

Our Achievements

We hope you enjoy taking a look back at some of the achievements and developments that have taken place during Mrs Ford's time as Headteacher, helping to make Stepgates Community School the special place it is today.

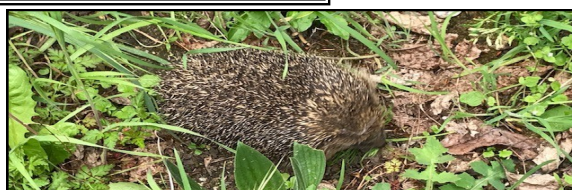


We are delighted with our 'Outdoor Classroom', which has been a wonderful addition to our ever-developing 'Outdoor Learning Area'.

Both children and staff continue to make the most of our fantastic outdoor spaces, from our beautiful 'Sensory Garden' and colourful planters to the new Infant playground equipment. It is lovely to see these areas being enjoyed by the children and providing opportunities for learning, creativity, exploration and play throughout the school day.

Despite some initial setbacks, we are delighted that the work on our school roof was successfully completed ahead of schedule.

We can now enjoy the lovely sight of a dusting of snow on our roof, safe in the knowledge that it is leak-free and more energy efficient, helping to keep our school warm and dry throughout the colder months!



Stepgates Sensory Circuit is a short and fun sensory motor skills programme that helps to set children up for a school day. It enables children to reach the level of alertness needed to concentrate during learning.

The circuit also encourages the development of the child's sensory processing skills.

Children participate in a 10-15 minute session of activities designed to improve brain processing efficiently, and they generally find that the circuit is a fun way to start the day.



There is always something exciting to discover in our Nature Garden! Our bee and bug hotels are full of life, birds and bats regularly visit, and we were especially delighted to spot this little hedgehog wandering along the footpath.

What a wonderful outdoor area for our children to explore the natural world, observe wildlife first-hand and develop their understanding of our environment.



We are delighted with our new school minibus, which is already proving to be a wonderful addition to Stepgates. It is currently being used to take children horse riding, as well as enabling us to venture further afield for a variety of exciting trips and experiences.

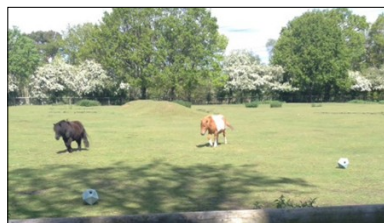
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Following consultations with Surrey County Council, we held the 'Grand opening' of Stepgates Sports Field (formerly Tulk Field) in June 2017. Councillor Mark Nuti, ex-Chair of Governors Geoffrey Hackett and Arthur Davenport joined us to cut the ribbon and officially open our new sports facility.

Our Sports Field continues to be a firm favourite with the children at Stepgates. They love having plenty of space to run around, play with their friends and enjoy being active outdoors.

We are very fortunate to have such a wonderful open space for everyone to enjoy!



Our Forest School continues to be a great success and is thoroughly enjoyed by children across Stepgates Community School.

The Forest School approach in the UK was inspired by the Scandinavian tradition of outdoor learning and play. Through regular visits to our Forest School, children become increasingly familiar and confident within their outdoor environment. They learn important safety routines while being given the freedom to explore, investigate, create and discover at their own pace.

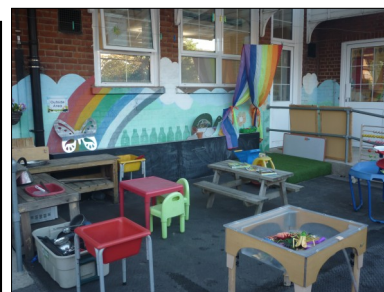
It is wonderful to see the children embracing the outdoors, developing their confidence, independence and curiosity, while learning about and appreciating the natural world around them.



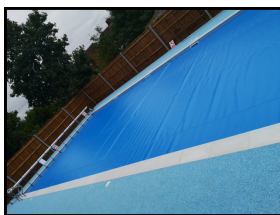
With a little improvisation, creativity and clever use of space, we have been delighted to welcome our Nursery into the main school building.

The children now have a fantastic space in which to learn, explore, play and develop, while being very much at the heart of the wider Stepgates School community.

Our Nursery children have embraced their new surroundings and continue to thrive in their wonderful learning environment.



Our Achievements



By far, one of our proudest and most significant achievements was the completion of our long-awaited swimming pool!

After many years of dedicated fundraising, determination and the tremendous support of our school community and generous funders, we were absolutely delighted to see our brand-new swimming pool finally become a reality.

The pool provides a fantastic facility for our children, giving them the opportunity to learn to swim, develop their confidence in the water and enjoy swimming as part of school life. We are also very proud that this wonderful facility can be enjoyed by the wider local community for many years to come.

Sadly, due to the pandemic, we were unable to celebrate its completion with the Official Opening we had originally hoped for. Nevertheless, seeing the finished pool and watching our children enjoy this fantastic facility was a very special moment and a wonderful reward for everyone who helped make our dream a reality.



Fundraising continued during the Autumn Term of 2020, and we were extremely grateful to Barratt Homes for their generous donation of £1,308 towards the purchase of two submersible swimming platforms.

Their kind contribution enabled us to purchase the platforms immediately, ensuring that our KS1 children could participate fully in swimming lessons and enjoy developing their confidence in the water.

CHANGING ROOMS AND SHOWERS

We were delighted to make two successful funding bids for the next stage of our swimming pool project, securing generous support from The Peter Harrison Foundation and Chertsey Combined Charities.

Our thanks must, once again, go to Lucy Taylor, former Governor and parent at Stepgates, who represented the school at a virtual meeting of Chertsey Combined Charities and spoke on our behalf in support of the project. We were absolutely thrilled when they agreed to award us an incredible £30,000 towards the work.

Further fantastic news followed when The Peter Harrison Foundation awarded £26,000, bringing the total funding received from these two organisations to an amazing £56,000. This meant that, at last, we had sufficient funds to begin the much-anticipated work.

These awards were particularly significant at a time when the pandemic had made traditional fundraising activities extremely difficult. To secure such substantial support was a wonderful achievement and enabled this important project to move forward.

We remain extremely grateful to The Peter Harrison Foundation and Chertsey Combined Charities for their tremendous generosity and support. Their contributions have been instrumental in helping us develop our swimming facilities, supporting both the installation of the swimming pool and, subsequently, the changing rooms, for the benefit of generations of Stepgates children.

Our Achievements



We are delighted that our new changing rooms, showers and toilets for the swimming pool are now fully plumbed in and being enjoyed by our children.

We are extremely grateful for the generous support of The Peter Harrison Foundation and Chertsey Combined Charities, whose contributions have helped make these fantastic new facilities possible. Without their kindness and generosity, this project would still be a work in progress.



**Artsmark
Silver Award**
Awarded by Arts
Council England

We are delighted to have achieved the Silver Artsmark Award presented by the Arts Council England, for delivering a high-quality arts and cultural education, and for providing excellent ways in demonstrating this.

We believe every child should have the opportunity to create, compose, and perform, as well as to visit, experience, participate in and review extraordinary work. Our Artsmark journey and achievement has helped us, at Stepgates, to unlock the potential of our pupils helping us to develop character and talent of each individual.

We were delighted to finally be able to organise an official opening ceremony to celebrate the completion of our school swimming pool and changing rooms.

The Mayoress, Cllr Gill, and her Deputy, Cllr Harnden, joined us for this special occasion, together with many of the wonderful people, past and present, who have supported us in achieving our goal following many, many years of fundraising.

With the pool sparkling in the sunshine, guests were treated to a welcome cup of tea and refreshments, courtesy of Megan's Cakes and our local Southern Co-op. The occasion was made even more special by the beautiful vintage crockery, which was very kindly loaned to us free of charge by All About The Taste in Chertsey. A lovely time was had by all. This wonderful facility is the culmination of many years of determination, fundraising and community support, and we are enormously grateful to everyone who helped make it possible.

It was particularly special to welcome back former staff, governors and FOSS members, many of whom have been instrumental in keeping this project alive over the past 10 years, following the demolition of our old swimming pool.

This wonderful facility is the culmination of many years of determination, fundraising and community support, and we are enormously grateful to everyone who helped make it possible.



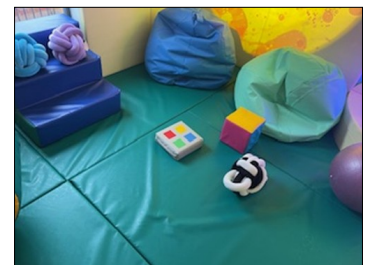
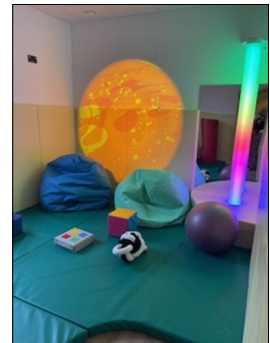
We were delighted to achieve the prestigious Eco-Schools Green Flag, following the hard work, enthusiasm and commitment of our Eco-Schools Council.

This wonderful achievement recognised the children's dedication to making Stepgates a greener and more environmentally friendly school, while encouraging everyone within our school community to think carefully about how we can help protect and care for our environment.

A huge well done and thank you to our Eco-Schools Council for helping us achieve this fantastic award!



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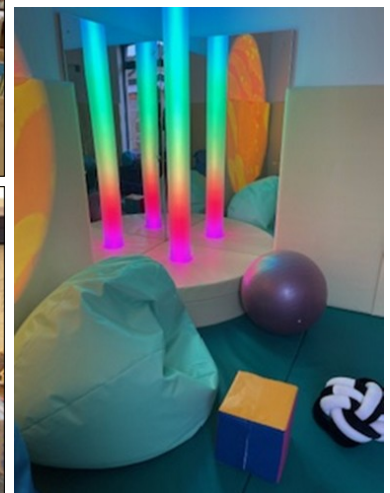
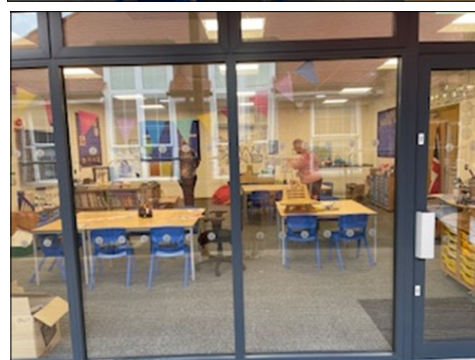


Following a proposal by Surrey County Council, in conjunction with the Governing Body of Stepgates Community School, we were delighted to see the expansion and development of our specialist Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) provision.

The expansion provided additional places for children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs, alongside newly developed accommodation designed to support their individual learning and development. Following the building work, and apart from one or two final touches, we were thrilled to see the new facilities completed and ready for our children to enjoy.

Pupils placed within our specialist provision by Surrey County Council have an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) identifying the specialist support required to meet their individual needs.

The completion of this project marked another important milestone for Stepgates, enabling us to extend our specialist provision and provide a supportive, nurturing and inclusive learning environment in which every child has the opportunity to thrive.



Our Achievements



Stepgates Community School
Learning and Growing Together

Stepgates Community School initially established 'The Den' Nurture Group to provide additional support for children with social, emotional and mental health needs. Following the success of 'The Den', we decided to apply to become a Locality Nurture Hub (LNH) and were delighted when our application was successful.

Locality Nurture Hubs are small, nurturing environments within schools that support a small number of pupils with significant or emerging social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

'The Den' Nurture Hub is a school-based intervention run by two members of staff. Its aim is to provide children with a safe, supportive and nurturing environment where they can develop positive relationships with both adults and their peers. Through carefully planned activities and experiences, children are supported in developing the social and emotional skills they need to engage successfully with school life and learning.

Effective nurture practice follows the six principles of nurture. We also use the Boxall Profile as an assessment tool to help us identify pupils who may benefit from attending the Nurture Hub, based on their individual social, emotional and mental health needs.

Research has shown that a nurturing approach to education can benefit all pupils, helping children to develop their social and emotional skills and supporting them to learn. Nurture approaches can also have a positive impact on behaviour, attendance and attainment, while helping to reduce exclusions.

Wellbeing is a huge priority at Stepgates Community School. We believe children need to feel calm, focused and emotionally regulated in order to learn effectively, thrive at school and achieve their full potential.

As part of this commitment, we have taken part in, and continue to engage with, the Compassionate Schools Programme. All staff have received training in Attachment and Trauma, helping them to understand and support children who may have additional needs in these areas. All of our children also use the Zones of Regulation, which supports them in recognising and understanding their emotions and developing strategies to help manage them.

We continue to work towards achieving the Nurturing Schools Award through the National Nurturing Schools Programme, with completion expected later this year.

We are delighted to be able to offer 'The Den' as a short-term intervention for pupils experiencing social, emotional or behavioural difficulties that may make it harder for them to access learning successfully within the mainstream classroom.

Above all, 'The Den' forms an important part of our whole-school approach to nurture and wellbeing, ensuring that children have the support, understanding and encouragement they need to feel safe, valued and ready to learn.

Our Achievements

There have been many achievements and successes during my time as Headteacher at Stepgates Community School, all of which I am incredibly proud of. However, by far my proudest and most humbling moment was being nominated for and receiving the Runnymede Borough Council Civic Award for Special Recognition.

It was a tremendous honour to receive this award and a very special moment that I will always treasure.



We were extremely honoured to be nominated by one of our parents for an award at the Runnymede Borough Council Civic Awards.

The Civic Awards recognise people and organisations who make a positive difference within the Borough, often quietly and without recognition. We were, therefore, delighted to learn that Stepgates Community School had been selected as a finalist and were very proud to attend the awards ceremony at Thorpe Park.

I was delighted to be accompanied by Mrs White and Mrs Conn for what we anticipated would be a very special evening. We believed that Stepgates had been nominated within the Community Awards category and, as the category was announced towards the end of the ceremony, we waited eagerly to hear the result. However, when our school was not named among the finalists, we were understandably a little confused.

The final awards of the evening were reserved for Special Recognition, and we were absolutely overwhelmed to discover that Stepgates Community School had been chosen to receive this very special award in recognition of our work and dedication within the school community.

There have been many achievements and successes during my time as Headteacher at Stepgates, but being nominated for and receiving the Runnymede Borough Council Civic Award for Special Recognition remains one of my proudest and most humbling moments.

I would like to thank every member of staff for their tireless work, dedication and, above all, the compassion they show to our children and families. This award belongs to the whole Stepgates community.

We were truly touched and humbled to receive this recognition, and I was honoured to dedicate the award to a Year 2 child and her wonderful parents. In the face of the most profound challenges, they have shown us the true meaning of bravery, courage and dignity. They are the real heroes of this story, and their extraordinary strength continues to be an inspiration to us all.

Our Achievements

Our sincere thanks go to:

- **The wonderful staff at Stepgates**, for their continued dedication, commitment and care for our children.
- **Our incredibly supportive Governors**, who give so generously of their time and work tirelessly behind the scenes for the benefit of our school.
- **FOSS (Friends of Stepgates Community School)**, whose hard work and enthusiasm in organising so many events and activities have provided invaluable support to the school.
- **Our fantastic parents and carers, past and present**, for their unwavering support, encouragement and generosity over the years.
- **The many volunteers and organisations who have generously given their time and support**, including Royal Bank of Scotland, F5 Networks Limited, VMware and Compass.
- **Our wonderful local community**, whose generosity and ongoing support are very much appreciated.
- And, of course, **our amazing children**, who are at the heart of everything we do and make Stepgates the very special school that it is.

To each and every person who has played a part in our journey, however large or small, we offer our heartfelt thanks. These achievements would simply not have been possible without you.