



We have had a busy start to the year here at Footsteps, as despite national restrictions our essential services have been running continuously (with plenty of safety precautions in place). We are so pleased to be able to help disabled children on the path to mobility. Read about Rohan's Footsteps journey, fundraising news, music therapy and more - enjoy!

Rohan's Footsteps



Nine-year old Rohan Fateh has the rare genetic condition Aicardi Greubere Syndrome. His family have been bringing him to Footsteps for 3 years and they come fairly regularly – around twice per year since they found the Centre and they are aiming to come 3 times per year. I asked Rohan's dad what motivates them to come so often.

“We have noticed lots of improvements in Rohan's ability with Footsteps. He was unable to sit up on his own and we used to have to spoon feed him. Now he can balance himself and sit up and his fine motor control has really improved, meaning he can feed himself.

He's also walking about 200m with a walker at home and school. He wasn't able to walk with it at all before and then he could maybe manage 10-15m, so this is a big increase. Rohan didn't always like coming to Footsteps to start with, and he can seem a bit reluctant, but as time goes on, he has realised that he is able to do more things and that it's worth it"

Rohan goes to a mainstream school which has funding for SEND and they make a big effort to include him. He joins in with normal lessons and is doing well. The school also have separate classes for the 'talking i-pad' group. This is special voice software on his i-pad, provided by the NHS. This allows Rohan to string a sentence together from individual pre-recorded words, meaning he can communicate and get his point across.

They do some physio at the school, once per week and Rohan has a private physio at home as well as enjoying swimming & horse-riding (pre-lockdown). So he keeps active and busy day-to-day. At his Footsteps session just now, Rohan is working on his core strength, walking and sitting up. He's also having orofacial therapy, getting used to eating more solid food

His dad tells us: "We are so proud of him, he's come a long way, doesn't get upset with change and new things as much as he used to and his mobility has greatly improved"

Well done Rohan! keep trying, keep moving, keep smiling!

Footsteps & Foundation News



Footsteps Foundation Fundraising – Does your company or school support a Charity of the Year? Are you interested in doing a challenge event such as a bike ride or running race later in 2021? Or perhaps you want to do a Tea Party or BBQ fundraiser now we can congregate in gardens! We rely on supporters like you to keep our valuable work going. Please speak to maggie@footstepsfoundation.com if you have an idea for helping Footsteps Foundation to help disabled children this year, and you could even check [this blog](#) for fun fundraising inspiration.

Bookings for 2022 – Usually Footsteps announces the schedule for the following year's sessions in March. However, this year we are waiting to release 2022 dates in July. Kirsty will be sending emails out well in advance to let you know when the phone lines will open for booking 2022 sessions. For those of you who are new to the process, places for sessions that coincide with school holidays are very limited and so it is advisable to try to call on the specific day if you want holiday slots, or have specific dates in mind.

Questionnaire's - We will soon be emailing questionnaires to all Footsteps families, to ask for some feedback on your Footsteps experiences. We are well aware that people get so many questionnaires nowadays, and often for really unimportant things too (do you want to give feedback on your toothpaste, or your recent customer services chat with your gas supplier? No? Me neither!) The big difference here is that Footstep Foundation relies on feedback, stories and data to report back to funders and to raise money to pay for services. It's also an opportunity for you to comment and make suggestions, so we are very grateful in advance to each of you that takes the time to respond. If you receive a grant from Footsteps Foundation, it is also a condition of your award that you respond to the questionnaire.

Helping Hand Project – Don't forget that we run a project to help families who need a bit of extra support to cover the costs of bringing a child to attend therapy sessions. We understand that the travel and accommodation costs of attending Footsteps can sometimes be difficult to manage, so please ask sarah@footstepsfoundation.com for more details. Maybe your circumstances have changed or things are a bit tight this year? The fund can help you pay for fuel costs, accommodation or physiotherapy if you need a Helping Hand.

Jess' Zoom-Music Fun



“Jess loved the music therapy and was very animated during it. That smile says it all. It has worked perfectly for us, as Jess is still at home shielding. Thank you very much for thinking of us”

Sadly we cannot have our music therapist Lizz in The Footsteps Centre at present, as our priority has been to reduce the numbers of people in the building and provide physiotherapy safely. However, we received some funding that specifically had to be used for music therapy, and so we adapted! Lots of us are bored of Zoom by now, but for those families that have been shielding because children may be more vulnerable, having something fun to occupy them is a godsend.

Lizz was initially unsure how it might work, as our children have such a range of abilities - however its been really successful “If you are determined enough to take on the occasional challenges of internet music therapy, there are many things to be gained from it. Zoom sessions can include anything from home-made

instruments to digital app sounds. We can do listening, sharing of music via the computer and discover which songs/pieces or bespoke music sections aid each child's goals. We can sing and vocalize, improvise, write songs and compose together. We can even develop musical activities for parent and child to do together that are bespoke for your child's needs”

So we are really happy that Footsteps children, including some who cannot attend for physiotherapy sessions at present are enjoying one-to-one music therapy sessions with Lizz, via Zoom or in the garden. If you are interested in these sessions, please email sarah@footstepsfoundation.com

To make a donation to support our work in 2021 please use <https://www.justgiving.com/footstepsfoundation/Donate>

Welcome to our new therapist Paula



We were very sad to say goodbye to Bartek this month, who has been with us for 8 years. He has been a wonderful calm and friendly presence over this time, working really hard helping children to improve their mobility year after year – we will miss you Bartek and wish you luck in your new job! However, we are excited to welcome our new member of the team, Paula, who started with us recently.

Where did you work before Footsteps?

I used to work in paediatric clinics and a special school in Poland (Katowice and Kraków) for a total of 5 years.

What is your favourite thing about working with disabled children?

Working with children, I am most happy that after conducting the exercises, my patients can cope easier with everyday actions as walking, sitting, eating, playing football, etc. One of the things that I love about my work is that I can make children smile during exercises. I am also delighted when parents are happy with their children's achievements.

What have you enjoyed about your first few weeks at Footsteps?

The privilege of helping children. My training was conducted very thoroughly. I have been provided with all the information I need to use the Spider equipment.

What do you like to do outside of work?

I love physical activity and like to do a vast range of activities, from running and swimming, to skiing and hiking in the mountains. However, spending time with my family and friends is the most important thing for me. I love to chat with them, play board games or cook together.

Welcome to the team Paula and we have already seen you bringing a smile to the children you work with!

Thanks to our wonderful supporters

With thanks to our Ambassadors: James Gesner; Susan Twitchett & Rose Noordujin

And our regular donors: Doug Tillman; Violando Percival; Sarah McAdden; Jane Mellor; Richard Farrant; Christine Briggs; Louise Van Heyningen.

Other generous donors in 2021:

Radley College; The Stamford Bridge Club; The Angus Lawson Memorial Trust; The DLM Charitable Trust; The Invesco Cares Charity; The Webb Family Trust; The 29th May Charitable Trust; Camilla Browne; Marketa & Darren Sivulski; The Rank Foundation; The White Hart Hotel; Newmans Own Foundation; Woodroffe Benton Foundation; Play 2 Give; Hamish & Anna Dewar.

To make a donation please go to <https://www.justgiving.com/footstepsfoundation/Donate>

Thanks for your ongoing support, The Footsteps Team.