

# Stepping Stones Pre-School

## Staff news...

As we have still not found a suitable replacement for Nives, she is staying on with us on a bank cover basis until we find a new Early Years Practitioner. However, please be aware that Nives will not be here Monday 14th November- Friday 18th November, and some other dates within the next month, which we have arranged alternative cover for, provision has been made for other practitioners to support with the observations on children's learning and assessment so that there is minimal disruption to children. Once we have recruited for Nives replacement, there will be a formal handover and the opportunity for parents to meet with the new key person. The team are kept up to date with all children's learning and assessment through our weekly planning meetings and regular supervisions, hopefully knowing this will alleviate any concerns that you may have with regard to the handover, however, if you have any questions in the meantime, please feel free to discuss these with myself or Caroline. We have also been recruiting for another practitioner as our numbers have increased and we have taken on Katy who will be working both sessions on a Monday, a Tuesday & Wednesday afternoon and Friday mornings. Katy has vast experience within the Early Years and is NNEB trained, she has worked in day nurseries and as a nanny. Please help us to make her feel welcome.

## Autumn interest table...

Thank you for bringing things in to add to our Autumn interest table, please do continue to bring items in you find on your way to Pre-school to help us learn about the seasons. As we move closer towards Winter and Christmas, we will change the table. Please help us learn about how you celebrate Christmas within your own culture by bringing in items for our interest table.

**Coats and wellies...** As the weather begins to change, please ensure that you provide a warm and **waterproof** coat for your child and a pair of wellington boots- perfect for splashing in those Autumn puddles!

## Lunch Club...

In response to previous parent questionnaires and requests from parents this term, we are going to be trialling some lunch club options. Frequently parents have expressed an interest in attending a lunch club to be able to link the AM & PM session, or just having an extra hour at Stepping Stones so children can have the opportunity to eat lunch with their friends. There has been a lot of work happening 'behind scenes' to come up with a workable system, but our session times and the physical space mean that setting up a lunch club is not as easy as it may sound. We are going to try out a series of models and request feedback from parents, staff and children on the lunch club sessions. If they are successful then we will look to roll out lunch club out as a more permanent feature of what we offer. There is a letter coming out to you over the next week where you can register your interest.

## Parent Rep...

During our recent coffee morning we were looking for some Parent Representatives to volunteer to organise the coffee mornings in future, as well as any other parent socials, and offer any help with Stepping Stones outings activities, and fundraising ideas. Please let Sarah or Caroline know if you are interested in the role. We are doing some fundraising in this half on the Autumn Term (see dates for diaries) and would love some help with this!

## Parking...

We are well aware that the parking within the locality of the Pre-School is very difficult, so we do try to encourage parents to walk whenever possible. As we are part of the local community here on the Alpha Estate, I'm sure that you can appreciate it's really important that we work together with the residents for the benefit of the pre-school and the people living here. As well as wanting to maintain a good relationship with the residents, we also have to ensure that the children's safety is paramount.



There have been occasions where the pavement has been blocked by parking, meaning that children have to walk in the road, which is particularly busy at pick up times, and therefore even more dangerous for children. In addition, parking for Alum Court is reserved for residents only, so you are not able to park in the bays that are reserved for Alum Court residents, and parents are not allowed to park in Surbiton Children's Centre Nursery car park.

There are several free roads that you can park on within a **5 minute** walk of Stepping Stones that you may not be aware of:

- King Charles Road
- Browns Road
- Christ Church Road
- The Avenue
- Avenue South
- Smith Street
- Alexandra Drive
- Berrylands

And a little closer but may be congested with Surbiton Children's Centre Nursery traffic:

- Alpha Road
- Britannia Road

Whilst we know that these are not in the immediate vicinity and they won't be a convenient option for everybody, we are asking those of you who can to support us to ensure the safety of all the children and to support us to have a good working relationship with the local residents of the Alpha Estate.

### Thank you/reminders & requests

#### Wellies...

We keep a stock of spare wellington boots here at Stepping Stones for unexpected down pours, which results in some fabulous puddle jumping, however our stock is running low, we have lots of small sizes, but unfortunately these don't fit many of the children. Please could you donate any wellies that you no longer have use for. In addition, please ensure that if it is a rainy day you dress your child for wet weather play and supply them with their own wellies to keep in their bag. We venture out to play in all weathers, and to support children's learning it is essential that they are dressed appropriately for the ever changing learning environment.

#### Tissues...

Please can parents ensure that whenever there is not a member of staff on the gate that they shut the gate properly; the metal plates must be touching and the top metal arm needs to be secured. This is extremely important to ensure that the children are kept safe.



#### Snack...

As previously mentioned, we would like snack time to be as healthy as possible for the children. 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>

When unhealthy snacks are brought in for the children, e.g. crisps, we will not serve them at snack time, so please do not bring them in, and leave them for your enjoyment outside of Stepping Stones.



#### Campfire...

With all of the wonderful Halloween and bonfire activities happening outside of Stepping Stones the children have been brimming with excitement about all the festivities. To further support the children's learning next week (commencing 14/11/16), we are going to have hot chocolate around a campfire. Bryn, the Chair of Stepping Stones is lending us his tripod campfire that he uses with the Scout group, (as well as being our Chair, Bryn is also Chair of a local Scout group). We have stringently risk assessed the activity and in groups of no more than 5 children, and an adult ratio of 2:5, we are going to do some signing and have hot chocolate (or warm milk) around the campfire.

You are more than welcome to come in to the session at any time, so just a reminder that, if you would like to come in and take part in this activity, it will be happening Tuesday-Thursday AM & PM sessions. We will offer every child the chance to take part in this activity, however if they or you would prefer not to take part, just let us know.

### Pre-School Events...

It was lovely to see so many parents come and join us for the Autumn Treasure Hunt-thank you for attending. We do hope that you found our recent coffee morning enjoyable, thanks again to those who attended.

We also recently advertised a session on potty training at Surbiton Children's Centre, as we have had lots of conversations with parents who wanted more support in this area. It was held by Sarah Edwards, the Children's Centre's Health Visitor. If you wish to have talks held on any other topics, please do let me know and I will try to arrange that for you.

### 30 hours...

You may be aware that In September 2017 the government plans to introduce 30 hours of free Early Years Education to eligible families. Attached to this newsletter is a questionnaire that we are asking you to take part in and also a letter with further details about the 30 hour initiative.



## Dates for your diary

### Inset day...

We will be closed for both the AM & PM session on **Tuesday 22nd November**.

### Parent Consultations...

Parent consultations will commence **5th December**. Please do sign up for 1:1, 10minute appointment with your child's Key Person. The signup sheet will be in the annexe closer to the time.

### Fundraising...

We haven't got involved in raising money for big charities such as, Children In Need, previously, because you may not be aware, we are a charity ourselves. Stepping Stones is a not for profit organisation who gives places as a priority to families 'in need'; this may be a family who has a child with a special educational need or disability, families who have come to us via professional referral, and we give families priority who are eligible for 2 year old funding. But it seems a shame to miss out on all the fun! So this year we are doing our own fundraising for our own children on the fundraising days that other charities use- so that our children don't miss out on the festivities! So... On **Friday 18th November** (Children In Need day) we are asking you to 'wear your spots' and bring in a £1 to raise money for us. In addition, the past few years Save the Children's 'Christmas Jumper Day' has become hugely popular, this year we are going to raise money for Stepping Stones by wearing Christmas jumpers on **Friday 16th December**. If you would like to wear a Christmas jumper on Friday 16th December and help us raise some money, please get involved and bring in £1 for our donation box. The money raised will go towards paying for our fabulous Christmas party which we hope you will all come and enjoy!



### End of term...

Our last day of term is Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December. We look forward to welcoming you all back on Tuesday 3rd January.



### Stepping Stones Christmas Party!

**When:** Tuesday 20th December

**Time:** 2pm (prompt)-2.45pm



**What to wear:** Fancy dress or your favourite party outfit!

**Who:** Everyone! Parents and children are all invited. If Tuesday is your usual day then you can drop off as usual & parents can come back at 1.50pm if they wish. If Tuesday is not your usual day then we request that parents stay with children for the duration of the party and arrive at 1.50pm. This year we will be holding a Christmas raffle to raise money for Stepping Stones. If you work with anyone who would like to donate a prize for our raffle please let us know. More information about prizes and tickets will come out closer to the time.

# Curriculum-EYFS

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

Theme: Autumn

Personal, Social and Emotional development	Communication & Language
<p>We have been learning to take turns when speaking in a group.</p> <p> Use a tool to help children understand when it is their turn, for example, hold a teddy when it is their turn to talk.</p>	<p>We have been learning new words, in relation to Halloween &amp; bonfire night. The children have begun to use these words in conversations such as; crackle, bubble, whistle, pop.</p> <p>Extend your child's language by using a wide range of vocabulary in conversation with them at home. </p>
Physical development	Literacy
<p>Children have been pouring their own drinks at snack time.</p> <p> Let your child have a go at pouring their own drink at home... and even yours 😊.</p>	<p>We have been introducing new stories to children and encouraging them the guess what might happen next!</p> <p>See if your child can tell you their favourite bedtime story! </p>
Mathematics	Understanding the world
<p>We have been looking at shapes &amp; sizes and learning new vocabulary.</p> <p> Line up your family's shoes and talk about the different sizes.</p>	<p>We have been learning about different occupations by role playing hairdressers.</p> <p>Talk about the different jobs that people have and their different modes of transport; a bus driver, a, postman, recycling collectors. </p>
Expressive Arts and Design	<p> = Ideas for learning you can extend at home</p>
<p>Children have had the opportunity to role play in our home corner doing cooking or looking after dolly.</p> <p> Let them help you make tea or set the table so that they can rein act real life in their role play.</p>	

*Best wishes,  
Sarah & the Stepping Stones Team*