

FOOTSTEPS CARE



Newsletter – December 2025 Issue

Well, we have reached the final month of the year, and what an incredible year it has been. This past month has been filled with festive preparations and countless moments of joy and fun. From decorating the home with sparkling lights to sharing in seasonal activities, our children and staff have had a wonderful Christmas.

December always gives us time to reflect on the past year. It has been a year of growth and changes for us, and we saw some of our children reach 18 and transition to adult care.

As we look ahead to the new year, our hearts are filled with excitement and optimism. 2026 holds endless possibilities, new adventures, and opportunities for growth, learning, and fun. We can't wait to continue supporting our children and young people, creating safe and nurturing spaces, and celebrating each and every success along the way. So, as we wrap up December, we look forward to a bright and hopeful new year-full of love, and endless possibilities.

THANK YOU TO THE LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

A huge thank you to the fire brigade for their incredible kindness and generosity in gifting Christmas presents to the children. Your thoughtfulness brought so much joy, excitement, and smiles to the children, helping to make their Christmas special. Thank you for taking the time to think us and for the important work you do in our community every day.

Your visit brought much excitement to the home! Some of the staff enjoyed being in the fire engine more than the children!



NEWS FROM OUR GOODMAYES ADULT SERVICE

December has been quite a quiet month for us here in supported living home. Despite being more quiet than usual, it was still filled with opportunities for our young adults to get out into the community, build confidence, and enjoy the festive season together.

Throughout the month, everyone took part in activities that supported independence, wellbeing, and social skills. We enjoyed our usual regular shopping trips, giving us the chance to practice budgeting, decision-making, and planning for ourselves. There were lots of walks in the community, which helped promote physical health while also encouraging conversations, confidence, and familiarity with local areas.

We made the most of our location with several train and bus journeys, including trips to Paddington, Bond Street, London Bridge, Chinatown, and Valentine Park. These journeys were great opportunities for learning how to travel safely, read timetables, and manage busy public spaces. Outings such as feeding the ducks at Belhus Woods Country Park and visits to local parks provided calm, enjoyable moments and a chance to connect with nature.

Our more active days included visits to Oxygen trampoline park, swimming, and time at the park. These activities were not only fun but also fantastic for physical fitness, confidence, and trying something new. Car rides and planned outings allowed everyone to feel supported while still building independence.

We also enjoyed several lunches out, which were a real highlight. These outings encouraged social interaction, choice-making, and confidence in public settings, and everyone really enjoyed sitting together, chatting, and sharing meals in restaurants of our choice.

As December went on, the festive spirit really grew. We had a lovely time Christmas shopping, choosing gifts, and talking about what Christmas means to each person. The home felt warm, busy, and full of excitement.

Christmas Day itself was a truly fantastic day for everyone. The atmosphere was relaxed, happy, and full of laughter. Our young adults enjoyed opening their presents, spending time together, and sharing a special Christmas meal.

Overall, December was a month full of meaningful experiences, independence-building opportunities, and festive joy. We are incredibly proud of everything our young adults have achieved and how they have engaged with the activities on offer. We're looking forward to building on this positivity as we move into the new year.

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 respect, support, positivity, and kindness.

IMPORTANT DATES

January 1 – New Year's Day
January 4 – World Braille Day
January 6 - Epiphany
January 11 – International Thank You Day
January 13–14 – Lohri / Makar Sankranti / Pongal
January 15 – World Religion Day
January 16 – International Day of Acceptance
January 24 – International Day of Education
January 25 – Burns Night
January 26 – International Customs Day
January 27 – Holocaust Memorial Day

HAPPY New Year

NEWS FROM OUR GOODMAYES CHILDREN SERVICE

What a wonderful time we have had throughout December here at Green Lane. The children have had a fantastic time enjoying a mix of simple pleasures, creative activities, and exciting outings. The home has been full of excitement throughout the month, and we have all enjoyed the festivities, especially decorating the home inside and out!

We enjoyed many activities out, including cinema trips, where we enjoyed popcorn and treats whilst watching films that brought laughter and enjoyment. As usual, we all enjoyed bus and train rides, allowing us to kick back and watch the world go by.

Despite the colder weather, we enjoyed playing in the park and going for walks in nature as well as visiting the arcades and having a few games of bowling.

One of our children had the special honour of attending a Christmas award show, where they were presented with a diploma for their achievements- a HUGE moment of pride for them and for us! This is such a big achievement, and we are all immensely proud. 😊

Another young person took part in her school Christmas play and received a star diploma for her performance. Together, we celebrated her hard work and confidence on stage. Well done, little lady, you were fantastic! 😊 Back at home, we decorated the home (there is no such thing as too many decorations!). Our home looked dazzling, welcoming, and full of festive spirit. From the twinkling lights to colourful decorations, the home really came alive with the magic of Christmas.

Over the holidays, we enjoyed a lot of sensory play, engaging the children's senses through textures, sounds, sights, and tastes. Activities included sensory pots filled with dried beans and rice, edible paints made from yoghurt, cornflour play,

DIY shakers with bottles and pasta, messy play with shaving cream, and experiences like tearing and exploring colourful paper. Sensory play is always enjoyed by everyone and is not just fun, but also helps the children explore creativity, build confidence, and enjoy new experiences.

One of our favourite activities was a visit to London to see the Christmas lights, taking in the beautiful displays across central London. It was such a magical activity and a very special day/evening for us all. The children were amazed by the city sparkling in festive colours and really enjoyed experiencing the magic of Christmas in the capital.

In December, we supported Christmas Jumper Day. It was a day full of colourful jumpers, festive cheer, and raising money.

We loved the pantomime at Queen's Theatre. We loved watching Jack and the Beanstalk, which everyone thoroughly enjoyed, and they later went to see Elf the Musical, which was a wonderful, fun-filled experience that had us smiling from start to finish.

Of course, Christmas Day itself was a blast! The home was filled with excitement. The children opened presents, enjoyed a delicious Christmas dinner, listened to festive music, and watched classic Christmas movies together. It was a perfect way to end the year.



NEWS FROM OUR LEYTON CHILDREN'S SERVICE

A Month of Festive Cheer

Well, what an amazing month it has been here at Ambleside. December really was an extremely busy month, and what fun we had! The home was filled with laughter and more Christmas spirit than Santa's workshop! We enjoyed many festive activities and adventures, and loved cosying up at home, absorbing that Christmas feel that only comes from a place of warmth and belonging.

Our staff Secret Santa brought lots of smiles, with luxury perfumes, bath sets, and thoughtful gifts being big hits all round. To top it off, staff enjoyed a lovely evening out at a beautiful restaurant, and for those with energy still to spare, the celebrations continued late into the night on the dance floor! It was a fantastic evening, which was enjoyed by everyone who attended.

Our Christmas party at home was just as special. Everyone enjoyed a delicious platter of mixed cultural foods, shared plenty of laughs, and even had a surprise visit from a very tall and familiar Santa, which brought excitement and festive cheer to the day.

The children were very excited, and it took quite some time for the excitement to fade! We had the most wonderful Christmas Day and it was a truly memorable day which was enjoyed by us all. We thoroughly enjoyed the day and it was simply the best day ever.

Wish List Activities

Following the Young Leaders Group wish list from last month, the young people enjoyed some brilliant days out. One highlight was a trip to Babylon Park, London's first underground theme park, complete with an indoor roller coaster and funfair rides, which was a huge hit and fun all round! It was a fantastic, adventurous day. Another favourite choice was Shrek's Adventure, where the children loved the immersive, interactive experience and engaging storytelling.

Children's Rights & Learning

In recognition of Human Rights Day, the Young Leaders Group focused on UNCRC Article 31- the right to leisure and play. One young person proudly hosted the session, presenting their ideas using visuals for new computer games, supported by staff signing in Makaton. It was a fantastic moment, and the young person was rightly very proud of their achievement- well done, young man! 😊

Throughout the month, the young people also took part in art activities and learning worksheets for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, alongside keywork sessions focusing on understanding, kindness, and sharing.

Celebrating in the Local Community

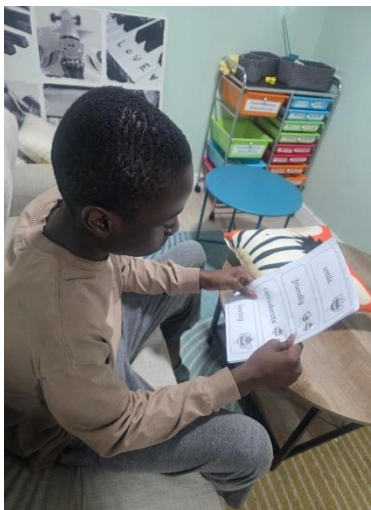
It was a joy to be part of many celebrations in our local community this festive season. At Snaresbrook Arts Project, which supports people with disabilities through life skills projects, the children and young people enjoyed viewing handcrafted items, live music, and delicious food. It was a great event. The young people also saw Walthamstow Library from a new and exciting perspective by attending the Angel Foundation Christmas Fair, celebrating the Afro-Caribbean community. The event included informative talks on sickle cell and lupus, along with toys, food, and beautiful Christmas carol performances. We really enjoyed visiting Chatsworth Youth Club, where the young people especially enjoyed tucking into delicious food, socialising, and receiving Christmas presents.

A Very BIG Thank You

We'd like to say a very special thank you to In Deep Music Therapy, who kindly gifted the children and staff wonderful hampers filled with chocolates, toys, and activity books. It was a truly thoughtful and greatly appreciated gesture.

Birthday Wishes

Finally, we would like to wish a very happy December birthday to Aggrey and Shamim- we hope you both had a fantastic day celebrating!



HEALTH & WELLBEING

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 and an interactive health and wellbeing management portal.

RECRUITMENT

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.co.uk>

YOUR FEEDBACK

Your input means so much to us, and we truly appreciate your thoughtful feedback. The survey is also available on the website. This helps us better understand your thoughts, suggestions, and ideas for improving our workplace. Your feedback plays a key role in shaping our plans for the year ahead. Thank you again for helping us build a better and more inclusive workplace. Stay tuned for updates on our progress and next steps! Click on the QR code and leave your feedback.



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Our policies and procedures are available to view and read on the FODS system and Footsteps Care Drive. Our core HR policies are also in the staff handbook.

COMPLIMENTS

I want to take this moment to express my sincere gratitude for the incredible care and support you've provided....I couldn't be happier with the improvement in his behaviour and overall well-being. Thank you wholeheartedly to every member of your team. You are making a profound difference. I am deeply grateful for your dedication and care. (Social worker)

I came to the home attending a looked after child review meeting. I was very impressed with the staff professionalism, all staff members are child focused and I observed them interacting with the young people, The facilities are top notch, child friendly environment. I will highly recommend this home to other social workers. (Social worker)

I am writing to say how impressed I am with the level of care I have seen at Footsteps Care. I feel so happy that the children in this home have such great adults to support them. (Teacher)

It is clear to me that you are providing a safe and nurturing haven for children. This has come through strongly in the feedback from parents, other agencies, and most importantly, the children themselves. Keep it up; the work you are doing is not only invaluable to the children in your care, but also to the wider community you serve. (Quality assurance inspector)

I wanted to take the opportunity to acknowledge the exceptional work that myself and other members of the Integrated Learning Disabilities Service (ILDS) have observed and experienced whilst working with Footsteps over the last two years. Your team's commitment to effective collaboration with all agencies including health, education and service providers throughout the process has been incredible, particularly as we have always had a representative, sometimes two attending all of the meetings which we can appreciate takes time away from their other duties .During BN & JB's transition planning to placements in Enfield, you coordinated with social services, school's and new providers to ensure all aspects of their moves were addressed, resulting in a seamless and safe transition. In addition to this, you remained involved post 18 to ensure that everything was okay for the clients before completely withdrawing. I appreciated your proactive approach to include these two young men in their transition journey. It's refreshing to see that your approach is consistent as demonstrated with IB, another young person transitioning from the Footsteps Children's provision to the Footsteps Adult Provision upstairs, in fact there was very little input from ILDS as both Footsteps Adult and Children's provision worked closely together in an extremely short time period. You definitely rose to the challenge on that transition! It is clear that you consistently place the best interests of your young people at the forefront of your practice, ensuring their needs remain paramount. Facilitating visits to new providers, advocating for the young people & offering constructive feedback to us and the new providers. The manner in which you and your team interact with other agencies always appears to be professional and timely. It's been an absolute pleasure working with you and your team, you most definitely made my job a lot easier. (Occupational Therapist)

As my involvement with Footstep Care comes to an end, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt thanks for what has truly been an amazing journey. It has been a pleasure to work alongside such a dedicated and professional team. I have been consistently impressed by the nurturing environment you've created and the way you have supported the child with care, respect, and genuine commitment. The quality of care provided has been outstanding, and I am very happy with the way you have treated and nurtured him throughout.

Management has been extremely cooperative and proactive, regularly contacted me for support when needed. This level of communication has been key to ensuring the child's needs were always prioritised. I've also appreciated the strong collaboration with the school and other professionals involved — it's clear that you value a multi-agency approach and work hard to maintain those relationships. I'd like to highlight the excellent work of both the keyworker and the deputy manager, who have shown great professionalism and dedication. Their involvement has made a real difference in the child's journey. A perfect example of your high standards was just yesterday during the LAC review meeting. The report you provided was thorough, well-structured, and covered all aspects of the child's development and well-being. It reflected a deep understanding of his needs and a genuine commitment to his progress. Thank you again for your hard work, your openness, and your unwavering support. It has been a very positive experience working with you all, and I leave with full confidence in the quality of care you continue to provide. (Social worker)

I very much looking forward to visiting Footsteps. It has such a warm, inviting family home feel. From the moment I walk in the door, I am welcomed by the friendly staff team who are very accommodating. The children are cared for to the highest level, and you can see the genuine warmth and care between staff and the children. The home is decorated beautifully and the children want for nothing. Their rooms are personalised and individual to their personal preferences, and the array of activities on offer for them is wonderful to see. Children thrive in such a caring environment and hearing of them enjoying movie nights and looking forward to weekends at home is heartwarming. The staff fully support education and are kind and attentive. Thank you Footsteps. (Independent reviewing officer)

We would also like to say a huge thank you to the Footsteps team for their continued hard work, commitment, and dedication to the children and young people in their care. The level of care and support they provide is second to none. Jo and her teams consistently go above and beyond to advocate for the children, ensuring their voices are heard and their individual needs are met. Through patience, encouragement, and genuine care, they support each young person to grow in confidence, develop independence, and work towards reaching their highest potential. Your passion and professionalism do not go unnoticed, and the positive impact you have on the lives of the children every day is greatly appreciated. Thank you for everything you do. (Placements officer)

I was in care for nearly all my life, and when I moved to Footsteps, I knew I had a home for life. The staff really cared for me and made my 8 years there the best time with the best memories. It was home in every sense and I was at my happiest living at Footsteps. I hope Footsteps is always there to help more children because being in care is really, really hard and before I moved to footsteps I had lots of moves and different homes. All children deserve a home like footsteps who are there for them even after they leave. Thank you for everything you did and still do. (Former resident)

This is such a wonderful, welcoming home for children. The home is clean and kept to a high standard. Staff really care about the children and this is evident in their approach. I have been impressed with meal times where staff ensure they support and eat with the children to create a family environment. Management are excellent and advocate for the children. Although this is a residential home, it feels very much like a family home. (Social worker)

I wanted to say how lovely it was visiting today, the home and TT's bedroom is of high standard. T is very happy and well cared for. Thank you all. (Reviewing officer)

I have had the privilege of working with Jo and her teams for over 11 years, and I cannot rate their dedication and professionalism highly enough. From the moment a child is placed at Footsteps, it is clear that they are fully committed to making a difference. They support each individual until they reach adulthood. (and beyond!) The staff genuinely care for every child, persevering through the difficult times and celebrating the milestones and successes along the way. All of the staff are fantastic, passionate, compassionate, and fully committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and stable environment. Their professionalism is matched only by the warmth and empathy they bring to their roles, making a profound and lasting difference in the lives of the children they care for. When we look to place a child, we always want to find a home that will support the child to thrive. Footsteps is my go-to, and I inform my colleagues "Footsteps is the Ritz of residential care." It is reassuring to encounter a team so dedicated and passionate, and I wanted to ensure that their exceptional work is recognised. Footsteps is truly a beacon of excellence. (Local authority placing officer)

As a deputy head teacher, I have had the privilege of working closely with Footsteps in supporting one of our children. I cannot speak highly enough of the dedication, professionalism, and genuine care shown by the entire team. The staff work tirelessly to ensure that the child feels safe, valued, and supported emotionally and academically. They maintain excellent communication with school, providing insight and guidance that helps us to meet the child's individual needs and ensure continuity of care. The impact of their work is tangible. The child has shown remarkable progress, both socially and academically, thanks to their consistent support and encouragement with education. (Deputy Head Teacher)