



[www.steppingstones.org.uk](http://www.steppingstones.org.uk)



## A message from the Headteacher

This prospectus will, I hope, convince you that, here at Stepping Stones, there has been created a unique environment in which young people with hemiplegia may grow as individuals, progress in their learning and realise their potential. Youngsters who are happy, secure, confident and enthused will be helped to achieve that potential, with the support of a team of teachers, therapists and LSAs who are dedicated to the pursuit of preparing them fully for further education and for adult life. We seek to provide for each student a curriculum carefully and precisely moulded to fit the individual; you will learn more about what we offer as you study these pages and listen to the voices of our students and their parents. We embrace the very latest technologies and have ambitious plans to develop on-line learning and to link up with schools abroad whilst retaining the timeless values of concern and respect for everyone in our community. Parents are a vital part of that community and we are proud of the partnerships we have established. Our students feel genuinely included; they are offered a rich variety of experience on and off the campus which enhances their emotional well-being, improves their self esteem and accelerates their academic progress.

Do come and see for yourselves; I would be delighted to show you round the school and to give you advice about your child's education, regardless of whether you choose to seek a placement here.

Neil Clark

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# History and Objectives

Stepping Stones School, established in 2004, is a **small, friendly** learning centre in Hindhead, Surrey situated close to the borders of Surrey, West Sussex and Hampshire, which caters for children with hemiplegia and other moderate physical and learning disabilities.

Stepping Stones has been approved by the DCSF as an independent special school for the education of students between the ages of 8 and 16 who have moderate learning difficulties. Students are fee paying, sponsored by the Local Authority or financed through a process whereby commercial organisations offer bursaries to students attending the school.

We believe that all children deserve the right to have a fulfilling and enabling education. It is especially important that they develop **physical and emotional confidence**, whilst following the National Curriculum. We are continually pushing the boundaries of knowledge, and experimenting with new ways of working with technology, learning support assistants and one another.

Teaching and learning is our main focus. Every single student within the school is receiving a high quality curriculum which is **personalised** for his/her benefit and individual advancement.



Our Mission statement is...

*Stepping Stones School is committed to providing a **stimulating, caring and friendly** learning environment, which will maximise students' educational opportunities and their potential for independence.*

# Statement of Purpose

As a school we have a **holistic** approach to our students' **well-being, growth** and **development**.

We aim to:

- ▶ Provide a **safe, secure** and **supportive** environment for students and staff.
- ▶ Offer a National Curriculum based educational programme **tailored** to meet individual learning needs. This is supported with a structured life skills regime linked to an appropriate personal, social and health curriculum.
- ▶ Ensure a **broad** and **balanced**, specialised curriculum for students' physical disabilities.
- ▶ **Stimulate** an enhanced knowledge and understanding of life so students can face the future with **confidence** in their own abilities.
- ▶ **Maintain** exceptional **standards** of teaching to help students achieve their full potential.
- ▶ **Reflect** these **values** to a broader community by action and example.
- ▶ Work with parents and relevant agencies to **maintain** and **encourage** each student's personal, social and **independent development**.
- ▶ Provide a recreation programme to **extend** student's **physical** and **cognitive** skills, offering a variety of experiences which allow for relaxation and enjoyment.
- ▶ To **assist** students and parents in planning **further education** requirements and placements.



*We want students to be empowered and we work very hard towards the attainment of independence through a complementary mix of academic disciplines, life skills and personal and social development.*

*I love school now because everyone is so understanding and I'm getting less worried and happier by the day. I am also getting more and more confident and my self-esteem has grown rapidly and is still building.*



*Amie Humphries, aged 13*

*"To see my daughter's self-esteem increase after only a term at Stepping Stones is fantastic. You have given me back my happy, smiley daughter who was slowly losing her self esteem in the mainstream setting."*

*Amie's parents, 2007*

*Personalised learning is not a move away from the standards agenda. Neither is it letting students coast along at their own pace or abandoning the national curriculum but rather it is about empowering the students in our care.*

*"A year ago we were told that our daughter, because of her disability, was making slow progress in her education. A year after joining Stepping Stones, Jessica has achieved more than we had expected. She is turning into a well educated young lady that has a promising future to look forward to."*

*Jessica's Mum,  
2007*



*I am really happy at Stepping Stones because all of the students are friendly and the teachers are as well. Stepping Stones has given me the opportunity to express myself.*

*Jessica, aged 13*

*Students are encouraged to understand their learning and this enables them to make decisions and choices about it.*

# Education

## Introduction

Stepping Stones School offers a **broad** and **balanced** curriculum, based on the National Curriculum, that has been developed specially for learners with hemiplegia and other moderate physical and learning disabilities. Every student's educational needs are considered **individually** and the curriculum **differentiated** accordingly.

*The opportunity for personalisation is increased because of the smaller group dynamic.*

Classrooms are well equipped with computers and relevant software where ICT forms an integral part of every subject across the curriculum. Students are taught in a stimulating and varied environment where they are encouraged to reach both their **academic**, **social** and **emotional potential**.

Each class teacher is supported by a learning support assistant who works with particular learners, both within the classroom and on a **1:1 basis**. The data that comes back from the LSAs also enables teachers to **personalise students' needs** indirectly.



The teacher and the LSA both respect the different, but overlapping contributions they make. Rather than a hierarchical pyramid we have a flatter model which means that ideas can be generated from anywhere in the school thereby maximising the contribution of all adults and students.

Our bespoke approach is building our schooling around the needs and aptitudes of individual students and shaping teaching around the way different youngsters learn. It's also making sure that the talent of each student is supported and encouraged and about personalising the school experience.



# The Curriculum

Stepping Stones School follows the National Curriculum but we offer our own **broader curriculum** so that students can study a **wide range of subjects** up to GCSE. We also offer a wide range of **out-of-school activities** to support and enrich the curriculum.

The subjects offered are:

English

Mathematics

Science

History

Geography

PE

ICT

Food Technology

Childcare

Art

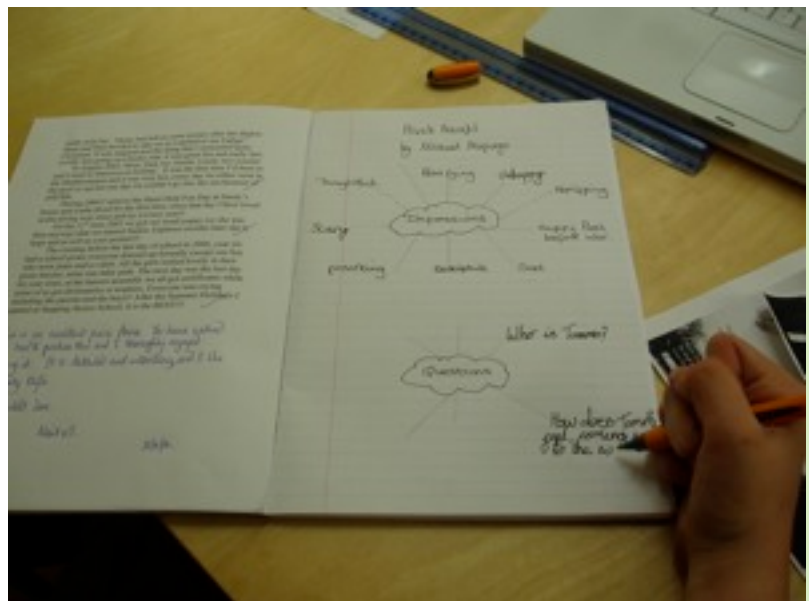
Music

RE

PSHE which includes our specially formulated social skills programme, sex education and career guidance.

The Key Stage 3 curriculum builds upon the learning experience of the students at Primary School. There is still a clear focus on literacy and numeracy, both in terms of discrete lessons and through other subjects. The other areas of the curriculum now play a bigger part, giving the curriculum more breadth. Learners move away from the class base and are taught by specialist subject teachers.

The aim of Key Stage 4 is to prepare learners for the next phase in their life. The curriculum is focussed on offering a wide range of GCSE subjects whilst allowing students to develop their interest and skills in enrichment activities.



Learners follow academic courses which lead to accreditation through Entry Level, ASDAN Awards, and GCSE exams. There are strong links with the local community, and students attend courses in the mainstream setting.

# ICT and learning technologies

Since the inception of Stepping Stones School in September 2004, we have made the decision to harness ICT and various technologies as powerful tools to facilitate a creative and visionary curriculum. Each student has an Apple Mac personal computer which they use both at school and at home.

Animation and digital video are just two ways in which we exploit the students' creative flair and build a method conducive to how they learn. Several key technologies enable the students to maintain contact with each other, including email and iChat (safe instant messaging system) through to video conferencing, all accessible from the desktop of their personal computer.

Learning in the 21st Century is about communicating and collaborating with each other. There are many examples where we demonstrate our commitment to this model of learning and provide students with opportunities to develop these key skills for the future.



At a recent BAFTA event, 'Be Very Afraid', we used video conferencing technology to communicate with students at our school. Those students who attended the event, showcased their digital creativity work to an audience of key professionals involved in media and education. These included representatives from the BBC, DfES, Design Council and many other learning organisations.



# Independent living



Students are taught to develop a sense of independence and responsibility through many activities such as the school garden and preparing hot lunches for each other and for staff.



Initiatives like these engage parents and students in partnership with teachers and support staff to deliver a tailor made service for students. In this way they will achieve the highest possible standards in their journey towards becoming independent young people.

The school council is conducted weekly, as an after school activity, using peer to peer video conferencing technology through the use of the students' personal laptops whilst sitting in the comfort of their own home. It also allows the opportunity to invite external people in as 'guests' when conducting a discussion on a specific subject.



# Enrichment activities

Alongside our main programme of study we strongly encourage participation in our enrichment opportunities, you can meet new friends, widen your interest and develop teamwork and leadership skills - all great for you personally and appreciated by Universities and employers.

You can also take part in enrichment during theme days including, Activity Days, School Camp and workshops.



# School Policies

The school welcomes children with hemiplegia and other moderate learning or physical difficulties aged between 8 years to 16 years. Prospective parents are invited to contact the school in order to make an individual appointment with the Headteacher, and / or to attend one of the open day events run throughout the school year. Prior to any visit, it would be useful for us to have the following information from you:

- ▶ Whether your child has a statement.
- ▶ The stated needs of your child.
- ▶ Cognitive levels of your child.
- ▶ Brief history of current placement status.

Initially, we invite a child to spend an informal day with us at the school so that he or she, can get an impression of what the school is like. If you and your child like the school, we then move on to formal referrals.

Before a place is offered the school requires up to date copies of reports from the following:

Educational psychologists  
Occupational Therapists  
Physiotherapist  
Speech and language therapists  
Other relevant information from support agencies

We assist parents in their application and statementing efforts with their Local Authority as we have a wealth of experience in this area.

## **Further Education and Careers**

In Years 10 and 11 the local Special Needs Careers Advisor and a member of the Children's Service department attend the Annual Review and help in the students' applications to colleges.

## **Careers Training**

In Years 9,10 and 11, all students have a careers lesson built into their curriculum. Stepping Stones School is linked to the Connexions service, whereby all students have access to advice and services. In addition, vocational experience will be offered to all students in their final year.

## **Sex Education**

All students receive sex education. Parents are informed prior to the provision of sex education and have the legal right to withdraw their children from this area of the

curriculum. The school's full sex education policy is published separately and is available upon request.

## **Bullying**

Stepping Stones School believes that successful teaching, learning and good discipline are achieved against a background of respect and mutual cooperation. We want our children to grow into confident adults and the school has a code of conduct, to which all our students agree.

## **Good and Bad Behaviour**

We aim to encourage children to value both themselves and others by respecting rights and tolerating differences. The school will endeavour to acknowledge and reward both consistent and improved good behaviour and consolidate this through PSHE lessons and group discussions.

## **Specialist Support Services**

At Stepping Stones School, a team of specialists, including Speech, Language, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists, aims to develop the communicative, social, motor and functional competences of each student to their fullest potential.

Individual therapeutic plans are made for each child based on thorough assessment, realistic goals and monitoring.

There is a well equipped room for both physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

## **Complaints Procedure**

Pastoral care is one of our strengths and we have the greatest consideration for the interests of each child. However, there may be times when a student wishes to complain about something that is causing him or her concern, such as perceptions of unfair treatment by either staff or other students. The various methods for complaining are set out in the school handbook, available to all new students and is written in accordance with The Children's Act.

"Provision for their personal development is outstanding. This enables them to thrive and grow in an atmosphere that encourages and celebrates their success."

— OFSTED, November 2005

"Teaching is good and, along with good support by the learning support assistants (LSAs), it enables students to learn effectively. Students clearly enjoy learning."

— OFSTED, November 2005

# General information

## **Policy Documents**

The School has a full set of policy documents including one for each curriculum subject, Health and Safety, Bullying, Child Protection and Out of School Visits. A copy of any of these is available upon request.

## **Rates of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

The rate of authorised absence for last year is 8.6% and unauthorised absences are zero.

## **Fees**

Our fees are currently £4,200 per term, excluding therapy costs.

## **School Term Dates**

### **Spring Term 2008**

Monday 7th January - Friday 4th April  
Half Term: Monday 18th February - Friday 22nd February  
Easter break Friday 21st March- Monday 24th March

### **Summer Term 2008**

Monday 21st April - Wednesday 23rd July  
Half Term: Monday 26th May - Friday 30th May  
Bank Holiday: Monday 5th May

### **Autumn term 2008**

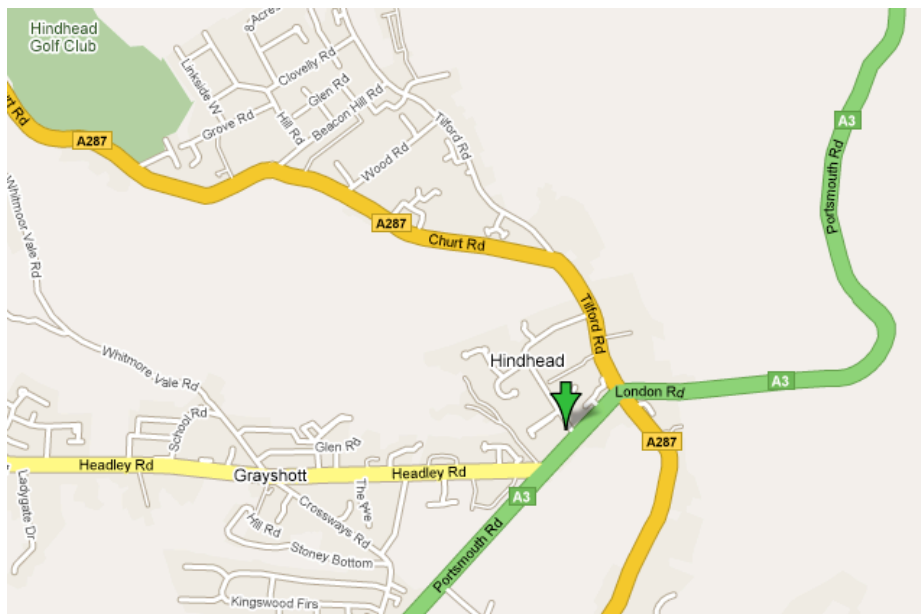
Thursday September 4th- Friday December 19th  
Half term break Friday 24th October- Wednesday 5th November

"Stepping Stones School has made very good progress in its development since it was first registered because of the dedication and commitment of all staff."

— OFSTED, November 2005

# How to find us

Stepping Stones School is easy to find, situated just off the A3 at Hindhead, Surrey, close to the borders of West Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire.



If you would like any further information about the school, please do not hesitate to call us, we would be only too happy to talk to you about how Stepping Stones School may suit your child.

Please contact:

Stepping Stones School,  
Tower Road,  
Hindhead,  
Surrey, GU26 6SU

Tel: 01428 609083

e-mail: [enquiries@steppingstones.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@steppingstones.org.uk)



# Trustees



## **Professor Stephen Heppell**

Stephen is the founder of [Ultralab](#) and [Notschool](#). Notschool is an internet based school for children excluded from mainstream. Stephen is often quoted in the national press regarding new approaches to education/the school of the future.



## **Caroline Coles**

Caroline is ex head of Meldreth Manor School in Cambridge and more recently head teacher at Horton Lodge Community Special School in Staffordshire. She did such a good job in these roles that she was invited to meet Tony Blair. Along with Robert Hancock, she is co-author of the "Inclusion Quality Mark" and is an advisor to central government on inclusion.



## **Sandy Seagrove**

Is the mother of Amy who has Hemiplegia, is organiser of the annual Stepping Stones Activity Day in Farnham and co. founder of Stepping Stones School.



## **Anne Hayes**

Having been head of a Beacon Primary School, Anne was for several years a School Improvement Adviser for Buckinghamshire. She has now returned to Headship in a large Ealing primary school. She is also an OfSTED inspector and an assessor of Overseas Trained Teachers for UK Qualified Teacher Status. She is passionate about the school curriculum being relevant to, and meeting the needs of, each individual child.

# Contact Information

**Headteacher:** Neil Clark BA(Oxon) PGCE

**Name of School:** Stepping Stones School

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**Website:** [www.steppingstones.org.uk](http://www.steppingstones.org.uk)

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