

**From:** Carol Webb  
**Sent:** 09 September 2012 14:54  
**To:** Nikhil Dally  
**Subject:** Re: Stepping Notes review

**When our children left Stepping Notes at the age of 8 (our son is now 13 and daughter 10) we couldn't find the words to thank Nikhil for, what we already knew, was a wonderful foundation in music. Five years on and we are constantly reminded of this as both of our children continue to discover their own musical path. I have never forgotten Nikhil's eloquent explanation, in his parents' information evening, of the processes necessary to develop good roots in musicality in the younger years enabling musicianship to blossom and bear fruit in later years.**

**Both of our children are testament to their good roots. They are motivated, dedicated and continue to inspired by music as a whole and their music belongs to them!**

**Nikhil is one of those rare individuals who genuinely changed our lives. Five years on and we still can't find the words to thank him enough for what he started!**

Best wishes,

Carol

From: Sara Rahman  
Sent: 21 June 2012 21:54  
To: Nikhil Dally  
Subject: Thank you

Dear Nikhil

I haven't had the chance to email you earlier but I did want to take the opportunity to say a big thank you for the wonderful musical education you have given [REDACTED] and indeed, myself!

[REDACTED] has left Stepping Notes with a true love for music and an amazing ear! Tinkering on piano, guitar or even baby toys like phones which make sounds on different buttons, she is able to pick out the solfa notes and play pretty much anything she can sing on anything that will sound a note!

The fact that this little girl picks up instruments and tries to play and write music of her own, simply for the joy of it and without direction from anyone, is the real success of Stepping Notes and your teaching.

Music isn't something [REDACTED] does as a separate hobby. She sings, hums, plays, creates constantly as part of her everyday activities because she loves it and because it has become part of her. And that means, it is likely to be a companion to her throughout her life rather than a passing fad, something she used to do as a child.

When I watched you sat with the children in the last few years of teaching, it was obvious that something very special was going on between you all, gathered together. It often felt as if those of us sat at the side were intruding on a private moment, as some sort of intense buzz enveloped you all.

We were very sad to have missed out on the last few months with you, but of course [REDACTED] continues her musical journey with the violin and something tells me it won't stop there!

A thousand thank you's for the lifetime of pleasure you have guided her towards.

Wishing you all the best,  
Sara

Nikhil Dally  
Winches Cottage  
Church Road  
Shepperton  
Middlesex  
TW17 9JT

Alan & Carolina Newton

██████████  
Staines  
Middlesex  
TW18 ██████████

11<sup>th</sup> March 2011

Dear Nikhil,

We are very sad that stepping notes for ██████████ is coming to an end. We can't believe how time has flown by, we have enjoyed and loved every minute of it. We are very lucky to have come across the opportunity of having our children taught by such an enthusiastic, charismatic and professional teacher who shows how much he loves what he does. Once again thank you for everything!

We ██████████  
██████████ would like to wish you and your family a great trip this summer.

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan & Carolina Newton'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'A' and 'C'.

Alan & Carolina Newton

██████████  
Maidenhead  
SL6 ██████

20<sup>th</sup> July 2010

Dear Nikhil,

We are writing to thank you for ██████'s third year of Stepping Notes lessons.

We feel very fortunate that ██████ is able to attend a class where real music is taught in such an age appropriate way. Thank you for the quality of and progression in each lesson. We understand that this takes many hours of preparation for which we are grateful.

At the start of this year the distance we needed to travel to the lessons was a concern but as soon as we arrive at each lesson we know that the journey has been more than worthwhile. By the end of the lesson ██████ has been invigorated and inspired and returns home to demonstrate the lesson to us.

Thank you for organizing the concert, the quality of the children's performance was outstanding as was their enthusiasm and confidence. ██████ loved watching and listening. It was great to see the next class performing and ██████ is looking forward to the year ahead.

Yours sincerely,

 Alison Morton

**From:** Tessa Jackson [mailto: ]

**Sent:** 12 July 2010 13:35

**To:** 'Nikhil Dally'

**Subject:** letter for your file!

When I first came to Stepping notes six years ago Nikhil gave a talk where he stated that you need to learn / experience musicality. He said that if you didn't let a child do any art until they were 8 and then taught them to draw that they would be able to learn this but would not draw with imagination and creativity, this made perfect sense to me. Then he said that if you don't let a child do any music until they were 8 you could teach them to play and they would do so again without creatively and innate experience and developed imagination, this is incidentally the time in a child's life when many parents send their children for piano lessons...

I am so glad I sent my children to Nikhil's Stepping notes. One of my children is dyslexic and finds many aspects of learning difficult due to the written aspect, under Nikhil's tutoring he has developed musically in every way and not ever had any difficulties as it is felt and experienced rather than written and formal. This child is now moving on to written music and due to his experience his innate understanding of music enables him to develop fast with a depth of understanding of music that I could never have even though I have been classically trained, its amazing. My younger child has just finished stepping notes this year which he loved and grew tremendously in confidence with and I hope will take to the piano musicianship in the same way his brother has.

I would recommend Stepping notes absolutely and feel that my children would have missed out in a truly fabulous developmental area if they had not gone. It is the best thing I have ever taken them to as an education and life enhancing experience. I would like to thank Nikhil for these years and what he has given my boys and would recommend you send your children!

Tessa Nelson

# IRINA LANKOVA

Woking, 13 July 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

As a mother of a 3 year old who attends Stepping Notes, and as a colleague musician, I can't recommend Nikhil enough.

The programme he has created by combining Kodály and Dalcroze is unique, and phenomenal in awaking the musicality in very young children.

The result he achieves in only half an hour group lesson per week is extraordinary: all children sing in tune, have a clear notion of rhythm, harmony and pulse.

But most importantly, they learn how to enjoy making music together!  
That's a gift for life.

*IRINA LANKOVA*

Dearest Nikhil,

██████████ and ██████████ have thoroughly enjoyed going to 'Stepping Notes' for the past couple of years. There are many music classes for children but we have to say that by far, yours is the best of them all. How we wish the girls can continue with your class when we move. Nonetheless, all good things do come to an end. Thank you very much for instilling a great musical interest in the girls. They ~~know~~<sup>now</sup> enjoy singing very much. We wish you the very best!

Best regards

The Leungs.

July 2008.

Englefield Green  
Surrey. TW20  
01784  
17<sup>th</sup> July 2006

Dear Nikhi,

### Stepping Notes

As this school year draws to a close, I wanted to write and express my thanks for you for the excellent Stepping Notes classes which & have enjoyed week by week since September.

The classes are nothing short of brilliant – the active and original teaching methods you use are truly inspirational, and seeing not only my girls, but the other children responding and developing is testament to their enjoyment of the classes.

I have some musical background (playing the flute and the piano to a fairly poor standard compared to you, plus Grade 5 Music Theory) – but seeing the girls develop in their musical knowledge makes me wish that I'd been to Stepping Notes as a child! The musical foundations are being laid in an amazing way for them, and the great thing is, they don't really even know they're learning music theory!

When they started coming along, I fully appreciated that the classes would be a lot more than just singing songs – but to see how the programme develops over the age groups in such a fun way has been such a great surprise.

& often sing Stepping Notes songs during the week, and even (who celebrated his first birthday this weekend) recognises and responds to the music that he has previously heard during your classes. I'll be definitely be enrolling him for a class when he's old enough!

Many thanks,



Alison Berry



## **Nikhil Dally**

**From:** Ken Partington [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 17 July 2006 22:19  
**To:** Nikhil Dally  
**Subject:** Fw: Stepping Notes: please read

Dear Nikhil

Many thanks for taking the time to write to us to say congratulations to the children that took part in the concert on Saturday. A big thank you should go to you for all the hard work it takes to organise such events - it was well worth it, a lovely piece of relaxation in what proves to be a very busy time of year.

Both Ken and I would like to thank you for the last at least seven years I think of outstanding music tuition given to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] whilst attending Stepping Notes. The girls have learnt so much and I have to say from a personal point of view so have I. I will miss coming to the Jurgen Centre on a Tuesday it has been a part of our lives for such a long time. Your passion that children deserve to be given the right to have good quality music tuition is evident in your teaching, your passion about music is inspiring and your ability to get the best from every child is truly amazing. To see the children in your class, as I have, develop from toddlers that can only just talk in to children that have, I feel, a much deeper understanding of true musicianship, and a love of making and enjoying music a true skill that will last them a life time.

[REDACTED]

Wishing you, Angela and the family a happy summer and look forward to hearing from you soon

Mary Partington

*Nick & Hayley Bicknell-Smith*

*Ottershaw Surrey*

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2003.**

**Dear Nikhil,**

**I have been meaning to write to you for some weeks now to thank you for your wonderful Stepping Note classes.**

**For both of my children the session they have with you on a Tuesday is the highlight of their week.**

**In their own words 'we have such good fun and Nikhil makes us laugh' – they do not even realise that they are learning. It truly is a wonderful adventure for them with activity and imagination along the way, we cannot recommend it highly enough.**

**Thank you once again.**

**Best wishes.**

*Hayley Bicknell-Smith*

**Hayley Bicknell-Smith.**

██████████  
██████████  
Chobham  
Woking  
Surrey  
GU24 ██████████

12 July 2001

Dear Nikhil,

I enclose the amount due for ██████████'s next series of Stepping Notes lessons, less the refund on ██████████'s course cost, the cheque for which I have enclosed so that you may cancel it. I hope this does not confuse your accounting system too much but, if it does, just send me back both cheques and I'll start again.

May I take the opportunity to thank you for the excellent year of courses both boys have had with you. They have really enjoyed themselves and clearly learned a lot. I was amazed to see that ██████████ was both reading and writing simple music without any problems when he brought his work home last week, and all the more so because he has mastered this whilst doing nothing more arduous than having fun singing and dancing. We enjoyed the concert last month too – it was impressive to see such young children fully in charge of the music they were making together. It has been a wonderful start to ██████████'s musical life and we are only sorry he cannot continue with his class. If you do think of starting any weekend or holiday courses, then do let us know.

In the meantime we look forward to watching ██████████ develop musically as he continues at Stepping Notes next year.

With best wishes for the summer holidays,

Yours sincerely,

*Libby Clarke*

Libby Clarke

Kayte and Richard Cable

Chertsey Surrey UK KT16

Dear Nikhil,

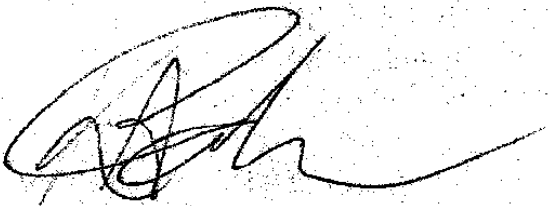
I just wanted to write and thank you so much for yet another year of Stepping Notes. I've said it before, but I am a real fan of your approach; I'm always amazed at the variety and pace of the classes and at how you keep all the children so utterly happy and absorbed for the entire time.

brings the songs and actions home and they have pretty much become a regular fixture in this house. She has picked up so much, without knowing she was doing so and, most importantly, she is happy and confident about singing anywhere and everywhere, and I am sure this is down to you. I have told so many of my friends and it is no wonder you have a waiting list.

Am just sorry my own singing is so unreliable. If only I'd come to you as a kid...

Thanks again, Nikhil; we are really looking forward to another year.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Kayte Cable', written in a cursive style.

Kayte Cable

Dear Nikhil,

Just a short note to thank you and Angela so much for all the effort and work that must have gone into the Stepping Notes concert yesterday.

■■■■ absolutely loved performing and really enjoyed listening to all the other musicians ( I am currently trying to suppress a new need to play the violin for a little while longer!). Indeed, we were all treated to a very special event and I particularly thought your piano students expressed themselves with great depth and emotion.

I know that I have said this before but I do believe that inspirational teachers should be championed: I honestly find it difficult to put into words how fortunate we are to have stumbled across your Stepping Notes classes. I truly believe that my children's lives would be fundamentally impoverished without the experience of your lessons and through you and more recently Elza Lusher, we have entered into a fantastic and creative musical adventure that has greatly enhanced all our lives. For ■■■■ to have been able to perform together with her class yesterday was very special and an experience not always possible when learning music. ■■■■, despite not always singing that much during her class, sings and plays piano and xylophone everyday at home - she currently treats us to Little Molly on the xylophone (slightly adapted in the middle bars) which she has simply absorbed from your classes and listening to the Colourstrings CDs. We also sing the Stepping Notes class back in its entirety after the class and her singing is really delightful. This week I have just bought the Colourstrings books which she loves to 'read and sing' while I play on the piano. Maybe next year she will put all that into practice during the lesson! but anyway, I thought you may like to know that you make a difference to her, too.

I wish every child could share this magic and I am just so thankful that we have been in the right place at the right time to be involved. I look forward to many more years on this journey. From the bottom of all of our hearts, THANK YOU for all this.

Una, ■■■■ and ■■■■ Brown

## Stepping Notes and Beyond

Like many parents, I want to explore my children's musical potential and believe that learning to play a musical instrument is part of a child's education.

Prior to joining Stepping Notes, my Daughter, Son and I, had attended two local children's music groups. My experience of these classes at the time was that they were an opportunity for the children to run riot, make a lot of noise and have some fun. When instruments were used in these classes the sound created could be painful to listen to. They really were just interactive children's shows. My children did enjoy them but learned nothing about music.

From the first Stepping Notes lesson we attended it became clear the experience was going to be very different. The first thing that was noticeable was the ratio of pupils to teacher, it was much smaller. There was a definite structure to the classes and a need for order and discipline. My Daughter and Son fell into the routine quickly. When musical instruments were used the sound was, thankfully, musical. As time went on and the classes progressed I could see a development in the skills being taught. I thought I knew what Nikhil Dally was trying to achieve but, as a non musician, I was not sure.

When my Daughter turned eight she started receiving violin lessons from Angela Dally. It was at this point that it became very obvious to me why Stepping Notes follows the developmental path it does. My Daughter was quickly able to look at a piece of music and know how it should sound. From the beginning she was able to hold a pulse and understood the relationship between the different notes, both in terms of length and pitch. The skills she had learned in her Stepping Notes classes became the foundations for her musical progress. Some of the familiar songs from Stepping Notes are used repeatedly in the exercises she practices as she is progressing. This means she is able to improve her technique quickly. My Daughter has been having Violin lessons with Angela Dally for almost a year now and is thoroughly enjoying it.

I recently attended a recorder concert at my Daughter's school. As the music teacher introduced one of the pieces the children (all nine years old) were going to play, she commented on its technical content. She commended the children's ability to learn the piece because it had 'rests' in it and she said these are difficult to apply. I smiled to myself because my Son, at six years old, has been learning this skill in his Stepping Notes class for some time.

My Son has already told me that when he finishes his Stepping Notes classes, he would like to learn to play the piano and would like Nikhil Dally to be his teacher.

I am very glad I found Stepping Notes. It has proven to be the very thing I was looking for. My children are having fun while learning good, solid musical skills.



Mrs. C French