



## Newsletter June 2023

### Consultation

You will be aware from our previous emails that Clipston Primary School have a consultation open until the 29<sup>th</sup> June regarding opening a nursery provision within their reception class. Full details can be found on their website.

Our latest update, sent to you on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June, can be found in full at the end of this newsletter.

We would urge you to spread the word and for you to respond to the consultation, whether you “support” the proposal or “oppose” it, you should make this clear in your response. This is your opportunity to have your say, it is your community, and it is important that the decision-makers understand your thoughts and opinions.

### Fundraising

On a much lighter note you will be pleased to hear our next two fundraisers involve cake!

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June we are working in partnership with Clipston Primary School PTA to host the Clipston Village Hall Coffee Morning 10am until 12noon, please come along and support the event. We will be selling tea/coffee and cake. Proceeds will be split between Clipston Primary School and Stepping Stones.

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June we will be serving tea/coffee and cake at the Clipston Music Festival. This is sure to be a popular event and we would be grateful for any cake donations, homemade or shop bought. Please bring any donations to Stepping Stones by Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June. We will also be looking for volunteers to help serve the refreshments on the day and would be grateful if anyone can help for an hour. Many hands make light work. If you are happy to help please let us know. And of course, please do come along on the day. It is from 3pm onwards at Clipston Playing Fields. See posters locally for more information.

### Kelmarsh Hall

We are looking forward to our annual trip to Kelmarsh Hall on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June. By now you should have replied to the letter to let us know if your child/children are coming, and you should know the plan for the day. If you have any questions at all please do just ask.

### Photographs

Again, you should have received a letter about the plan for this. If you have not please let us know. Lisa is coming to take the photos of the children first thing in the morning on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June so please contact us asap if you need further information.

## Summer...

- Please send your child with a sunhat with their name in
- Please apply sun cream prior to arrival. We recommend the “once a day” type. Please do not send suncream into the setting
- Please send your child in closed shoes suitable for running – no flipflops, open sandals or clogs please

## End of year

On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July, our last day of term we will be hosting our End of Year Show and Party. This year's show will be Sleeping Beauty. You will be receiving a letter in the coming week explaining the plan, which if you have been to one before, follows the same traditions. In brief, the show will be at 10:30am at Clipston Village Hall, followed by a little party and goodbyes. You will be receiving a letter this week with the full details.

Rosie O'Connor is kindly putting together a collage of the children leaving to go to big school so if your child is about to leave and you haven't sent her a photo yet you may wish to do so. If you do not want your child included, please just let her or us know.

## Hours for September

For those of you who are staying with us – yippee! Please complete and return the request for hours for September and return it to us asap to assist our planning. Thank you

## Parent Survey

You should have received our summer term parent survey. We would really appreciate it if you could complete it. We do value your feedback and any ideas for how to improve our service are seriously considered.

## Dates for your diary

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June** – photographs, see details above

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June** – 10am-12noon – coffee morning at Clipston Village Hall

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023** - annual trip to Kelmarsh Hall

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June** – 3-6pm - Teas and cake at the Clipston Festival

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023** - End of Year Show and Party

## Term dates

Summer term first half	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> April – Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
Half term break	Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> May – Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2023
Summer term second half	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> June – Friday 21 July 2023
Summer break	Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> July – Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
Autumn term first half	Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> September – Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> October
Half term break	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October – Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Autumn term second half	Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> October – Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2023

Our latest update, sent out on Friday 9th June, is below:

On Wednesday afternoon I led a meeting with Mrs Mercer, Head Teacher at Clipston Primary School, along with your entire Stepping Stones Committee and Manager Sam. We are very happy to share these minutes which Mrs Mercer agreed to disclose as well.

As Sam highlighted last week, we were completely shocked to find out about the current consultation going live just hours before it was sent out, which, if approved, would allow 10 spaces for 3-year-olds to join the Reception classroom as early as next year. Worth noting it is 10 spaces per day for 3 year olds, so overall there potentially could be many more different children within the Reception classroom doing different variations of days, as well as morning, after lunch and afternoon pick-ups each week.

Even more shocking to us was that Mrs Mercer decided to include a statement about Stepping Stones in the Consultation FAQ's without speaking to Stepping Stones at all. As noted in the minutes, we asked her to remove this item but she refused saying it would then extend the Consultation an extra two weeks, but was happy for Stepping Stones to highlight to the public that it was written without speaking to anyone at Stepping Stones and was made up by Mrs Mercer. If we had been consulted our answer would have been:

"The Stepping Stones committee and staff will endeavour to continue to support our children and families whilst this process happens in the background. However, if the proposal is approved it does put the future of Stepping Stones and risk and may result in our forced closure. We will be reviewing our various options and remain hopeful."

If your child is starting Reception next year at Clipston it was advised that you can request a meeting or send an email if you have any questions on this matter as no meeting or proactive communications with upcoming parents is planned until after the Consultation period is over. It is worth noting that your scheduled meeting in July will not highlight or focus on this possible modification of the classroom as a result of this Consultation.

We obviously want everyone to support or not support what is best for their families and the community. Either way, please ensure in your response to clearly note 'oppose' or 'support' to ensure your response is categorised correctly. We would also ask that you copy in preschool1@clipston.northants.sch.uk if you feel comfortable doing so, when you send it to Mrs Martin at Office@clipston.northants.sch.uk as per the procedure for the Consultation. This will allow us to understand the feelings of the community and provide ourselves, the dedicated staff and wonderful families time to plan next steps – as Clipston Primary will not be able to disclose to us the level of support or opposition they receive.

Anyone can respond to this Consultation so please feel free to share widely, as it will be very helpful to provide both parties insight on the overall feelings towards this proposal. In the days to come we will be highlighting this Consultation on Facebook.

We have also drafted a template for ease of sharing and submission, so if you would like that please let us know and we will email it to you.

Regarding our next steps, Stepping Stones will be opposing the proposal as we all feel very passionate about continuing the superior early education environment that Sam and her team work so very hard in upholding. We feel the low child to staff ratio, calibre of staff, forest school and individualised care will continue to be hard to find and we want to ensure our community has that resource for another 30 years.

As always if you have any questions Sam and the Committee are always available.

Best wishes

Katelyn Maybury, Stepping Stones Pre-school Treasurer



Stepping Stones Pre-school  
and  
Clipston School Association  
**COFFEE MORNING**

Saturday 17th June  
10am to 12 noon

Clipston Village Hall

Cash and card accepted

