



## Case study: Stepping Stones

### The Background:

Stepping Stones Preschool is a committee-led charity serving the families of the St Austell area of Cornwall with high quality care and education. It currently offers childcare in two different locations within St Austell and has strong links with local schools. The charity was founded in 1991 by Elisa Manuel who had the help of a few mums, a £50 grant from the Preschool Learning Alliance and the use of rented accommodation.

### The challenge:

After previously using nursery management software from another provider, Stepping Stones had spent 12 months using Excel spreadsheets to manage their records after repeated problems with their software, but Excel couldn't meet their needs either.

"The methods we were using to record data and manage our observations were taking up an astronomical amount of our staff's time," said Angela Campbell, Stepping Stones Preschool Administrator.

"Parents regularly wanted to increase or change the sessions their children were allocated, but we were struggling to keep up with these changes. This caused repeated problems with our registers and invoices and meant that the management team never had an accurate picture of our availability and future occupancy levels."



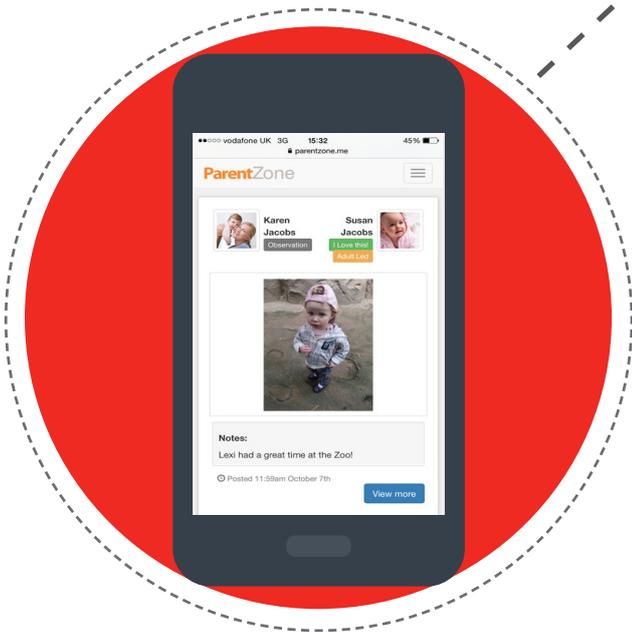
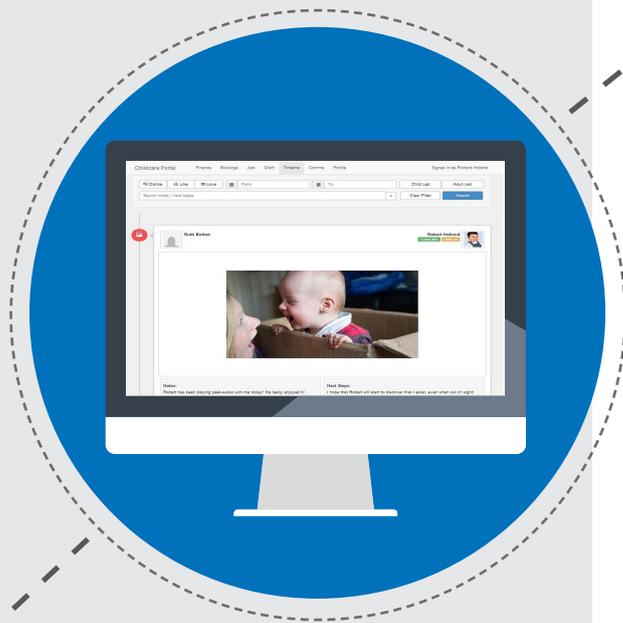
## The Solution:

Connect Childcare's nursery management software appealed to the management team at Stepping Stones because of its wide range of features and flexibility.

"Registers are now incredibly easy to manage using Connect Childcare," said Angela. "We now have a daily register broken down into half hour slots so we always know exactly what occupancy levels we are at and can cope with varied shift patterns for staff and children. Management of the preschools is much improved because we can easily print off our daily sheets and everyone knows what is happening that day. The staff information facility is also being well utilised to keep track of staff training."

“Checking invoices is also very quick and has ensured that we have cut down on making errors, improving communication with parents.”

"For us, the today screen is the most impressive function of the Connect Childcare software. It provides us with reminders, room movements, child and staff birthdays and pretty much any other information we choose to have on the screen. The occupancy widget is particularly helpful if a parent calls to extend hours for that day as the information is in front of you."



## The Result:

The management team at Stepping Stones is delighted with the impact Connect Childcare's software has made on the operations of the Preschools.

Angela concluded:

“Connect has been very adaptable to meet our complex needs and has become an asset to running our business. We have been impressed with the software right from its installation and if we have ever had any queries, Connect's advisors are extremely knowledgeable and are always ready to help.”

