

# Footprints Conductive Education Centre Parents Handbook 2022



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# Welcome to Footprints CEC

'Hello' and welcome from all the team at Footprints! We know there is a lot for you to take in when you enquire about a new service, so we thought you might like us to tell you more about what we do, and what happens next.

## **About us**

We are a Nottingham-based charity that supports children with a disability and their families. We teach children with disabilities practical skills that can help develop their independence and prepare them for the future. These include communicating, movement and posture, and problem-solving. We try and build 'everyday' activities into our sessions, so children also learn things like eating, drinking and playing. You or a relative would attend with your child to learn techniques to use at home and, we hope, get tips and emotional support from the team and other families.

## **Brief History**

Formerly 'School for Parents', we re-branded on 1 May 2018. Initially run by Scope, the disability charity, we were established thirty years ago as a service for pre-school children with cerebral palsy. Since becoming an independent charity in 2001, and reliant on voluntary fundraising, we have extended our service to support children with a range of motor disorders and motor development delay, including Down's syndrome. A Board of Trustees oversee the strategic aims of the organisation, and we also have a group of ambassadors from various backgrounds who support the organisation in many ways.

## **What is Conductive Education?**

In summary, it is not a 'therapy' or a 'treatment', but a method of teaching practical ways to manage the additional challenges that accompany a disability. It isn't a health service, but it can have health benefits such as helping safe-eating, exercise and emotional well-being.

Neurological conditions create a wide range of developmental challenges which can involve areas of gross and fine movement, perception, cognition, social skills, emotional development, speech, language and communication. These, in turn, can significantly affect motivation, confidence and personality. Ultimately, it is the whole person that is impacted by the condition.

Conductive Education perceives people with neurological conditions as facing a challenge of learning rather than needing treatment for a medical condition.

# Our Service

We run pre-school classes from Tuesday to Saturday for children aged six months (approx) to five years. The child and parent or carer usually attend a half-day group session with children who are matched in age and ability to learn together. These include groups for children with cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, global development delay and other physical disabilities (with or without a diagnosis).

Sessions last approximately two hours, depending on age (and energy levels!).

We run a Gym Club for children with cerebral palsy or other physical impairment aged five to eleven years. Gym Club recently moved from a Saturday to Tuesday after school. We also provide Speech and Language sessions on Mondays for children with Down's syndrome, which the child can attend once moving on from pre-school.

Following your enquiry we invite you in for an initial visit to observe a session in action before coming for a consultation. However, because of various restrictions, you will now receive a call from one of our team to discuss what we do and arrange your consultation. To get a feel for our service, we encourage you to look at our videos <https://youtu.be/EferMZEzLaE> and <https://youtu.be/Qjc0LXAm8zU>. These links are on our websites download page.

We may take a video or photos of your child for clinical and communication purposes between professionals during your consultation. We ask that you sign a consent form for this. We then consider whether our provision will benefit you and your child.

We create a programme of support in partnership when we offer a placement.

## **Key-Workers**

We operate a keyworker system for all children that attend our pre-school service. Apart from the older children attending Gym Club, each child that attends Footprints has a designated staff member (keyworker) assigned to them, providing a range of responsibilities:

- The first point of contact for families with any questions or concerns
- Develop, maintain and share with families the child's development folder
- Work with the child and family to develop a programme that is specific to the child's individual needs
- Maintain accurate family contact details
- Contribute to and provide reports regarding each child's progress
- Attend multi-disciplinary meetings
- Complete regular reviews of your child's aims
- Liaise with the professionals that are involved in supporting the child
- Maintain regular contact with the family if the child is unable to attend our service for a significant period due to illness
- Provide emotional support and information to the family

### **A keyworker cannot:**

- Support the child or family outside of regular working hours
- Provide advocacy support
- Provide counselling support
- Be a lead professional for a child transitioning to School or Nursery
- Attend hospital/clinic appointments with the child and family

We are unable to provide reports or participate in any meetings for children accessing these projects, although we can provide a copy of your child's individual aims to external agencies.

## **Attendance and Reporting Absences**

**We know that life with a child who needs extra help is challenging and that last-minute changes to plans are sometimes unavoidable. We understand this but ask that if you can't attend for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible by sending a message using our text service: 07398977483, including your child's name. We spend time preparing for your visit.**

### **When your child is ill**

*A runny nose in isolation is not a reason for exclusion, but if in conjunction with other symptoms such as cough, temp, sore throat, or generally feeling unwell, we advise you to stay at home.*

When deciding if your child is well enough to come, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is your child well enough to do the activities of the session? If not, keep them at home.
- Does your child have a contagious condition? If so, keep your child at home.
- Would you take a day off work if you had this condition? If so, keep them at home.

### **When not to bring your child:**

- High temperature (over 37.8 C).
- Vomiting and diarrhoea. You can resume sessions 48-hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea.
- Tonsillitis. Your GP will advise.
- Impetigo. Your child can only attend after having treatment for at least 48-hours.
- Chickenpox. Your child can only return when all the blisters have fully burst and dried.
- Measles. Your GP will advise.
- Mumps. Your GP will advise.
- Scarlet Fever. Your GP will advise.
- Slapped cheek syndrome. Your GP will advise.

You can download our [Covid policy](#) and [Infectious Diseases Policy](#) on our website.

## **Family Contributions**

As an independent charity that strives to deliver the best form of Conductive Education to your children, we, like other charities, face tough financial challenges. There are increasingly growing demands on trusts and foundations and less money to go round.

Previously offering a free service, our Trustees took the difficult decision in 2016 to ask families for a financial contribution towards their sessions at Footprints, helping us deliver the quality of education and support that your child and you as parents deserve.

**The costs outlined below are the subsidised minimum monthly amount. In reality, each session you attend costs £101.88 per child.**

**This note sets out our policy from April 2020:**

### **Family contributions and payment**

- **Preschool - £32.50 per month** (covers £10 per session or £390 per annum)
- **Gym Club - £32.50 per month** (covers £10 per session or £390 per annum)
- **Speech and Language - £28.35 per month** (covers £10 per session or £340 per annum)

**The above contributions are per family rather than per child.** Therefore, the cost for families with two or more children in need of our service is the same as those with one.

As a charity, we fundraise to cover the remainder of the actual cost of providing a service. Therefore, where possible, we encourage families to contribute more than the minimum monthly amount and set up a standing order for an amount with which they feel comfortable - *this is a request to help support our costs and is not mandatory.*

## **Trial periods, cancellations and absence**

The initial consultation and first session are provided free of charge.

Contributions are per month and are non-refundable, even if a session is cancelled or your child is unable to attend. Exceptional cases for refunds will be considered by our Trustees (for example, long-term health problems). Trustees will also consider a refund to parents if Footprints CEC cancels a significant number of sessions in one term, but this is at the Board's discretion.

Because of the nature of our services, our policy is that **after the first free session** families contribute to their place, not for each session they attend. We cannot refund sessions missed through illness or for other reasons, save in exceptional circumstances at the trustees' discretion. If a child has been unable to attend for health reasons for more than one term, we will consider this on a case by case basis.

## **Extra Sessions**

We occasionally have extra spaces in some of our sessions when children move on to school, and we are waiting for new children to start. We will charge additional sessions at the usual rate of family contributions. If you would be interested in attending more than one session per week, please let your key worker know, and your name will be included on a list to be offered a place when it becomes available.

## **Financial assistance**

**We aim to work in partnership with some other charities and networks, and we encourage families to talk to one of our staff regarding trusts and foundations that could potentially fund a child's place or other costs, or if they wish to take a break for financial reasons.**

If parents would like to discuss family contributions, they can talk to a member of the team or email us at [enquiries@footprintscec.org](mailto:enquiries@footprintscec.org).



## **Does your child have a personal budget?**

**It may be worth talking to the lead professional completing your assessments about Footprints Conductive Education Centre. You may be able to spend your budget towards these family contributions as they provide a health and educational benefit to your child and family.**



Donations help to keep our service running for your family and others like you, and we'd very much appreciate any further support you could offer us while your child attends.

We want to ensure the contributions fund our services, so to minimise administrative costs, we ask that families pay by standing order. Please set up a standing order by visiting your bank or using online banking at home. Unfortunately, we cannot invoice because of the administration time and cost.

To help us track payments, we ask that the child's surname and initials be used as a reference. In addition, we ask that the standing order leaves your account on the date of your second session (first fee-paying session) for the month in advance.

### **Arrangements for statutory partners**

- We anticipate that 88% of our expenditure will still be met by generous fundraisers, donors, grants, trusts and foundations. Money is donated in good faith for our charitable activity, not to subsidise other organisations.
- On the rare occasion when a statutory partner makes a referral and takes on responsibility for the family contribution, we ask that they meet us halfway, paying 50% of the actual cost per session (**£101.88**).
- We must minimise costs, so if financial regulations prevent payment by standing order, an invoice can be issued per term, payable in advance.
- From 1st April 2020, the monthly charges to **statutory agencies** for our Pre-School service will be: £163.93 per month (i.e. £50.44 per session or £1,967.16 per annum)

# Policies and Procedures

## Data Protection/Confidentiality

The types of personal data that Footprints Conductive Education Centre may be required to handle includes information about current, past and prospective service users, supporters, suppliers and others with whom we communicate.

- The personal data, which may be held on paper or a computer or other media, is subject to certain legal safeguards specified in the Data Protection Act 1998 ('DPA'), the General Data Protection Regulation ('GDPR') and other regulations (together Data Protection Legislation).
- Confidentiality is respecting organisations, groups and individuals by not divulging information considered sensitive or inappropriate. However, Footprints CEC expects staff, trustees and volunteers to breach confidentiality if someone said they intended to hurt themselves or another person or if anyone discloses an intention to carry out a terrorist act.
- Information we collect throughout our relationship. This information relates to your child and their development while using the service; photos and videos of [your child's] progress or updated contact details and information shared by other professionals working with your family.
- We occasionally take images and videos to promote Footprints CEC and its services. A consent form allowing us to use pictures, quotes, and videos will be available at your consultation.
- We are committed to protecting your personal information. Download our data protection policy - <https://www.footprintscec.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/05/Data-Protection-Policy-2018.pdf>
- Download our privacy statement <https://www.footprintscec.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Privacy-Statement-Fair-processing-Notice-2018.pdf>

## **Health and Safety**

- Footprints CEC has an in-depth working Health and Safety policy which all staff and volunteers adhere to while here on our premises. While we take every step to ensure your visit to Footprints is safe, it is essential to remember that health and safety are everyone's responsibility.
- Fire escape routes are signposted, and designated fire marshals are on site. It is essential to take notice of these during your time at Footprints CEC. If the fire alarm should sound, the fire marshall will ensure you leave the building safely and promptly via the fire escape.
- First aid - all of our education team are trained as 'first-aiders'. If you or your child has an injury while on the premises, the staff will provide adequate first aid, and we will fill out an accident form and ask you to sign it. If your child arrives at Footprints with an existing injury, please let the staff know so they can fill out the appropriate paperwork (and you can sign it).
- If you are bringing medication for your child to sessions, we ask that it be correctly labelled, stored in our locked cabinet throughout the session, and taken home at the end of the session.

## **Safeguarding Children**

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Footprints fully recognise its responsibilities for protecting and safeguarding the welfare of all children. We will work closely with families and co-operate fully with other agencies to take all reasonable steps to minimise the risks of harm to a child or young person's well-being.
- Where we have concerns about the welfare of children and young people, we will take appropriate action to address those concerns by working to agreed procedures with families and our partner agencies.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Footprints recognise that every human being, regardless of gender, age, ethnic origin, refugee status, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, education, religious beliefs, geographical location, caring commitments, class, employment status, mental or physical health problems, HIV or AIDS status, has a right to equal recognition, treatment and opportunities. Footprints will promote equal opportunities in all aspects of its work.

## Fundraising

As previously mentioned, we are a small independent charity, and we are always looking for new and exciting ideas to support us in the continuing struggle to raise funds.

We understand many of the additional challenges you may be facing as a parent with a child who needs extra help.

However, if you feel you have extra energy, there are many ways you can become involved in supporting us. These include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting our charity ball
- Volunteering at fundraising events
- Donating raffle/auction prizes
- Introducing our fundraiser to some of your contacts who might be interested in supporting us
- Taking on a sponsored event, such as a charity run or skydive
- Organising a fundraising event
- Nominating us to become a charity of the year with your employer, your local pub or supermarket

**Please contact Sophie Underwood with any fundraising ideas or suggestions – [sophie.underwood@footprintscec.org](mailto:sophie.underwood@footprintscec.org).**

We are grateful for the support we receive. Our extensive family of supporters continues to grow, and we certainly couldn't do any of this without them.

For anyone that wishes to donate or raise funds for our small charity, you can find **Footprints Conductive Education Centre** on the **JustGiving** site (a reminder to ask for/or add GiftAid - it means an additional 25% to us!):

<https://bit.ly/FundraiseForFootprintsCEC>

## **Who to speak to if you have a question, concern or complaint.**

It is advisable to make contact with your child's key worker as the first port of call. Usually, they will be able to help you with most queries and will try their best to find a suitable solution for all involved.

You can also speak to our Business and Charity Manager -

**Stephen Frew**

**0115 9586641**

**[stephen.frew@footprintscec.org](mailto:stephen.frew@footprintscec.org)**

We hope this gives you an insight into life with Footprints Conductive Education Centre and answers some of your questions.

We are looking forward to building a fantastic relationship with you and your family, and hope that your journey with Footprints begins here.

**[www.footprintscec.org](http://www.footprintscec.org)**