

Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service  
Northlands  
Davenants  
Basildon  
Essex  
SS13 1QX  
T: 0300 247 0013

Dear Parent/Carer

## **Re: Academic Year 2024 – 2025 Height, weight and vision checks for children in Reception**

We understand that your child has recently started school, and we would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the School-Age Health Service. Our team is here to support both you and your child throughout their school years, until they reach the age of 19 (or 25 if they have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities - SEND). Our dedicated team of professionals has a wide range of skills and qualifications, offering confidential advice and support in schools, family hubs and other community settings.

### **National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP)**

As part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) children in Reception and Year 6 have their height and weight checked at school. These measurements help build a better understanding of how children across the country are growing and guide the development of health and leisure services for families. Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service is contracted by Essex County Council, on behalf of Office of Health and Disparities (OHID) to undertake these checks in your child's school.

We will also screen your child's vision to help ensure your child's eyes are developing well. Good vision is integral to your child's learning and development. If your child passes the vision test, we will not contact you. However, if the vision test indicates the need for further investigation, we will reach out to discuss the results and next steps, which may include a referral to an Optometrist for more detailed assessment.

Please note that our vision test is a basic screening and will not highlight all potential issues such as astigmatism. Regular visits to the optician will provide a more comprehensive assessment.

### **How We Work**

Our trained NCMP Practitioners will be visiting your child's school to undertake these measurements and offer vision screening in private and comfortable setting. Children are

measured fully clothed (except for their coats and shoes) and we ensure the process is discreet and sensitive to their needs. All our staff have undergone Safeguarding training and are fully Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) cleared. The programme will be delivered following national guidance to make sure the programme is delivered safely and effectively.

## Your child's well-being is our priority

We understand that health screenings can sometimes be worrying for both children and parents. That is why we are committed to supporting your child's emotional well-being throughout the process. Measurements are conducted in a sensitive way, in private and away from other children. Individual results are not shared with your child or their school, this ensures that your child's dignity is maintained.

If your child's measurements are within the expected parameters, you will not hear from us. However, if the measurements fall outside the expected parameters, we will reach out to discuss the measurements and explore supportive services available in your local area. We will always approach these conversations with care and respect for your families' preferences. It is your choice if you share the information with your child. Once screening is complete, you are very welcome to request a copy of your child's height and weight measurements for your personal records.

## The information we collect and what it is used for is listed below

- your child's date of measurement, sex and date of birth are used to calculate your child's weight category (also known as body mass index, or BMI)
- your child's name, date of birth and NHS Number are used to link your child's measurements in Reception and Year 6.
- Other data sets held by NHS England and Department of Health and Social Care may also be linked as this would let us add information from health and education records, where lawful to do so, to understand how and why the weight of children is changing, and how this affects children's health and education and how we can improve the care children receive. This includes your child's health data relating to:
  - their birth, hospital care (including time in hospital and out-patient appointments and diagnosis of medical conditions)
  - mental health
  - social care
  - primary care - includes all healthcare outside of hospital such as GP and dental appointments,
  - public health - including data relating to preventing ill health such as immunisation records
  - records for when and the reason why people pass away
  - medical conditions such as cancer, diabetes
  - health, lifestyle, and wellbeing surveys that your child has participated in
- your child's ethnicity and address are used to help understand some of the reasons for the difference and changes in child weight across England.
- your telephone number is required as we may contact you by telephone to discuss your child's results and offer you further support following your child's height and weight measurement.

## How the data is used

The information collected from all schools in the area will be gathered and held securely by Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service. We will store your child's information as part of their local child health record on the NHS's child health information database.

All the information collected about your child will be sent by us to NHS Digital. NHS Digital is responsible for collecting data and information about health and care so that this can be used to monitor and improve the care provided to people across England.

For more information on how NHS England and OHID collect, and use information can be found at:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/our-work/keeping-patient-data-safe/how-we-look-after-your-health-and-care-information>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care/about/personal-information-charter>

## **Withdrawing your child from the National Child Measurement Programme and/or vision screening**

**If you are happy** for your child to be measured in **Reception Year** you do not need to do anything\*.

**If you do not** want your child to take part in **Reception Year**, or your child has a medical condition that affects their height or weight, please contact us within the next seven days on the above number.

\*Children will not be made to take part on the day if they do not want to.

## Looking after your child's overall health

We encourage you to continue taking your child for regular check-ups with local opticians and dentists, in addition to the NCMP. These appointments are important to help ensure your child's overall health and development.

Thank you for your support in helping us promote the health and wellbeing of children in Essex. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out. We are here to support you.

Yours faithfully,

Zoe Oddy  
Head of Targeted and System Support Services  
Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Services  
Strategic Lead for School Aged Services

Nikki Smith  
NCMP Team Lead  
Pre-Birth - 19 Services  
Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Services

## Further information, which you might find useful.

1. Further information about the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service can be found at: <https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk>
2. Our privacy policy can be found here: <https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/privacy-policy>
3. Further information about the National Child Measurement Programme can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/national-child-measurement-programme>
4. NCMP Process animation: [Map Me - YouTube](#)
5. Information about the organisations NHS England has shared information from the National Child Measurement Programme can be found at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/national-child-measurement-programme>
6. Supporting your family to make positive lifestyle choices: <https://essexwellbeingservice.co.uk>
7. Information on measuring children using a body mass index (BMI): [NHS BMI Calculator](#)
8. For useful advice on looking after your family's health and wellbeing: [Active Essex: Find Your Active Lifestyle](#)