

# Stepping Stones Pre-School

## Welcome back...

We hope you all enjoyed a lovely half term break, it's lovely having the children back with us!

## Staff news...

As you may have seen, Steph is still with us...We are still recruiting for Steph's replacement, so we are lucky to have her for a while longer! We will keep you posted as to when we have found a suitable candidate. We have a student, Deepika, who is studying her level 2 in Children's Learning and Development who will be with us every Tuesday for the AM & PM session. Please help us to make her feel welcome.

I am off to do my first Key Stage One week's placement at Lime Tree School next week and in Sweden the week after... so I will have lots to report back to you on upon my return!

We had our interview with the Surrey Comet, and the paper will be released this Friday so look out for some familiar faces if you do buy the Surrey Comet.

## Pick up routine...

We have recently changed our pick up routine, as we had some feedback that the annexe was getting very congested. We would warmly welcome your feedback on the recent change.

## Questionnaire...

As a committee run Pre-School, parents views are at the forefront of what we do. We are sending out a questionnaire (online), and we would love for as many of you as possible to tell us what you think about Stepping Stones. Please find the link to the online questionnaire, in the newsletter email and fill it in by Friday 1st May.

## Pupil Premium...

You may have heard that Pupil Premium is now available for eligible early years children. This is great news for us as it means that we are able to access funding to further support your children's learning and development. Attached to the newsletter email, there is a letter explaining the funding and who is eligible. Please could **all parents** fill in and return the attached form by **24th April**.

## Garden help...

We would like to request some help from our parents with our side garden over the Summer Term. As we have a 'U' shaped garden, we find that it is difficult to have enough adults in each area to support the children's learning and development. So we are asking for parents to come and help out during the session to help us manage the space, and give our children more access and learning opportunities outside. If you are interested in coming and helping during the sessions, any time, any day, please see the signup sheet in the annexe. Thank you!

## Drop off time...

AM session- please ensure you are here by 9.10am- at the latest. We would like to allow the children into the garden by 9.15am, especially as now we can enjoy the warmer weather. We also try to use the beginning of the session for children to do small focus groups with their Key Person, so please if possible could you ensure you arrive by this time so that we can support your children's learning in this way.



## Thank you/reminders & requests

### Tissues...

Please remember to bring in some boxes of tissues for us ☺

### Snack...

Thank you for keeping our snack bowl topped up with fruit, vegetables and breadsticks.



### Drop off time...

AM Session-please ensure you arrive by 9.10am at the **latest**. This is to ensure that the session is not disrupted. Thank you.

### Sunny Weather...

At long last the sun has got it's hat on! Let's enjoy it whilst it lasts! To ensure we are keeping children safe in the sun, please ensure you apply sun cream before coming to Stepping Stones. Please keep a labelled bottle of sun cream in your child's bag and a labelled sun hat.

### Shoes...

Please ensure that your child is wearing closed toe shoes to Pre-School, this is for health & safety reasons.

## Dates for your diary...

### Toddler Time...

Toddler Time is a play session run by your child's key person. Key group sessions will take place week commencing **27th April**. Please see sign up sheets in the annexe.

### People who help us...

We have some special visitors coming to pre-School over April & May, to help us learn about 'people who help us'. So far we have the police coming to talk about Stranger Danger on **20th April (AM&PM session)**, a dental health **29th April (AM&PM)**. And some of our lovely parents who are doctors, and a football coach have agreed to come in and speak with the children. If you would like to come in & help, or know of anyone who would like to come in as part of our topic... Please let Charis know.



### Fire station visit...

**Thursday 21st May** we are going on an outing to Surbiton Fire Station to support our 'people who help us' topic. We will need as many parent helpers as possible, so please let the member of staff on the gate know (manned with the clipboard) if you will be coming along, closer to the time.

### Coffee morning...

Our Summer Term Coffee morning will be on **Monday 1st June** from 8.45am at Surbiton Children's Centre.

### Behaviour management workshop...

We are hosting a workshop on behaviour management, after some requests from parents. **Thursday 4th June at 7.30pm**, further details will be provided closer to the time.

## A focus on child development at home...

- Did you know this gloriously **squishy, colourful, messy** stuff is fantastic for your child's development?... better still, you probably have the ingredients in the contents of your kitchen cupboards! It's great for fine motor development: The malleable properties of play dough make it fun for investigation and exploration as well as secretly building up strength in all the tiny hand muscles and tendons, making them ready for pencil and scissor control later on. As part of simple, tactile play it can be squashed, squeezed, rolled, flattened, chopped, cut, scored, raked, punctured, poked and shredded! Each one of these different actions aids fine motor development in a different way, not to mention hand-eye co ordination and general concentration. And as soon as you add another element to it (such as lemon essence, googly eyes, straws, buttons and beads), the list of benefits and creative play possibilities continues to grow!

### What do I need? (Ingredients):

- 1/2 cup of salt
- 1 cup of water
- 2 tablespoons of cream of tartar
- 1 cup of flour
- 1 tablespoon of oil
- Food colouring

### How do I do it? (Directions):

- Mix the flour, salt, cream of tartar and oil in a pan.
- Mix the water with the food colouring.
- Add the water/colour-mix to the other ingredients, stir well.
- Start kneading. (the dough will be hot, so mind your hands, when its cool enough you can hand over the ropes to your child!)
- When desired texture is achieved, the play dough is finished, enjoy!

## What we're learning at Stepping Stones...

Personal, Social and Emotional development	Communication & Language
<p>We have been focussing on helping children to learn to share and work with other children, by setting problems for children to solve. e.g. build a fence to separate cows &amp; pigs in the farm.</p>	<p>We are focussing on children's interests of playing with play dough, and extending their language by adding scents and textures to the play dough.</p>
<p> Set a problem for children to solve at home with you, e.g. build a house for Teddy.</p>	<p> Introduce new words to your children's vocabulary... it's a 'glorious' day!</p>
Physical development	Literacy
<p>We are doing obstacle races to support children with doing a range of movements, e.g. run, jump, hop!</p>	<p>We are focussing on children's early recognition of letters by matching object and initial letter sounds, e.g. 'S' and a strawberry, sunshine.</p>
<p> Can you run, hop or skip to Pre-School?!</p>	<p> Talk to children about their special sound, e.g. 'D' for Daniel, pronouncing it 'duh' rather than 'dee'.</p>
Mathematics	Understanding the world
<p>We are having an ice cream shop- counting, money, scoops and using the till to recognise numerals.</p>	<p>We are encouraging children to understand growth and decay by planting sunflower seeds.</p>
<p> Point out special numbers e.g. what number is your house?</p>	<p> Look at the changes outside... blossom on the trees, new spring and summer flowers coming out.</p>
Expressive Arts and Design	<p> = Ideas for learning you can extend at home</p>
<p>We are looking at different textures by having a feely tray.</p>	
<p> Talk about different textures at home, is the carpet rough or smooth?</p>	

*Best wishes, Sarah & the Stepping Stones Team*