoga has been offering us a moment of calm and relaxation as well as an opportunity to reflect and reset.

Nothing beats a bit of friendly competition! Laser tag and bowling have been a favourite, with fun for all those who participated. We have also enjoyed a visit to London Zoo. This was a real adventure and highlight for us. It gave us an opportunity to have close encounters with fascinating animals and some unforgettable wildlife experiences.

Shopping was on the agenda again as it is for most months. We certainly like to shop! Our shopping trips have been a fantastic way to explore, socialise, and enjoy some retail therapy.

We had a magical time visiting the Summer-Hill Garden Centre, where the Christmas lights created a festive wonderland. The sparkle and holiday vibes left everyone feeling very excited for the approaching festive period!

Pub Lunches with Friends

There has been good food and even better company as we enjoyed our pub lunches and some of the adults have enjoyed attending the ACE group which is always a positive and interactive experience with others.

A special trip to Geordie land!

One of our young people enjoyed a fantastic break to Newcastle. They had a wonderful time exploring this vibrant city and thoroughly enjoyed a visit to St. James' Park where they had a tour of the stadium. They enjoyed visiting local museums, and the iconic castle keep. It was a wonderful blend of culture and sports.

We have enjoyed train rides and exploring new destinations along the way. We have also been trampolining and enjoyed swimming.

Welcome to our new arrivals

A warm welcome to two new young adults who have joined our home and family this month. They are both settling in well and appear to be enjoying adjusting to a new environment.

We are thrilled to see everyone adapting so well and making new friends along the way.

We are also enjoying the use of our new treadmill. As the weather turns colder, we can sometimes be reluctant to go outdoors, so the new purchase allows us to get exercise without feeling the chill.

NEWS FROM GOODMAYES CHILDREN SERVICE

It has been nothing short of exciting this month at our Goodmayes home. We have enjoyed no less than three birthday celebrations this month! It has been a very busy month, and we have enjoyed some warm snuggly days indoors during some of the colder days we have experienced recently.

What Have We been Up To?

We have enjoyed some time outdoors on the finer days, exploring through the parks and enjoying some quiet time in nature. We enjoyed watching the ducks and a walk through the silent serenity of the woods.

A visit to the trampoline park was an absolute hit where we enjoyed bouncing the afternoon away! This was a great way to expel some energy.

The British Transport Museum was another favourite amongst the children and young people. They loved exploring the different modes of transport. It was a very interesting day.

Train rides continue to be a favourite! This month saw many adventures on the rails, with the children enjoying travel all over!

Our home has been filled with joy thanks to the karaoke machine, which has been well used this month. We have been belting out ballads and our favourite tunes. It has certainly made things lively in the home. With music comes dance and what fantastic dancers we have in the home.

We have enjoyed visits to the library where we have enjoyed choosing books to take home and read under the warmth of the blankets on the colder days. It has been nice to snuggle down, turn up the heating and enjoy some time reading.

Celebrations

We have celebrated no less than three birthdays in the home this month! It's been an eventful month of parties to mark these occasions.

We have really enjoyed making memories and each celebration was filled with laughter and joy. There were party games, excitement, presents galore, lovely food and we have eaten a lot of birthday cake!



Farewell Party

We also had a farewell party as we said a heartfelt goodbye to one of our young people who is moving on from our home. This was both a bitter-sweet occasion to celebrate a new beginning, marked with a sadness for us to have them leave. It was a touching event with a moving speech from one of the children in the home about how much they will be missed.

We were moved by the singing of one of our children on karaoke to express their good luck wishes. We wish you all the luck in the world young lady! You will be missed more than you could ever know.

Achievements

One of young people were thrilled to receive a certificate from school for partaking in "Pentathlon Tenpin Bowling", where they learnt various skills of: fair play, meeting new people and demonstrating good team spirit. Some of the young people did very well in understanding and showing very good listening skills during a life skill session on crossing roads and learning to peel an orange themselves.

One of our young people enjoyed enrolling in a maths club and developed their knowledge about money. We have also enjoyed seeing some of the children receive recognition at school for educational achievements including a certificate for kindness towards another pupil!

Our children have been learning new skills and development of existing skills. Well done everyone, we are very proud of you all!

Makaton Wall

We have introduced a Makaton board in our activity room which has been a great tool to assist both the children and the staff to learn new Makaton signs. The board prominently displays a selection of weekly Makaton signs, focusing on commonly used words and phrases we use every day. Each week, the signs are updated to introduce new vocabulary. We are already finding that this is improving communication for our children and young people with limited vocabulary or language.

Home Updates

We have recently purchased a new outdoor writing board for the garden which is proving popular with the children and young people. This gives the children an opportunity to incorporate expressing themselves outdoors. We have already seen some lovely handwriting and some very creative artwork being displayed!

We are currently redecorating various rooms in the home to create a brighter and more welcoming environment.

NEWS FROM LEYTON CHILDREN'S HOME

It's been a very busy month of activity here at Ambleside. We all wrapped up warm last week to brave the cold and we are preparing for the festive period with discussions already in full swing about Christmas lists!

This month we have been enjoying listening to music, playing football, participating in cookery club, trampolining, visits to the park and having lots of fun using the exercise equipment there!

We attended the remembrance event which was a reflective period for us all and have participated in several arts and crafts activities.

Some of the children have enjoyed ice skating, and video game designing. Visiting the library and swimming remain a firm favourite in the home and we loved joining in with the Diwali activities and events.

The children have especially enjoyed making and painting clay pottery and using the kinetic sand. We continue to enjoy attending music sessions with 'In Deep Music Therapy' at the Stratford music hub

One of the important chores of our weekly routine is the big weekly shop! The children and young people enjoy being involved in this mammoth task. They like to browse the aisles, and making decisions on what to purchase. It's a fun activity (for them anyway!) and an experience that lends itself to many life skills, choices and decision making.

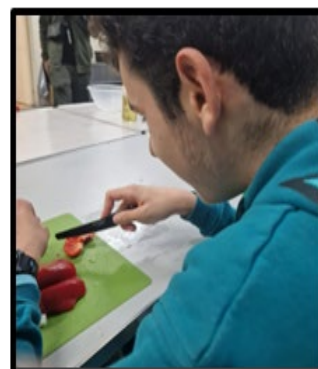
Community Spirit

At Ambleside, we try to emphasise the importance of community connection. Our children and young people are encouraged to value and actively participate in the local community, creating a sense of pride and sense of belonging.

We encourage our children and young people to take a sense of pride in their local community and to value and appreciate the community in which they live. Some of our children and young people enjoy contributing to the community through volunteering their free time.

This benefits the children and young people in our home and gives them the opportunity to develop social and practical skills as well as develops their self-esteem and a "I can attitude" Recently some of our young people have supported Epping Forest young conservation project as well as the Heath Hands project in Hampstead Heath which offers young people great support such as completing a Duke of Edinburgh Award. These projects promote mental wellbeing and gave participants a chance to engage with nature by taking part in activities such as hands on conservation, nature-based art activities and forest-school style experiences.

One young person reported they enjoyed the projects immensely, and their favourite part of the project was digging which they found very satisfying.



A NIGHT TO REMEMBER - CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

Our 20th birthday party was a memorable celebration, marking two decades of dedication, growth, and shared achievements in supporting and caring for vulnerable children and young people. It was a night that brought together the past and present of our organisation, and one that will remain in our memories for some time to come.

The evening was filled with laughter, dancing, and plenty talk of times gone by. It was lovely to see the dance floor alive with energy and the atmosphere was joyous. There was lovely food and of course there was the cake which I had underestimated the size of upon collection!

The event wasn't just a celebration of 20 years, it was a reunion. We were thrilled to welcome back some familiar faces from previous years. Former colleagues returned and there was much reminiscing. It was truly wonderful to have them join us at this special event.

Jo delivered a speech, extending heartfelt thanks to all the teams, past and present, for their dedication and hard work over the years. Her words highlighting the collective success that has brought us to this milestone and the impact we have had on the lives of many vulnerable children and young people.

Special thanks went out to Mel, Sophie, and Katrina, who did a wonderful job with the decorations and the dressings of the tables. Their hard work was truly appreciated- the venue looked beautiful.

A special thank you was dedicated to the team members who stayed back to care for the children and young people, allowing others to join the celebration. This was very selfless of you and really appreciated by all.

As we reflect on this milestone, we are filled with appreciation and gratitude for the journey that has brought us to this point. This celebration is not just about the past, it is a moment to look ahead to the future, reaffirm our mission, and continue building on the foundation we've created together to help each child and young person who comes into our care.

Here's to many more years of making a difference.

TOKEN OF APPRECIATION

This month, a small token of appreciation was presented to every member of the teams. This is a gesture of thanks for all the continued dedication and hard work of all staff members.

