



# Newsletter Nov—Dec 2014



Check out our website for information, term dates and policies

[www.steppingstonespreschool.org.uk](http://www.steppingstonespreschool.org.uk)  
Tel: 01280 706553

## Welcome Back and Welcome to Our New Families

Our Autumn Term is well underway and we welcome back our existing children and new families to all of our different groups. There have been a few tears, but generally the children are settling in well.

### The Early Years Foundation Stage

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the Early Years and a child's experiences between birth and age 5 have a major impact for their future.

A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together, provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities.

At Stepping Stones we aim to provide:

- Quality and consistency to enable the child to make good progress whilst in our care
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents/carers
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

We do this by working within the Early Years Foundation Stage, which is:

Primary Areas of Learning

- 1) Communication and Language
- 2) Physical Development
- 3) Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- 4) Literacy
- 5) Mathematics
- 6) Understand of the World
- 7) Expressive Art and Design

As parents it is difficult for you to see this happening, as morning and afternoon pick up times only give you the opportunity to settle your child into the day or collect at the end of the session. We would like to remind you that you are always welcome to spend time with us, which will give you the opportunity to see how we deliver the Early Years Foundation. We use a number of methods; small key worker groups; circle time; large group work; outside play; child centred activities; adult lead activities; planned and spontaneous learning; one to one.

We also use a number of different pieces of equipment to do this (large, small, computers). We also have a number of educational DVDs we occasionally use such as :

Little Einsteins—teaches about countries, cultures, arts, music (Understanding of the World)

Number Jacks for early maths (Mathematics)

Mr Tumble looks at language and signing (Language and Communication)

Boogie Beebies—for indoor exercise and dance (Physical Development)

We use these DVDs in a controlled group and will use them within a 15-20 minute cycle. If you have any concerns about these DVDs you are more than welcome to view them with us, if you choose to take the opportunity to spend time with your child during sessions time or come and discuss with Kim Buckingham or Kim Martin.

### A Message from Our Committee

We hope everyone is settling in well and enjoying starting or being back at Stepping Stones. Volunteers from the Rotary Club and staff have been busy revamping the garden whilst we wait for planning permission for construction of the canopy, to enable us to use the garden more in all weathers.



Did you know that 95% of the brain's capacity is developed by age three.

### Current Term Dates

4 Nov—19 Dec

### Holiday Club

22, 23 Dec 2014, 2, 5 Jan 2015

First Day of Next Term:

Tue 6 January 2015

### Next Term Dates

6 January—13 February

Remember children love to play outside and we will still be doing this during the cold weather. Please ensure that they have sensible footwear, hat, gloves and scarf to be able to enjoy outside during the winter months.

### Diary

Term Invoices Issued	4 Nov
Week commencing	
Invoices due for payment	20 Nov
Bag2School Fundraiser	7 Nov
FOSSP Wine Tasting Evening at the Wine Bar	15 Nov
Creating Christmas	1 Dec
Preschool Christmas Show	11 Dec
FOSSP Santa Day	13 Dec
Christmas Party Day	16 Dec

## Spotlight on the Green Room

The new Playgroup children have been establishing relationships with their key workers, and the rest of the team, and getting to know the room and play equipment. They have been learning about transport and doing lots of role playing. Induction of our new Playgroup children will continue throughout next term, so the Green room will become a little noisier!

### 2.5 Year Checks

Over the next few months children who will be 2.5 years will have their health check at Stepping Stones, instead of with their Health Visitor in clinic. This has become very successful, following the pilot last year, and informative both for us and parents. Letters have been put in children's drawers with date and time of the review.

### Your View Counts

As parents your views are important to us, and we have a suggestion box in the room—please help us with ideas that you have to improve our service. We enjoy spending time with you and you are always welcome to spend time in the room getting to work alongside the team and seeing what your child does during the day. So when you ask them what they have been doing and they look blank or say nothing, you know better!

The Key Workers in the Green Room are:

Mrs Emma, Room Leader and SENCO

Mrs Clara, Early Years Practitioner L3

Miss Jess, Early Years Practitioner L3

Mrs Lisa, Early Years Practitioner L2

Miss Rachel, Early Years Practitioner L3

Miss Chenique, Early Years Practitioner L2

### 2 Year Funding

If you are in receipt of a number of benefits you may be entitled to access 15 hours per week government funding for your child. If you wish to find out more information about this then please contact the office or alternatively check Northamptonshire County Council's website and Eligibility Checker at [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk)

### Don't Forget Childcare Vouchers!!

Speak to your employer to see if they offer a childcare voucher scheme. You are entitled to a tax relief on up to £55 per week, and this is doubled if your partner is also eligible! Vouchers can be used to pay for childcare.

## Spotlight on the Red Room

Transition has gone well from our Playgroup to Preschool, and the children are beginning to understand roles, responsibilities, and boundaries. They will continue to develop with the support of the Early Years Team and are already showing maturity in all aspects of learning progress—which is high.

You will see that there is a difference in the way the EY team presents learning opportunities to the children from Playgroup, and this is to encourage more independence and confidence in their learning and development.

The Key Workers in the Red Room are:

Mrs Kim, Room Leader and Deputy Manager, Lead SENCO

Miss Becky, Room Leader

Mrs Sam, Early Years Practitioner L3

Mrs Vicky, Early Years Practitioner L2

Mrs Jill, Early Years Assistant

### 3- 4 Year Old Funding

Every child who will turn 3 will be entitled to 570 hours per year (15 hours per week) government funded childcare. If you have not been contacted about taking up your entitlement for this year please contact Teresa.

All children who turn 3 on or before 31 Dec will be entitled to their 15 hours from the January term. All newly funded parents will need to sign a parental funding contract before the end of this term and provide their child's birth certificate or passport, and a copy of a utility bill or bank statement as ID.

All existing funded parents will need to re-sign their contracts for the new January term by the end of December. Please see the office at your earliest convenience to do this.

## Spotlight on Breakfast Club & Afterschool

Welcome to our new children and welcome back to our existing children. You will see that there have been a number of changes to our Out of School provision over the summer.

We aim to provide a healthy breakfast to ensure that the children are ready to start the day. This has meant the removal of sugary cereals and squash from our menu. Please remember that breakfast starts at 7.45am and will finish at 8.15am in the Red Room (school children age), as this allows us to get the children ready for the walking bus to school. If your child arrives after 8.15am we will offer them a drink and a brioche milk roll. For non-school age children breakfast time will be 7.45-8.30am.

Breakfast and Snack Menus are displayed on each of the doors to the two rooms. The menu will be updated each main term, so the next change will be in January—this is so that we can ensure that we vary the menu, and provide seasonal foods. After school numbers are growing and at times we are left waiting at school, as children may be off sick or have clubs they are attending. Please make sure that you remember to let us know of any absence or clubs on 01280 706553, as the school do not contact us to let us know.

Please also remember to check the lost property box situated in the hallway, as there are a number of items unnamed which need a home. Our lost property will be cleared out at the end of each half term as we do not have the space to store large numbers of lost property.

### Data Collection and Contact Information

Please do remember that your contact information needs to be updated when you change any of your details—this includes any change in personal circumstances. We will be shortly sending out data sheets with your current contact details on—please check them, mark any changes, sign them and return them to the office.

**Safeguarding Our Children VERY IMPORTANT!!!!** Door Entry and Exit Always remember NEVER to let another person in to the building—this includes another child, even if you know them. Only members of staff are allowed to give access to the building. This is important at all times including breakfast and after-school club.