



Footsteps Care

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

JANUARY 2024

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Quality and Purpose of Care

Footsteps Care, Leyton is an independent Children's Home, offering residential care for up to 8 children aged 5 to 18 years on admission that have a diagnosed learning/physical disability or both. In recognition of the pressures of transition, Footsteps Care may continue to accommodate young people after their 18th birthday until their 19th birthday, where multi-disciplinary judgment supports such a decision and where it is in the best interest of the individual. In such situations staffs are trained in safeguarding for young adults and record keeping will be changed in respect to care planning and risk assessments.

Such children may have physical disabilities and or complex needs including health care needs. Each child referred would be assessed to ensure that they did not compromise the care needs of children already placed, which would include taking into consideration the ages of children already at the home. The home would consider age gaps of more than 4 years, however there would need to be further dialogue with the local authorities of existing children at the home and a comprehensive/integrated risk assessment in place prior to placement. Each young person will have to be identified as needing residential support as the most appropriate option at the time.

The home has three bedrooms on the ground floor fitted with facilities that allow children with limited physical mobility to be accommodated. Such facilities include wide access toilet and bathroom facilities, a wet room and optional staff call system. The first floor has 6 bedrooms, 5 of which are available for children. One bedroom is used as a staff room.

Our experienced team is resolutely committed to crafting a nurturing environment that instils a sense of security and belonging in every child under our care. We recognise that an essential aspect of this is the physical environment itself, which is why we have meticulously designed our home to emulate a genuine family setting. Our decor is not dictated by institutional guidelines but is rather influenced by the children who live here. We actively involve them in decisions about decor and furnishings, valuing their input as integral members of our community.

Structure is another cornerstone of our approach to care. The children at Footsteps Care benefit from well-defined boundaries and consistent routines, key elements that provide them a sense of security and stability. We make a concerted effort to minimise any institutional feel, striving instead for an ambiance of home-like comfort and acceptance.

In summary, Footsteps Care is more than a children's home; it's a carefully constructed ecosystem designed to foster growth, emotional well-being, and an enduring sense of community among its young people.

Accommodation and Facilities

Footsteps Care, Leyton is a modern 8 bedroom, two storey semidetached house. There are three bedrooms on the ground floor with wide access toilet and shower facilities that can facilitate wheelchair access, and 6 bedrooms on the first floor. The home is situated in Leyton, London within the London borough of Waltham Forest. It offers children a well decorated and modern environment. The design and décor aims to create a homely environment which allows the children to flourish and gain ownership of their own lives with the support and dedication from the staff team. The children are actively encouraged to be involved in the decoration of the home and have opportunities to personalise their bedrooms.

The accommodation provides each child with their own bedroom, which they are encouraged to personalise. Each room has its own toilet, wash basin and shower facility. There is a bath on each floor should children prefer to have baths. Each bedroom has a smart TV for use.

There is a separate activity room for computer games in the bungalow.

The premises have a bungalow on site which has two sections customised to meet children's special needs. There is a sensory room in use and an activity room in use. It is recognised that some children may not be placed in a school

immediately after they are admitted to the home, in such cases, our education facility provides an environment where continued learning can take place.

There is the staff and management office on the ground floor. There is a kitchen/dining and lounge with a communal TV. There is a laundry room adjacent to the bungalow out of the main building where there is a washing machine and dryer. The property perimeters are secured by fences and walls on three sides with a metal gate entrance which is locked and can be opened by staff on one side of the building.

The home has a programme of continual maintenance and refurbishment to ensure that appropriate safety, privacy, hygiene, and functionality of facilities. The premises has been configured to comply with fire, health and safety regulations and are regularly inspected and certificated to ensure safety and compliance with regulations.

The home is registered and regulated by Ofsted for 8 children for children between the ages of 5 and 18 years with learning and physical disabilities.

Ethos and Outcomes

Footsteps Care, Leyton adopts an individualised and bespoke approach to care of the children. Each child is assessed prior to admission, to ensure that the correct level of support and services can be identified and planned for. We offer a positive environment for children to exist and develop supported by a Positive Behaviour Support model, facilities for learning and development with an onsite home education bungalow.

We aim to increase the children's opportunities for positive outcomes for their future and assist them in changing learned patterns of behaviour, attitudes and providing practical solutions to overcome obstacles created by disability.

The Aims and Objectives and desired Outcomes of Footsteps Care, Leyton are:

- To provide security and stability to children and young people requiring group residential care who need to be away from their family home or are not able to live in foster care.
- To provide a professional service that is able to assist and make recommendations on a child's learning needs, emotional and behavioural needs and developmental needs within the context of a specific requirement from the referring local authority.
- To risk assess all referred children, assessing the risk of all children already at the home.
- To contain behaviours that challenge, through positive behaviour management techniques, the strength of the group of children and input when necessary, from other agencies such as Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and schools and where appropriate input from our psychiatrist and through close supervision.
- To enable the children to find a way of describing and defining their issues in a manner that helps carers, families and others by mobilising the appropriate resources for them to communicate, be taught life skills and independent living skills, with a programme that is unique for each child and incorporating achievable targets and breaking down tasks to the child bearing in mind their level of understanding, so that their goals are achievable.
- To identify health and educational issues pertinent to the wellbeing of each child and to ensure they have access to all resources available within the period of their placement with our service.
- For each child to feel they are protected and cared for within a homely environment for the length of time they reside at Footsteps Care, Leyton.
- For children to be able to develop trusting, safe and secure relationships.
- For children to participate in all aspects of planning for their care.
- To enable children to achieve positive outcomes academically and vocationally within an environment that recognises all achievements for the child.
- To promote physical, emotional health for each child ensuring that their health is monitored and that there is a plan to ensure that all the health needs are met for each child.
- To be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing.

The home ensures that each child has an identified Key Worker who will be a point of contact and also provide individual support for the child, their family, social worker and other professionals.

Staff members always ensure that the children know they are present on all shifts. The children will be valued through boundaries and routines set for their behaviours; also by the way staff members persevere in trying to help them. The organisation will raise staff awareness of the complex needs of children through training, supervision and appraisal. Each child will have a Care Plan and Placement Plan on their records to enable staff to work in a positive and consistent way. We will also provide the allocated social worker with a thoroughly update report in respect of the child each month.

Staff will involve the children in all aspects of their care and planning to meet their needs through involvement in regular key work sessions, children's meetings, menu planning and activity planning. Each child will be supported to maintain acceptable levels of behaviour by a positive behaviour plan.

Location

The location of the home is in a quiet residential close in Leyton, London. The home is close to the local supermarket and leisure facilities. There are schools and shops within easy reach with doctors' surgeries, dental and optician facilities nearby. There are regular bus services close by with routes to central London, north and east London. There is a main line station for rail transport and the nearest underground rail transport station is a short bus ride away.

There are lots of opportunities for activities in the area and larger shopping facilities in Stratford City which is a 20-minute bus ride away.

Safety Measures:

As part of our commitment to providing a safe and enriching environment, we conduct an annual Location Risk Assessment and Fitness of Premises Report. These rigorous evaluations serve to continually monitor and improve the suitability and safety of the location and facilities, ensuring they align with our objectives of holistic child care.

In summary, the strategic location of Footsteps Care is designed not only to provide convenience but also to enrich the lives of our young people through a diverse range of experiences and opportunities, all while upholding the highest safety standards.

Support for Cultural and Linguistic Needs

Footsteps Care is deeply committed to fostering a culturally responsive and inclusive environment. Our multi-ethnic team of adults brings a rich tapestry of backgrounds and experiences, which enhances our collective ability to meet the diverse needs of the children under our care.

Assessment and Planning: Prior to admission, we conduct a thorough assessment of each child's unique cultural, linguistic, and religious needs. This initial evaluation is not merely a procedural step; it informs our holistic care plan designed to resonate with the individual child's identity and beliefs. Any gaps in our team's cultural or linguistic proficiency are promptly identified, and we engage with family members, cultural consultants, or relevant organisations to bridge these gaps.

Language Support: When language presents a barrier, our adults are prepared to learn essential words and terms to facilitate communication. An interpreter may be engaged when necessary, and all written information is provided in the child's preferred language. This commitment extends to support for non-verbal communication methods, ensuring that every child feels heard and understood.

Religious and Cultural Practices: Respect for religious and cultural practices is an integral part of our care philosophy. We provide ongoing support for specific dietary requirements, clothing preferences, and religious observances. Places of worship for various faiths are readily accessible in the local area, and our adults are proactive in supporting children in their spiritual journey, should they choose to participate.

Training and Development: We are agile in adapting to the learning needs of our team, particularly in areas that enhance our capacity to provide culturally competent care. Training programs, preferably initiated before planned admissions, are designed to equip our adults with the necessary skills and knowledge.

Communication: Clear, open, and reciprocal communication is the cornerstone of effective caregiving. We place a premium on ensuring that children's views, feelings, and wishes are fully understood and integrated into their care plans. Our approach to communication is adaptive, accommodating children who are non-verbal and employing their preferred individual methods of communication.

In summary, Footsteps Care goes beyond mere accommodation of cultural, linguistic, and religious needs. We actively engage in practices that affirm the individual identities of the children in our care, nurturing a sense of belonging and emotional well-being.

Diversity and Equality

At Footsteps Care, we do not just acknowledge diversity; we celebrate it. Our commitment to an inclusive environment reflects in the richness of backgrounds and experiences among our children, adults, and visitors.

Legal Framework and Policies: We operate in full alignment with the Equality Act 2010, standing against all forms of discrimination based on disability, gender, age, colour, ethnic origin, culture, religious beliefs, marital status, responsibility for dependents, employment status, sexual orientation, or social and economic status. Our anti-discriminatory stance extends to all stakeholders, including applicants, children, families, adults, and visitors. Furthermore, we have robust policies in place to ensure the privacy, dignity, and confidentiality of each child are safeguarded.

Rights and Protections: Every child has unequivocal rights to all aspects of care provided at Footsteps Care. Our policies fortify these rights, offering protection against abuse, bullying, and unfair treatment under our behaviour management policy.

Education and Empowerment: We recognise that embedding the values of equality and diversity is not just about policies; it's about culture. Consequently, we undertake ongoing educational activities aimed at fostering a deep-rooted understanding of these principles among the children in our care. During keywork sessions, children are educated on the myriad differences that make each individual unique and are instilled with a sense of duty to treat everyone with respect and fairness.

Addressing Discrimination: Should a child experience discrimination, our adults are trained to guide them through the appropriate channels for voicing their complaints. The goal here is not just to resolve the issue but to empower our young people to stand against prejudicial behaviours.

In summary, Footsteps Care does not merely comply with diversity and equality norms; we aim to be a benchmark in the field. Our strategy is twofold: internally, we strive for a culture of inclusion and respect, and externally, we prepare our children to be respectful, educated citizens, committed to the ideals of fairness and equality.

Complaints Handling

At Footsteps Care, we strive for excellence in all aspects of our service, which includes addressing concerns in a transparent, timely, and equitable manner. Although our primary aim is to resolve issues as they arise, through informal means, we acknowledge that formal procedures sometimes become necessary.

Mechanism for Raising Complaints:

1. **Initial Point of Contact:** Children are actively encouraged and supported to voice any concerns they may have. The initial point of contact for lodging a complaint is usually the Registered Manager.
2. **Escalation:** If the complaint pertains to the Registered Manager or is not satisfactorily addressed, the matter can be escalated to the Responsible Individual, who also serves as a director of the organisation.

3. **External Avenues:** If resolution is not reached or the complainant remains dissatisfied, complaints can be directed to external bodies such as Ofsted or the Children's Rights Commissioner.

Documentation:

- All formal complaints will receive a written response outlining the findings and any corrective actions taken.

Contacts:

- **Responsible Individual:** Anslim Narinesingh - anslim@footstepscare.net
- **Home Manager:** Michael Gyau-Boakye – michael.gyau_boakye@footstepscare.net
- **Ofsted:** enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or call 0300 123 1231
- **Children's Rights Commissioner:** Info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk or call 0207 783 8330

Transparency and Availability: A full copy of the complaints policy is readily available and can be obtained from the Registered Manager upon request.

We are committed to ensuring that complaints are dealt with professionally and impartially, with the utmost focus on achieving a satisfactory resolution for all parties involved.

Teamwork

One of the pillars of Footsteps Care is our unwavering commitment to teamwork. Our team of dedicated Adults understands that many children arrive at our facility during critical junctures in their lives. With that awareness, we work cohesively to offer not just a place to stay, but a haven for growth, change, and emotional well-being.

Patience and Understanding: We recognise that working with children who have complex needs requires not just skill, but immense patience and a deep level of understanding. Each team member is committed to these virtues, ensuring we help children navigate their complexities in a constructive manner.

Building Trust and Relationship: Our Adults invest time and effort to cultivate open, honest relationships based on mutual trust. It is through this foundational trust that we are able to guide children toward positive life outcomes.

High Expectations and Aspirations: Team members maintain high expectations for each child, aimed at motivating them toward greater independence and future planning. We are not just caregivers; we are their cheerleaders, mentors, and guides.

Celebrate Achievements: At Footsteps, we understand that every step forward counts. No achievement is too small to be celebrated, as each one contributes to the child's larger journey towards progress.

Creativity in Approach: Our Adults employ a variety of creative strategies to keep children engaged and motivated. This includes utilising innovative methods to break down complex tasks or concepts in a way that can be easily understood and assimilated.

One-on-One Time: Each child benefits from dedicated one-on-one time with their key worker, as well as with any other Adult of their choosing. These sessions provide an opportunity for deeper emotional connection and help the child to feel valued and understood.

Record Keeping: The 1:1 sessions are meticulously recorded to ensure that any pressing issues or significant discussions are noted for further action and follow-up. This allows for a comprehensive understanding of each child's evolving needs, preferences, and concerns.

Overall: As a team, we know that the success of each child relies heavily on our ability to work together seamlessly and passionately. Through collective effort, we strive to provide an environment where children not only feel safe and cared for but are empowered to reach their full potential.

Children's Views, Wishes and Feelings

At Footsteps Care, we place the utmost importance on creating a transparent and open environment where children feel empowered to voice their thoughts, concerns, and feelings. Our policy is not just about active listening; it's about actionable listening. We do not just hear our children; we act on what they say, ensuring their input contributes to the ongoing development of their individualised care plans and the overall environment of the home.

Manager's Accessibility: One of the key aspects that set our home apart is the accessibility of the manager to the children. It's not just about an open-door policy; it's an open-line policy. Each child is aware that they have the right to direct communication with the manager whenever they wish, whether for a general chat or to discuss specific concerns.

Uninterrupted Access: If, for any reason, the manager is not present on-site, contingency measures are in place to ensure children can still reach out. They are informed that they can contact the manager by telephone and are reassured that their concerns are of such importance that the manager will make themselves available if needed.

Emergencies and Immediate Needs: In the event of an immediate need or emergency, our protocol ensures that children can rapidly reach the manager or another designated responsible adult to resolve the situation promptly.

Regular Check-Ins: Besides these direct communication channels, we also conduct regular check-ins, forums, and one-on-one sessions to make sure children have multiple platforms to express themselves.

Feedback Mechanism: All comments, feedback, and expressed needs are logged diligently, analysed, and acted upon. This documentation aids in policy review, staff training, and care plan adjustments.

Empowerment and Advocacy: Our ultimate aim is to empower children to become their own best advocates. By reinforcing the importance of their views and actively incorporating their feedback into our practices, we instil a sense of agency that benefits them now and in the future.

By ensuring a multi-faceted approach to capturing and respecting the children's views, wishes, and feelings, we ensure an atmosphere of trust, mutual respect, and shared responsibility in their care and well-being.

Children's Guide

The introduction to any new home can be an overwhelming experience, especially for children who are already dealing with their own sets of challenges and experiences. That's why we have developed a comprehensive Children's Guide, designed to explain life at Footsteps Care and provide a clear roadmap for what they can expect during their stay.

Pre-Admission Familiarity: Wherever feasible, we aim to provide this guide to the child before their move to Footsteps. This proactive approach, often facilitated with the support of other professionals, allows us to customise the guide to suit the child's needs and concerns, offering a sense of familiarity and assurance before they even walk through our doors.

Inclusive Formats: One size does not fit all; we recognise this and have developed our Children's Guide in multiple formats. Whether it's easy reading, pictorial guides, or digital interactive versions, we make sure the guide is as accessible as possible. This adaptability ensures that children of all abilities and learning styles can gain a comprehensive understanding of their new home.

Regular Updates: As our facility evolves, so does our guide. Regular updates ensure it reflects the most current services, staff, and procedures, keeping both children and their families abreast of any changes.

Ongoing Support: Our team remains available to discuss any aspect of the guide. We encourage children and their families to ask questions or seek clarifications at any point during their stay. The guide is not a one-off tool but an evolving resource that can be consulted as often as needed.

Feedback Mechanism: We value feedback on the utility and effectiveness of our Children's Guide. This information is essential for its ongoing improvement, ensuring it continues to meet the needs and expectations of the children we serve.

Importance of the Guide: The Children's Guide is not just a document; it's a cornerstone of our commitment to transparent, individualised, and child-centric care. Its ultimate goal is to empower children with the knowledge and understanding they need to make their time at Footsteps as positive, enriching, and constructive as possible.

Care Planning

In our mission to provide individualised, effective, and compassionate care, we believe that the children living in our home are our most crucial stakeholders. Their firsthand experience uniquely positions them to provide invaluable insights into the quality of our care services.

Key Work Sessions: These are an essential part of our care planning. During these sessions, we actively encourage children to speak openly about their experiences, concerns, and wishes. These dialogues are documented and carefully reviewed by management to identify areas for praise as well as those that may require further attention.

Quality Assurance Feedback: To keep a pulse on the efficacy of our services, we administer regular quality assurance questionnaires to the children in our care. These questionnaires are tailored to be accessible and inclusive, available in various formats to accommodate children's differing communication needs and abilities.

Data Analysis: The collected data is then subjected to rigorous analysis by our management team. This process enables us to understand the effectiveness of our current strategies, identify areas for improvement, and adapt our care plans as necessary.

Action and Follow-Up: Based on the feedback received, we act promptly to address any concerns or implement suggestions. We believe in the continuous improvement of our services and understand that this is a dynamic process that requires ongoing effort and commitment.

Feedback Loop: After implementing changes, we seek further feedback to ensure that the amendments are meeting the children's needs and expectations. This continuous feedback loop ensures that our services remain responsive, effective, and in line with the children's evolving needs.

Transparency and Accountability: Any changes or adaptations made to our care plans or operational protocols are communicated clearly to all stakeholders, including children, staff, and other relevant professionals. This keeps everyone in the loop and maintains a transparent and accountable system.

By actively involving children in the care planning process, we do not just pay lip service to the idea of child-centered care; we live it every day. Through this inclusive, data-driven approach, we continually strive to elevate the quality of the care we provide.

Young People Meetings

Young people meetings are a pivotal component of our governance structure. They serve as a democratic platform where children can freely discuss concerns, ideas, and suggestions about the home, directly influencing decision-making processes. These meetings are not just a token gesture but a cornerstone of our child-centred approach.

Agenda Setting: Children take the reins when it comes to setting the agenda for house meetings. They are empowered to choose the topics, issues, or ideas they wish to discuss. This sense of ownership stimulates engagement and fosters a proactive atmosphere.

Meeting Leadership: While adults facilitate these meetings, it is the children and young people who are encouraged to lead. This nurtures their leadership skills, boosts self-esteem, and imparts a sense of agency.

Communication Support: We are fully aware that communication abilities differ among children, especially given their diverse needs. Our adults are trained to identify and employ alternative communication methods—whether it be sign language, visual aids, or technological tools—to ensure that every child's voice is heard.

Topics of Discussion: The meetings touch upon various aspects of daily life in the home. This ranges from menu planning and activities to decor changes and holiday planning. Structure, safety, and other pertinent topics may also be discussed based on the children's interest.

Action and Documentation: The outcomes of these discussions are meticulously documented, and actionable items are followed up in a timely manner. Children are updated on the progress, providing them with a transparent view of how their input directly results in change.

Feedback Loop: Subsequent meetings serve as an avenue to revisit previous topics and discuss the effectiveness of changes made. This keeps the loop of communication open and further emphasises the importance of their participation.

By upholding these standards for our house meetings, we create an environment where children feel empowered, valued, and an integral part of the community. This is aligned with our commitment to providing care that respects and encourages the individuality and agency of each child.

Advocacy

Our commitment to the children extends beyond the immediate care we provide; it encompasses a broader spectrum that includes empowering them to be their own best advocates. To facilitate this, we offer an advocate service for children requiring additional support to express their needs and concerns.

When Is Advocacy Required? Advocacy services are generally activated for specific scenarios such as complex decision-making processes, grievance handling, or during critical transitions in the child's life.

Selection of Advocates: The advocates are independent professionals specially trained to represent the interests of the child. They are selected based on the specific needs and circumstances of each child, ensuring a tailored approach.

Role of the Advocate: The advocate serves as a conduit between the child and the decision-making processes affecting them. They contribute to meetings, assist in interpreting jargon, and aid the child in navigating complex systems, ensuring their voice is at the forefront of any discussions or decisions made.

Independent Visitors: Alongside advocates, we offer the services of independent visitors, who are impartial third parties. They meet with children regularly to ensure their wellbeing and also contribute to meetings that impact the child's life.

Accountability and Transparency: All interactions with advocates or independent visitors are duly documented to maintain a clear record. This serves as a transparent log for all stakeholders involved.

Review and Feedback: The effectiveness of the advocacy or independent visitor services is regularly reviewed, incorporating feedback from the children themselves as well as team members and other involved parties.

Training for Adults: Our team is trained in supporting the advocacy process, upholding the dignity and autonomy of each child as they interact with these services.

Through these advocacy services, we make it abundantly clear that the children's voices are not just a supplement to our decision-making process; they are central to it. We are steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that every child feels heard, understood, and empowered to influence the matters that directly affect them.

Education

At Footsteps Care, we understand that education is not merely an academic pursuit, but a cornerstone for the holistic development of a child. With this perspective, we approach educational support as both a duty and an opportunity to pave the way for the children's future.

School Collaboration: The home establishes symbiotic relationships with educational institutions, featuring a 'daily home/school diary' to maintain transparent and consistent communication. Our key workers are not only present but also actively involved in all educational reviews, meetings, and school events.

Special Educational Needs: We pride ourselves on having strong connections with local schools that specialise in meeting the needs of children with special educational requirements. Children residing at Footsteps typically have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and it's our obligation to ensure these needs are met through their educational engagements.

Beyond the School Walls: For children over the school age, our support extends into higher education and vocational training. We offer comprehensive advice and access to resources for local college courses and other training programs. Discussions about their future educational goals are initiated well before they transition from school to the next stage of their lives.

Interim Educational Support: There may be circumstances where a child is unable to attend their current educational setting due to logistical issues or other challenges. In such cases, the home collaborates with the school and virtual educational providers to organise alternative educational activities, including tutor-led programs. This ensures that the child does not miss out on crucial educational milestones during transitional periods.

More Than Just Academics: We firmly believe that schools are not just places of academic learning; they are microcosms of society where children first encounter responsibilities and societal expectations. Therefore, it's vital for their development to have access to an appropriate educational environment at the earliest opportunity.

Review and Adaptation: We continually assess our educational support mechanisms, and we are always open to adapting our approach based on feedback from the children, educational professionals, and other stakeholders. We are committed to the premise that every child has the right to educational advancement and personal development, and our practices and policies are crafted to reflect this fundamental belief.

The home is not dually registered with a school, but education can be provided as home education in the bungalow while a child is waiting to be placed at a school or where health conditions limit attendance.

At Footsteps Care, education is perceived as an opportunity for preparing for future life. Our staff team are therefore duty bound to support children to attend education locally, in neighbouring boroughs and further afield where appropriate.

Where a child is over the school age, in the first instance a local college or training course would be offered to the child. Support and advice and links to courses would be given by staff.

Staff members attend school events and open evenings and take an interest in all aspects of school life. Schools are always invited to participate in reviews for each child in order to ensure that there is focus on identified needs.

All young people will have preparation for transition into adulthood support through their Life Skills and independence programme co-ordinated by the home.

Enjoyment and Achievement

At Footsteps Care, our ethos revolves around providing a holistic experience that caters not just to the educational and developmental needs of the children, but also to their enjoyment and sense of achievement.

Activity Budget and Leisure Access: Each child in our care has a dedicated activity budget, replenished monthly, to ensure they have the resources to engage in activities that bring them joy and a sense of accomplishment. We also facilitate access to local leisure centres, clubs, and community events, broadening their social and experiential horizons.

Personalised Activity Planning: Activities are meticulously planned to align with the individual recreational, developmental, and social needs of each child. These are detailed in their care plans, which are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they remain relevant and beneficial.

Hobbies and Skills: If a child arrives at the home with pre-existing hobbies or skills, we actively support and encourage the continuation of these interests where practical. This aids in maintaining a sense of continuity and personal identity, which can be incredibly empowering for the child.

Annual Holidays: The opportunity for an annual holiday, chosen by the children themselves, adds an extra layer of excitement and offers a much-anticipated break from routine. It serves as both a reward and a learning experience, touching on elements of planning, social interaction, and cultural exposure.

Activity Documentation: To maintain transparency and to continuously assess the effectiveness of our activity programming, all activities are recorded in the care plans. This record serves as a valuable tool for ongoing assessment and for future planning.

Purposeful Engagement: Our adults are committed to not just supervising, but actively engaging with the children during these activities. The aim is to make each activity a purposeful endeavour that contributes to the child's well-being, skills, and overall sense of happiness.

By fostering an environment where enjoyment and achievement go hand in hand, we aim to equip our children with the self-esteem and skills they need to thrive in the wider world.

Staff members take into consideration the half-term breaks as well as the three holiday blocks during the academic year to plan activities for the children.

Planning Activities

Planning activities at Footsteps Care is an essential part of our day-to-day operations and is rooted in a multi-faceted approach.

Holistic Planning: Our first objective is to achieve a well-rounded mix of social, recreational, and leisure activities, complemented by regular physical exercise. We aim for activities that will contribute to the children's physical health, emotional well-being, and skill development.

Family Time: We understand the irreplaceable value of family interactions in a child's life. Therefore, activities are often arranged to coincide with family visits, particularly over weekends. This dual planning ensures that children not only engage in enriching activities but also spend quality time making meaningful memories with their family.

School Holidays and Group Activities: During school holiday periods, we ramp up our group activities. These are designed to encourage social interaction and help the children develop interpersonal skills. Whether it's a team-building exercise, a community service project, or a group outing, the focus is on collaborative engagement.

Logistics and Location: For activities that are located at a distance from the home, meticulous planning and booking are undertaken well in advance. This ensures all logistical elements are in place, from transportation to tickets, allowing for a smooth and enjoyable experience for all involved.

Activity Calendar: A regularly updated activity calendar keeps everyone in the loop and allows for anticipation and preparation. This transparency also facilitates easier coordination with family visits and other commitments.

Child-led Planning: While adults take on the bulk of the organisational responsibilities, input from the children is highly valued. We encourage them to suggest activities they are interested in and, where feasible, incorporate these into the planning.

By adhering to these principles, we strive to make activity planning an inclusive, enriching, and streamlined process that caters to the varied needs and preferences of the children in our care. This level of attention to detail ensures that every child has ample opportunity to engage, enjoy, and grow.

Access to Television, Films, and Internet

Providing children with access to entertainment and information through television, films, and internet services is part of our holistic care model at Footsteps Care. However, this comes with an unwavering commitment to ensuring that such access is responsible, safe, and in line with developmental goals.

Device Allocation and Locations: Each child has access to a TV in their own room, and there are additional televisions in communal spaces like the lounge and activities room. These Smart TVs have subscriptions to streaming services like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+.

Content Monitoring and Controls: The safety of our children is paramount. We have robust parental control settings in place on all TVs and connected devices. This is fully aligned with our E-Safety Policy to ensure that children are not exposed to content that is inappropriate for their age or developmental stage.

Screen Time Management: Mindful of the impact of excessive screen time on social interaction and mental well-being, we actively monitor the amount of time spent on devices and the internet. Limits are set and regularly reviewed to maintain a healthy balance with other activities.

Educational and Quality Content: While entertainment is important, we also encourage the consumption of educational content and documentaries that are enriching and align with the child's interests or educational goals.

Community Norms: Shared TV watching in communal areas is often a scheduled activity and, where appropriate, serves as a medium for social interaction, communal learning, and entertainment.

Parental Guidance and Recommendations: We welcome suggestions from family members regarding content that may be beneficial or enjoyable for their child and will make efforts to include these options in our subscription services.

Ongoing Review: Access to television, films, and the internet is subject to ongoing evaluation as part of our commitment to the children's well-being and personal development. This will include regular staff trainings on internet safety and updates to our E-Safety Policy as needed.

By adopting this balanced and mindful approach, we aim to offer children not just the means for entertainment but also a pathway to enriching experiences that contribute positively to their overall well-being.

Health

The well-being and overall health of our children are of paramount importance here at Footsteps Care. In line with this, we have put in place comprehensive measures that cover multiple aspects of health and safety, ensuring a nurturing and secure environment.

Health Promotion and Awareness: Our staff actively educate and guide children on various health-related topics. This encompasses a broad range, from good nutrition and sleep habits to personal safety protocols.

Informed Consent: Upon admission to the home, we obtain necessary consents for administering medication and emergency medical treatments.

Healthy Lifestyle Education: We address the full spectrum of health-related topics pertinent to each child's needs, such as sexual health, substance abuse, and general well-being. Communication is facilitated using 'easy learn' formats tailored to each child's understanding.

Primary Care Access: All children are promptly registered with a local General Practitioner (GP). Any prescribed medications are administered following a rigorous procedural structure, with thorough records maintained.

Medication Audit: We conduct a meticulous monthly audit to assess the administration of all medications, ensuring safety and accuracy in the process.

Regular Health Assessments: Children undergo an annual health check, including regular optician and dental visits. Specialised medical check-ups are also arranged for those with unique health needs.

Specialised Medical Support: For children requiring specialised medical care, such as diabetes management or PEG feeds, our staff members are specifically trained to provide the necessary support, both at the home and during hospital visits.

Health Protocols: Custom protocols and procedures are developed in conjunction with healthcare professionals for specific health needs, ensuring a comprehensive approach to medical care.

Emergency Procedures: In the event of an emergency, we have trained first-aid personnel on-site and a procedure in place for notifying all relevant stakeholders, including parents or guardians.

Performance Metrics: Our commitment to maintaining the highest standard of health care is continuously monitored through various channels. These include monthly progress reports, Looked After Children (LAC) reviews, and feedback from healthcare professionals.

Appointment Records: We keep detailed records of all health-related appointments, which includes the outcomes and any recommendations from healthcare providers.

Our approach to health and well-being is designed to be holistic, covering not just immediate medical needs but also educating our children on how to maintain a healthy lifestyle long-term. We collaborate with healthcare providers and involve our staff in ongoing training to ensure the highest level of care for all children in our facility.

Positive Relationships

At Footsteps Care, we hold a strong belief that nurturing positive relationships is integral for the emotional and psychological well-being of our children. As a result, we take various steps to foster and maintain these relationships.

Family Time Support: The staff here is committed to facilitating "Family Time" with individuals significant to each child. This can include immediate family, friends, prior caregivers, and other persons important in the child's life.

Planning and Coordination: We work in close collaboration with social workers and other stakeholders to ensure that these Family Time arrangements are seamlessly integrated into the child's care plan.

Facilitation of Contact: When necessary, our team provides comprehensive support, which can include arranging transportation for these meetings. Should any meetings take place within the facility, we ensure that privacy is provided for the child and their guests.

Visits from Friends: We actively encourage our children to foster friendships and social bonds. While we do not allow overnight stays from friends at the home, children are permitted to stay overnight with their friends and family, pending approval from the relevant authorities and after a thorough risk assessment.

Communication Tools: Children have ready access to telecommunication services like telephones, FaceTime, and Zoom. This allows them to maintain important relationships in a private setting without any interference.

Social Engagements: The home environment is made conducive for social interactions, including special dinners, parties, and events. We encourage children to extend invitations to those they wish to share these occasions with.

By offering multiple avenues for maintaining and enhancing relationships, we aim to provide a holistic approach to emotional and social development for our children. We believe that these positive relationships are cornerstone experiences that will assist them not just during their time at Footsteps Care but also as they transition into adult life.

Protection of Children

Approach to the Monitoring and Surveillance of the Children

Ensuring the safety and well-being of our children is a paramount concern at Footsteps Care. Our approach to monitoring and surveillance is developed with a balance between providing optimal security and maintaining the dignity and privacy of our residents. The young people are monitored by staff 24 hours per day at the home. Each child has a level of supervision agreed at the time of admission or following specific events that requires the child having their supervision level increased or decreased. Staffing ratios are agreed in advance and the schedule of staff for the home reflects such supervision levels when at home or outside the home on an activity or appointment.

Exterior Monitoring: CCTV cameras are strategically positioned on the premises' exterior to deter unauthorised activity and ensure a secure environment. This serves to give peace of mind to both the children and their families.

Interior Monitoring: We have consciously decided against installing CCTV within the home's interiors, recognising the critical importance of privacy and dignity for our children.

Daily Logbook: For internal activities, a meticulous Daily Logbook is maintained to document all occurrences within the home. This creates a transparent record and serves as a useful tool for staff and management.

Night Support: We have a minimum of two waking night staff to provide round-the-clock care and support. These adults are specially trained to handle a variety of situations, ensuring that children can sleep soundly while their needs are being attentively met.

Door Pagers: Given the layout of the home, bedrooms are equipped with door pagers to alert the staff should a young person require assistance during the night.

Specialised Monitoring Equipment: For children with specific health needs, such as those with epilepsy, we utilise baby monitors to offer remote surveillance. This allows the children to sleep undisturbed while enabling staff to remain vigilant. The usage of any such specialised monitoring equipment is always agreed upon and consented to prior to a child's admission to the home.

Through these mechanisms, we are committed to providing a secure and comfortable environment for our children, while equally upholding their rights to privacy and independence.

Our Approach to Behaviour Support

At Footsteps Care, we embrace a holistic, empathetic, and evidence-based approach to behaviour support, grounded in the principles of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). This model aligns perfectly with our overarching mission: to enhance the quality of life for each child in our care while effectively addressing any behaviours of concern.

Core Principles:

1. **Increasing Quality of Life:** Our aim is to provide an enriching, fulfilling environment where children can thrive, both emotionally and socially.
2. **Decreasing Behaviours of Concern:** Our adults are trained to use proactive strategies to mitigate behaviours that may be distressing to the child or those around them.

Key Strategies:

- **Skill Teaching:** PBS places a strong emphasis on skill development, equipping children with the tools they need to navigate their world effectively.
- **Environmental Adaptations:** Modifications are made to the child's environment to prevent situations that might trigger undesirable behaviours.
- **Understanding Behaviour:** Instead of mere control or suppression, we seek to understand what the child is attempting to communicate through their behaviour.

Implementation and Training:

- **Consistency is Key:** Uniform implementation among all team members is vital. Staff receive ongoing training and are kept abreast of updates in best practices.
- **Structured Environment:** Clear boundaries and regular routines are in place to provide a structured yet nurturing backdrop against which positive behaviour can flourish.
- **Cyclic Plan:** Our approach is iterative, regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it continues to meet the individual needs of each child.

Reward System:

- **Tailored Targets:** Rewards and targets are personalised for each child to encourage and acknowledge positive behaviours.
- **Golden Book:** Outstanding behaviours and accomplishments are celebrated by entering them into our "golden book," which serves to recognise and promote continued positive actions. Not only do we enter commendable behaviours and achievements into our "golden book," but these entries are also read out during house

meetings. A round of applause follows each reading to offer collective appreciation and acknowledgment. This practice serves to instil a sense of community and shared values, further promoting positive behaviours.

Managing Incidents:

- **Maintaining Calm:** When incidents occur, our top priority is to restore and maintain a peaceful environment. This involves encouraging the children to reflect on the outcomes of their actions, helping them understand the ripple effects their behaviour can have on others.
- **Consequence Communication:** All children are made aware of the consequences for specific actions and why such outcomes are necessary. This is done transparently and respectfully to foster understanding rather than resentment.

Permissible Controls and Monitoring:

- **Record-keeping:** Any sanctions or controls used are thoroughly documented. These records are reviewed by the managerial staff and monitored by the Independent Visitor to ensure accountability and legality.
- **Staff Training:** In accordance with Children's Homes Regulations 2015, all staff members are educated about permissible and prohibited disciplinary measures.

Sanctions:

- **Educational Approach:** Sanctions are never used as punishment but are employed as an educational tool. The aim is to help children learn from the consequences of their actions.
- **Proportionality and Efficacy:** Sanctions are only used when they are likely to be effective in helping a child understand the impact of their actions. The severity and relevance of the sanction are carefully calibrated to match the behaviour in question. Moreover, if a sanction is found to be ineffective, it will not be used again.

By incorporating these guidelines into our behaviour support approach, we create a comprehensive, ethical, and effective framework focused on nurturing positive behaviour and well-being among the children in our care. Our method is both structured and adaptive, designed to cultivate a culture of respect, understanding, and self-improvement. The ultimate objective is to empower each child to take ownership of their actions, thereby fostering their independence and enhancing their capacity to engage in positive, meaningful relationships.

Our Approach to Physical Intervention

In line with our commitment to the welfare and safety of children in our care, physical restraint serves as a last resort, utilised only in extreme cases to prevent significant injury or severe damage to property. When necessary, specific types of restraints may be included in a child's daily routine, such as securing a child in a wheelchair during transport.

Our primary methods for resolving conflict are reasoning and discussion, complemented by distraction techniques. Physical intervention will only be considered when these methods prove ineffective and there is an immediate threat of significant injury to the child, other residents, Adults, or anyone else present, or in instances of serious property damage.

We employ Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment (PRICE) techniques, accredited by BILD, for any necessary physical interventions. All Adults on staff are trained in PRICE techniques and various de-escalation and diversion strategies. Any instance of restraint is meticulously recorded in a dedicated log, reviewed by the manager, audited monthly, and subject to independent oversight. Incident forms are also sent to the local authority for additional accountability.

Physical restraint is viewed as a temporary, emergency response, to be discontinued as soon as the immediate risk has abated. When used, it involves the minimal force necessary and is executed with utmost caution to minimise injury risk to the child or others involved.

Post-incident, children are given an early opportunity to discuss the event with an uninvolved adult member, promoting mutual understanding and exploring alternative future behaviours. This serves both reassurance and educational purposes.

Staff competency in physical intervention is rigorously assessed through a training program that features both theoretical and practical elements. Our facility houses an advanced PRICE trainer to whom Adults can turn for additional guidance on appropriate techniques. Those failing to pass the training assessments are required to undergo retraining, and all Adults receive annual updates.

Moreover, children have full access to our complaints procedure in the event they feel a restraint incident was unjust or resulted in injury. This underscores our dedication to transparency, accountability, and the safeguarding of the children in our care.

Leadership and Management

Directors

Anslim Narinesingh
Michael Ward

Area Manager

Jo Wright

Home Manager

Michael Gyau-Boakye

Footsteps Care, 1 Ambleside Close, Leyton, E10 5RU.

Tel: 020 8558 8234 Email: leyton@footstepscare.net

Ofsted URN: SC481293

Registered Provider: Footsteps Care Limited, The Orchard, Ashmead Drive, Denham, Uxbridge, UB9 5BA

The rich diversity among adults—across ethnicity, gender, and age—enhances the scope and quality of care we offer, bringing a wealth of experiences and skills to the home. Staffing levels are meticulously calculated to ensure sufficient supervision, in line with the specific requirements laid out during each child's admission or any subsequent changes in their needs.

To manage staffing shortages and maintain a consistent caregiving environment, we maintain a pool of relief Adults who are familiar with our operations and philosophies. Utilising agency staff is considered a last resort; however, when this is unavoidable, we make every effort to engage the same agency personnel to maintain continuity of care for the children.

It's worth noting that staffing levels are not static; they can and do fluctuate based on various determinants. Primarily, the needs of the children are the focal point, but other factors like reduced occupancy or external appointments and activities also come into play. This flexible approach ensures that we are always in a position to offer optimal care and supervision, in alignment with current circumstances and needs.

Manager

NAME	POSITION	QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE
Michael Gyau-Boakye	Registered Manager	Completing Level 5 in leadership and Management Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Aurelie Badika	Deputy Manager	
Rashidat Ibrahim	Deputy Manager	Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Michelle Cos	Senior RSW	Enrolled on to Level 5 in Leadership and Management Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Micheal Asa	Senior RSW	Level 5 in leadership and Management Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Victoria Akidimah	Senior RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Sodiq Motolani	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Raymond Addai-Poku	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Mariya E Kibtiya	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Ajarat Isaiah	RSW	Probation
Tony Olufemi	RSW	Probation
Folakemi Ajagbe	RSW	Probation
Jithin Karamabayil	RSW	Probation
Festus Odebode	RSW	Enrolled on to Level 3 Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Rebecca Ahazie	RSW	Level 3 Health & Social Care
Kofi Adutwum	RSW	
Laura Izedonmwen	RSW	Level 3 Health & Social Care
Sarafina Sugri	RSW	
Mavis Donkor	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Augustine Olunwa	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities

Shamim Kazi Ahmed	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Manpreet Kaur	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Alima Adalakun-Umoru	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Karina Walcott	RSW	Enrolled on to Level 3 Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Ernest Obeng	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Markson Agyapong	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Hasara Dias	RSW(R)	Masters in Psychology
Fiona Henry	RSW	Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Florence Sowenimo	RSW	Enrolled on to Level 3 Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Felix Akinwande	RSW	Waiting to be enrolled on Level 3 in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Mariann Racz	RSW(R)	Enrolled on to Level 3 Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Frederick Saiwo	RSW(R)	Enrolled on to Level 3 Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
Shamus Lally	Admin	Level 3 in Business Administration IOSH Managing Safely (Health and Safety) Enrolled on to Level 5 HR Business Partner
Beverley Kassouri	Admin	Enrolled on to Level 3 Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities

Supervision and Appraisals

At Footsteps Care, we have a clearly defined hierarchy for supervision to ensure accountability and continuous improvement at all levels. The Area Manager supervises the home's manager, who in turn supervises both the Deputy Managers and Senior Adults. In this cascading structure, the Deputy Manager and Senior Adults share the responsibility of supervising and overseeing the rest of the Adults on the team. This framework allows for a seamless flow of communication, supervision, and accountability, ensuring that all team members are aligned with the home's values and objectives.

Annual Appraisals: To foster professional growth and team cohesion, we conduct annual appraisals for all Adults. These sessions serve as a dedicated platform for the manager to discuss performance metrics, achievements, and areas for improvement with each staff member. More importantly, this is a structured opportunity for setting new objectives aimed at personal and professional development within the team. The goal is to ensure that each member is aligned with Footsteps Care's values and objectives while achieving their own career goals.

Training

At Footsteps Care, all new Adults are required to complete an initial induction period, followed by a six-month probationary phase. During this time, they undergo a comprehensive and robust training program. Not only does the program cover mandatory training elements, but it also extends to specialised training modules tailored to meet the specific needs of the children residing in our home. Recent additions to our curriculum include training on Autism, safe moving and handling of people and DMD training. This ensures that our Adults are fully equipped to provide targeted care for any health conditions or disabilities that a child may present with. Furthermore, our team is committed to continuous learning; we eagerly participate in any additional training proposed by other professionals involved with the children. This proactive approach to training underscores our commitment to delivering exceptional support to the children in our care.

Care Planning

In our care planning approach at Footsteps Care, we engage in a meticulous assessment process for each child referred to ensure that the existing dynamic and needs of children already in our care are not compromised. Our home accommodates children aged 5-18 who may present with a variety of conditions ranging from learning disabilities, emotional behavioural difficulties, complex health needs, global developmental delay, physical disabilities, to Autism.

Factors such as the child's functional abilities compared to those already in the home, complex needs requiring specialised adult skills, and access to special educational facilities are all carefully considered. The Registered Manager, in collaboration with the referring local authority and social worker, will ascertain whether the home has the necessary resources and expertise to meet a prospective young person's individual needs.

We strongly encourage visits by the child, as well as their social worker and parents/guardians where applicable, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the setting and its appropriateness for the child's needs. Our approach to care is individualised and child-centred, aimed at providing a sense of value, understanding, and belonging to each child.

Pre-admission assessments are conducted to identify appropriate levels of support and services. This allows us to better tailor our care to each child, with the goal of fostering positive future outcomes and offering practical solutions to challenges posed by disabilities.

Upon confirming admission, immediate steps are taken to update the child's records, which will include an initial risk assessment, essential information, a Placement Plan, an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and consent forms for emergency medical treatment. Within 72 hours of admission, a Placement Planning meeting is convened to delve into specifics such as health needs, safeguarding issues, leisure needs, religious considerations, contact arrangements, and life skills. A Looked After Child (LAC) Review is also arranged within 28 days of admission, led by the allocated social worker, to finalise the Care Plan, agree on the placement, and clarify the roles of all professionals involved in the child's life.

Unplanned Endings

At Footsteps Care, we are committed to providing a stable, long-lasting, and positive living experience for all children in our care. Our Adults team is trained to manage a diverse range of complex behaviours and health conditions, enabling us to adapt to the changing needs of our young people. In crisis situations, we engage with additional agencies and pertinent individuals to collaboratively develop a plan to maintain the placement's success. This could mean enlisting extra services, adjusting supervision levels, updating adults training, or revising medication protocols.

However, despite our best efforts, there may be instances where unplanned endings become unavoidable. Such a profound decision is never made lightly and is only considered when we believe it's in the best interest of all parties involved. Typically, unplanned endings occur under specific circumstances, generally involving safeguarding concerns.

These concerns could relate to the child in question, other children in the home, or the adults team. Specific situations where an unplanned ending may be warranted include:

- A significant change in the child's health or behaviour that can no longer be accommodated by the home's resources or expertise.
- Instances where a child's actions pose a significant risk to themselves, other children, or Adults.

In any case involving unplanned endings, we engage in thorough documentation and reporting, informing all relevant stakeholders, including the local authority and parents or guardians, to ensure a transparent and accountable process. This is aligned with our overarching goal of providing a secure and nurturing environment for every child we serve.