



Hello from Footsteps Foundation



We are very pleased to have recently been able to open up the Footsteps Centre further, in line with guidelines, to allow families to use the kitchen and the family room. Everyone has been very respectful, and we are all still being careful. As one child commented – it is nice to be able to see everyone’s smiles again!

Here’s hoping that everyone has nice summer plans and that we all get to enjoy some wonderful summer weather and being outdoors. In this newsletter we hear from Ava's family and interview two cheeky chaps William and Chase, our Charity Ambassador Rose, as

well as catching up on some general Footsteps news.

Ava's Footsteps



Ava is six years old has been coming to Footsteps for around 4 years. Ava has the rare genetic condition Angelman syndrome and is non-verbal but her mobility is good. Her dad Julian talked about their experiences:

“Whenever I peek through the window at Footsteps to watch Ava’s therapy session, I am always impressed by how well the therapist’s manage to get Ava engaged, even though she doesn’t understand many requests or talk, they are very encouraging, speaking to her for the whole hour and motivating her to work hard. Now Ava

comes straight in through the door in the morning and goes straight to sit on the therapy mat – she knows what to expect!

We often notice improvements with Ava’s mobility after a Footsteps session. She has low muscle-tone and it has definitely made her stronger. From a young age she could cruise around the house holding onto things, but with the help of Footsteps and her SEN school, she learnt to walk independently. She happily walks (and even runs around) inside, but we are just working on building up her confidence so that she can walk around outside, in the playground and back from the shops.

When Ava was young, the sessions used to completely exhaust her, but not anymore. She has learnt things like bending over to pick something up, walking upstairs holding our hand and walking outside.

Apart from Footsteps and school, it's been a bit lacking on the activity side for Ava since the pandemic. Sadly her horse riding and swimming - which she loved - have had to stop and have not returned to normal. Her school is good though, and they do lots of activities with the children. Ava loves music and often has a little dance when she hears it. She is also obsessed with Topsy and Tim, which can be a godsend when she wants to get up at 2.30am (Angelman's children sleep very little).

All in all, her strength is better, her concentration is better and my wife and I have met lots of other parents and made friends here at Footsteps"

Charity and Footsteps News

CHARITY FUNDING: COULD YOU GET SUPPORT? Footsteps Foundation charity is having a good fundraising year once again and we are very grateful to all our donors that continue to support disabled children at Footsteps. The Foundation would like to ensure everyone knows that the Helping Hand Fund can assist with accommodation and fuel costs, so if you haven't already accessed this, please speak to Maggie or Sarah in the office or email sarah@footstepsfoundation.com. Also, a reminder that anyone on a household income of under £65,000 should apply for support towards therapy costs through the charity - to apply, please email Sarah. In September, we will begin processing grants for those attending sessions in 2022 and so any application made after September will be valid until the end of 2022, unless your circumstances change.

THE FOOTSTEPS CENTRE has had some staffing changes over the past months and so you can expect to see some enthusiastic new faces as well as familiar ones when you come for your next session. We welcome all our new team members! As mentioned, the Centre has been re-opened recently, to allow parents to use the facilities once more, but staff are continuing with the 15 minute breaks in order to thoroughly clean rooms between sessions, as well as using PPE for the time being. The Footsteps Centre will be closed for a one week summer break between the 9-13th August.

CHARITY RAFFLE Towards the end of August, we will be launching our annual charity raffle with some fantastic prizes such as a £500 designer clothes voucher, vouchers for local attractions, a giant luxury hamper, a case of fine wine & champagne, a homemade quilt and further delights – there will also be a prize for the person that sells the most tickets, so watch your inbox for more details.

PARENTS FEEDBACK In 2021 Footsteps Foundation has initiated an online questionnaire which asks about your experiences at Footsteps. This has provided really useful feedback that has been used to secure further funding. The nice comments have given the staff a real morale boost and the constructive comments can be used to improve services and facilities where possible. A huge thanks to all who have participated so far - if you haven't yet, then please follow the link below to add your voice. You don't have to be in receipt of charitable support to join in, it is for all carers and parents who bring a child to the Footsteps Centre.

[PLEASE FILL IN OUR FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE](#)

Chase & William's Footsteps



Chase Wells, 12 years old from Sussex, has been coming to Footsteps since 2016 and William Moreland, 11 years old from Yorkshire, has been coming since 2015. Foundation manager Maggie caught up with Chase and William at the end of their Footsteps session:

Maggie – I can see that you two have made friends this time around, I always hear you chatting to each other in the morning and making jokes.

Chase – Yeah, he's alright!

William – I call him my Comrade!

Maggie – Its great to hear you making friends and having fun. So this is nearly your last day of session, how have you found it?

William – Footsteps is great, I like the atmosphere. Ever since the waiting rooms have opened, I've got to admit, to be honest – there was a bit of a gloomy atmosphere when everyone was masked, but now you get to see everyone smiling, now I enjoy it more.

Maggie –Yes, I understand, It was very quiet at Footsteps, wasn't it, when everyone had to wait in their cars? So tell us about your time at Footsteps in general over the years:

Chase – Footsteps gives me a boost each year, I feel like I wouldn't be where I am today without it. I can't believe I've been coming here for six years!

William – We have actually both been coming here for 6 years.

Both – And we saw each other at sessions three times before.

Maggie – Have you noticed anything that you can do a little bit more easily after Footsteps sessions?

Chase – I'm just a lot more flexible

William – Me too! I would say more energetic, more flexible, I like having the lunch break in between my two hours, so I get a break. I like the sunny atmosphere.

Maggie – Thanks Chase, Thanks William. It's great to have your feedback and see you again soon.

Rose's Garden Studio



We have a wonderful Charity Ambassador, Rose Noorduyn, who has helped out a lot at Footsteps over the years, beginning with volunteering at events and ending up with building a purpose-built studio in her garden with special disabled facilities that Footsteps families can stay in during their sessions. Rose is a true gem, who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to help give families with disabled children the extra support they need. She tells us what motivated her to help out:

How did you learn about the Footsteps Foundation charity?

Cholsey had a charity called Choko. Kodemaila /Cholsey which is in South Africa.

I participated in this charity and we started a yearly fundraising event at the Laurence hall. The first one was in 2007. It was decided that the money raised would also be shared with a local charity.

This is how I became aware of Footsteps, it was brought to the committee's attention and chosen as the charity that would share the profit from our fundraising event for some years. I visited Footsteps and straight away, I became more involved in supporting it.

What inspired you to create the Garden Room apartment in your house?

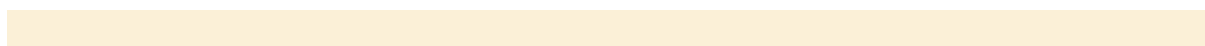
I had a large garage and with the family leaving home, I did not need so much space. So in 2017 I started to explore what I could do. The result is the apartment which really is one room.

During this time I was inspired by Jesus Christ's teaching, love your neighbour. This is how I ended up offering support to Footsteps families. With a warm heart and a smile on my face I can tell you that it was the right decision and it continues to be a blessing. It is a privilege to host the families and to be able to support them if needed. As many parents come alone with their child, the three weeks are a challenge for the hard working children but also for the parent.

During the challenge of Covid-19, it was still possible for families to come and stay, as the studio can be totally isolated from the house. We did meet up outside, but in the winter time that was more difficult. It continues to be a pleasure to meet the families and, as some return many times, we build up relationships which are a treasure.

Thank you Rose! So many families have expressed their gratitude for your kindness. The world needs more Roses 😊

Check our recommended [Accommodation Providers](#), including Rose's Garden Studio. Don't forget that The Helping Hand Project can assist with accommodations costs.



Sending thanks to all our lovely supporters



Thanks from all the children and families at Footsteps - we couldn't do it without you!

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

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

Huge gratitude to all our kind donors this summer: A Hennings; 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust; Trees of David Solomon's Charitable Trust; Tom Pritchard; Midcounties Coop; Barney Lewis & family; The Albert Hunt Trust; John & Pitt Rink Charitable Trust; Catherine Morris; Boots PLC; The Edward Gostling Foundation; Cotswold Primrose Trust; Radley College E Social; Jodie McNamara & Oxford Business Park; Peter Harrison Foundation; The Broyst Foundation; John Horniman's Children's Trust; The Dragon School and The Christopher Laing Foundation.

Would you like to join in helping disabled children at Footsteps? Please [DONATE HERE](#)

Thanks for your ongoing support,

The Footsteps & Foundation Team.

Fund a footstep and help begin a journey

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