

Stepping Stones Pre-School



Welcome back...

We've had a great start to the term, the new and returning children are getting used to Pre-School life. Thank you all for your support whilst we are settling the children in.

Afternoon sessions...

Afternoon sessions are still available, so if you would like your child to attend an afternoon with us please contact Tracey via email to find out availability. The cost of the sessions will be the same, £18.50 & the afternoons will be structured in the same way as the morning. Similarly, if you know someone who is looking for a Pre-School place, please let them know about us.

Staff News...

I have now completed my Early Years Teaching Status & my Post Graduate Certificate in Early Years, although graduation won't be until next May. Thank you for all of your support over the past year. Michelle has completed her Level 3 award in 'Understanding Early Years' - congratulations Michelle!

WOW moments...

Often children behave differently at home & at Pre-School. We want to get the most accurate picture of your child and what they are learning...Look out for our WOW moments section on the EYFS board, we want to know what your children are doing outside of Pre-School, and if they have done something to make you say 'WOW' we want to hear about it, so that we can plan to support your children's learning in the most accurate way.

Stepping Stones Library...

We have a Stepping Stones library for you to borrow books located in the annex. There is a book signing in/out system, and you can keep the book for up to 2 weeks. Reading with your child at an early age will support their own reading skills as they grow and develop.

Bikes, scooters & buggies...

Please do not bring children's own bikes or scooters to Stepping Stones. We want to make the most of every bit of play space we can, so we would prefer that buggies are not left here. However, if you are unable to take your buggy home we ask that no food or small items are left in your buggy, and you leave it in the space behind the entrance/exit gate.

End of the session feedback...

The end of the session can be a very busy time, and we know that you are eager to collect your child and hear how they have got on in the session. To ensure you get feedback about your child's session, please wait and speak with the member of staff at the side door. Then parents can collect their child from the carpet and exit through the annex. Collection time can be anxious for children who are waiting for their parents. The end of the session group time aims to engage children so that they are not feeling anxious, we know that you are very excited and proud of your little ones, but ask that you are mindful of this by not disrupting the group time on the carpet, and saving your celebratory hug for the annex!

Mobile phones...

Please remember that we have a 'No Mobile Phone' policy for the whole site and ensure that phone calls are finished before coming to collect your child.

Charity status...

For those of you who are not aware, Stepping Stones is a charity if you are interested in helping to raise money for Stepping Stones, there are some easy ways to get involved:

Our donation box: Many of our families are in receipt of Early Education Funding. You may not know this but, the rate the government pay is £4.00 per hour, which does not cover our costs. In the annex we have a green donation box if you would like to make a voluntary donation to contribute to buying resources to support children's learning and development.

Donation matching... A large number of companies offer their employees a "donation-matching" scheme, whereby any donation you make to a charitable organisation, they will match your contribution. It is easy to set up, you just ask your company for a matching gift form, and send it completed and signed with your donation. Any donation is gratefully received as it enables us to buy extra resources and equipment for your child and children to enjoy while they are with us.

Last term we raised over £400 in a sports days event and this enabled us to buy a much needed new water tray!

You can help raise money for us whilst shopping online through Easyfundraising.

Easyfundraising info:

This is our cause page where you can see how many people have signed up and how much we've raised: <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/steppingstonessurbiton/>

This is the donation reminder tool, so that each time you are shopping on a page that you can donate, a handy reminder pops up! : <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/raise-more/donation-reminder/?v=b>

And this is the app, however it looks like it's not yet available on

Android: <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/raise-more/easyfundraising-app/>

Books...

Regency Book Shop (in Surbiton High Street), also support Stepping Stones by having a wish list open with them. Any books purchased from the Stepping Stones wish list are eligible for a 25% discount.



Amazon wish list...

Alternatively, we also have setup a wish list with Amazon to purchase resources to help support your children's learning and development. We currently have a wish list for books, and I will continue to create new wish lists as you can imagine we need to restock resources regularly! Perhaps instead of bringing in cakes for your child's birthday- you might like to purchase a book from our wish list for the children to share? Here is the link for our wish list: <http://www.amazon.co.uk/registry/wishlist/1SG3UAOYJBZ9H>

Thank you/reminders & requests

Welcome sign...

There is a notice in the annexe for creating a 'welcome' sign together, if you speak another language, please tell us what it is, and how to say 'welcome' ☺.

Tissues...

As the sniffles increase. we are running low on tissues! Please could you bring some in to try and help keep the germs at bay!



Snack...

Thank you for keeping our snack bowl topped up with fruit, vegetables and breadsticks. We would like snack time to be as healthy as possible for the children, so we are asking that flavoured corn snacks and yoghurt covered raisins etc are kept for your child's enjoyment at home. There are surprising amounts of salt and sugar in snacks aimed at children, this website has some useful tips to make healthy sugar and salt swaps for your children's snacks: <http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/change-for-life.aspx>



Dates for your diary...

Half term...

We are closed for half term **26th October – 30th October**. Tuesday 6th October is an inset day and we will not be open.

End of Autumn Term...

Term ends on **Thursday 17th December**.

People who help us...

We have some special visitors coming to pre-school next week, to help us learn about 'people who help us'. The police are coming to talk about Stranger Danger and how the police help keep us safe on **29th September** (AM&PM session).

Parent induction & information session...

Thursday 8th October 7.30-9pm we are holding an information & induction session. This is going to be a great chance for you to get to know how Stepping Stones works, ask any questions & give any ideas ☺. Please do come along. The member of staff manning the gate will be taking names of parents who will be attending. Unfortunately you cannot bring children to the session.

Welly Walk...

Tuesday 13th October at 10am & 1pm we will be going on a Welly Walk to the Fishponds. We will be doing an Autumn Treasure hunt to see what we can find & look at the Autumn changes in the environment. We will collect some Autumn leaves/acorns/conkers and we will use them to create a collage the following week. All children and parents are invited, even if Tuesday is not your usual day. We will need lots of parent helpers, so please keep your eyes peeled for the letter that will be coming home about the trip.



Coffee morning...

We are holding a parents coffee morning on **Thursday 19th November** at **8.45am-10.30am**-please note this a change from the original date sent out in our Term Dates. It will be held at Surbiton Children's Centre. We will provide tea, coffee and of course cakes & biscuits ☺ & you will have the opportunity to get to know other parents & enjoy the opportunity of a well deserved cuppa!



Toddler Time...

Toddler Time will take place over a week every term (this term it will be week **commencing 7th December**), the purpose of Toddler Time will be to see how your child interacts at Stepping Stones, see the kind of small group work your child usually takes part in with us and get to know other parents. The play session will be led by your child's Key Person, this will last around 20minutes, afterwards you can stay and have a coffee and a chat with other parents until collection time. Please see sign up sheets closer to the time.

A focus on child development at home... Singing with children

Listening to and joining in with songs when children are able to plays an important role in a child's early education learning process. Songs involve the use of words and, as such, can help with a child's understanding of language, words, speaking and even writing. To help your child get to know our routine here are some songs we sing every day & some of our favourites! **Some of our favourite songs:**

Hello Everyone:

Hello everyone,
Hello everyone,
It's nice to see you today!
(Repeat twice)



Goodbye Everyone:

Goodbye everyone,
Goodbye everyone,
It was nice to see you today
(Repeat twice)

Twinkle, Twinkle Chocolate Bar:

Twinkle, twinkle chocolate bar,
My daddy drives a rusty car,
Start up the engine,
Pull out the choke,
Off we go in a puff of smoke!

Twinkle, twinkle chocolate bar,
My daddy drives a rusty car!

(To the tune of Twinkle,
Twinkle Little Star)



Crabs and Starfish



Crabs and starfish,
Crabs and starfish,
Big sharks too,
Big sharks too,

Octopus and penguins,
Octopus and penguins,
Dolphins too,
Dolphins too!

(to the tune on Frère Jacques)

What we're learning at Stepping Stones...

Theme: All about me

Personal, Social and Emotional development	Communication & Language
<p>We have been learning to use our parents and key people as secure bases to settle into Stepping Stones.</p> <p> Talk to your child about their key person & read a book on feelings, about families, or starting pre-school.</p>	<p>We have been playing Mr Tongue to try and build up children's mouth muscles.</p> <p>I have attached Mr Tongue to this newsletter for you to have a go home! </p>
Physical development	Literacy
<p>We have been using different kinds of tools to strengthen children's pincer grip, such as tweezers, threading objects, scissors, cooking utensils.</p> <p> Encourage children to make marks on paper using different sized chalks/crayons/pens</p>	<p>We have been encouraging children to practice their writing skills by giving them a reason to write, for example, a shopping list, plans and clipboards in the builders area.</p> <p>Write a shopping list together at home. </p>
Mathematics	Understanding the world
<p>We have been learning the language of size and shape by using small and large building tools, and building very tall or very small towers.</p> <p> Point out different sizes at lunch/dinner time, who has the biggest plate or smallest cup?</p>	<p>We have been enjoying playing with small world toys such as trains, and telling stories about places & journeys.</p> <p>Take some photos of places you have been to put in your child's special book. </p>
Expressive Arts and Design	<p> = Ideas for learning you can extend at home</p>
<p>Children have had the opportunity to experiment with paint/collage materials/use scissors so that we can observe their interests.</p> <p> Encourage your child to be creative with their art work, try painting leaves/apple printing.</p>	

*Best wishes,
Sarah & the Stepping Stones Team*