

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, £19.50 & 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...

Hopefully most of you have met our new Deputy Manager **Caroline Smith**. Caroline has lots of Early Years experience, and has most recently been working with reception age children at school, so we are looking forward to drawing on her expertise as we prepare children for their next stage in school life. Please help us to make her feel welcome!

I am going to be starting a new position in October as a lecturer and program leader of the BA Foundation Degree for South Thames College, so I will be splitting my time between Stepping Stones and the college. I am looking forward to using this experience to enhance our staff training at Stepping Stones too.

Sadly, I need to inform you that **Nives** will be leaving Stepping Stones after half term. Nives has been with us for 7 years and is an asset to our team, we will be so sad to see her go. Nives is going to take some time to figure out her next venture, and we wish her the VERY best of luck! We will be recruiting for Nives' position, so if you know of anyone who may be suitable, please give them our details.

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 (that the children may pick up), 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: children's learning and development.



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

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 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.

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. We tend to get LOTS of apples and we would love the enhance the children's experiences of different fruits and vegetables, so if you could support us in providing a wide range of fruits and vegetables that would be most appreciated. 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>

Mud Kitchen...

A **BIG** thank you to a grandparent of a child who attended with us last year who made us a fabulous mud kitchen after our request. It looks absolutely amazing (check out the photos on our Facebook page!). We can't wait to get into the nature garden with the children and make the most of it! All we need now are some pots and pans to help make mud pies and such like! So if you have any old pots & pans, spoons etc, which you would like to donate to our mud kitchen, please let us know!



will gratefully receive them!



Dates for your diary...

Parent induction & information session...

Wednesday 21st September 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.

Children's Centre Manager visit...

Teresa is the manager of Surbiton Children's Centre and will be around during drop off of Wednesday 28th September AM & PM Session to give you some information of what you can access at our fantastic Children's Centre.

Half term...

Monday 17th October is an inset day and we will not be open.

We are closed for half term **24th October – 28th October**.

Tuesday 22nd November is an inset day and we will not be open.

Autumn Treasure Hunt...

Wednesday 19th October at 10am & 1pm We will be doing an Autumn Treasure (in the spirit of the treasure hunt, hopefully it will feel more like Autumn than Summer by then!) hunt to the Fishponds 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 Wednesday 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 **Friday 4th November at 8.45am-11.45am**. It will be held at Surbiton Children's Centre. We will provide tea, coffee & biscuits ☺ & you will have the opportunity to get to know other parents & enjoy the opportunity of a well deserved cuppa! Please feel free to bring little ones along & dip in & out of the coffee morning, and not stay for the duration. You are welcome to stay at the Children's Centre until pick up time, but the member of staff will need to come back to Stepping Stones at 10.30am.

Parent Consultations...

Over the academic year we schedule 3 Parent Consultations. One in the Autumn, Spring & one in the Summer Term, this is an opportunity for you to meet with your child's Key Person on a formal 1:1 basis to discuss your child's progress, this term's consultations will be held on the weeks commencing **5th & 12th December**.

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

Listening to and joining in with songs when children are able to play 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 too!

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)

Cuddly Koalas,
Cuddly Koalas,
Possums too,
Possums too!



Wallabies and wombats,
Wallabies and wombats,
Kang- a - roo
Kang- a roo!
(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, or back into Pre-School routine.</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 learning new vocabulary as we make play dough ourselves e.g. full, empty, enough, more etc.</p> <p>Try using these new words when playing in the bath at home. </p>
Physical development	Literacy
<p>We have been using our gross motor skills to climb the WESCO (climbing equipment outside), and changing the way we move our bodies as we change the shape of equipment.</p> <p> Encourage children to move their bodies in different ways, can you bump down the stairs instead of walking?</p>	<p>We have been encouraging children to practice their writing skills by giving them a reason to write, for example, invitations to a birthday party.</p> <p>Encourage your child to make marks in birthday cards you send to friends. </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> Put your family's shoes in a row and see who has the biggest & the smallest feet.</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 over the Summer Holidays to put in your child's special book. </p>
Expressive Arts and Design	<p> = Ideas for learning you can extend at home</p>
<p>We have been creating play dough and allowing the children to choose the scent and colour that we make.</p> <p> Talk to your child about the choices that they make when selecting colours and materials for art work at home.</p>	

*Best wishes,
Sarah & the Stepping Stones Team*