



School Readiness Self Help Guidance for Parents during COVID-19

Your child is due to start school this September which we recognise can feel overwhelming for some families particularly during the current pandemic. Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust School Nursing service would like to support you to help prepare your child for school and have compiled supportive information below for you to access. As a service we continue to offer support via telephone and virtual appointments so please contact us if you think we can help you. You can contact your School Nurse team via our **ChatHealth** texting service or by telephone. The telephone number of your local school nurse team is: New Forest and Romsey 02380 874537

ChatHealth: The School Nursing and Health Visiting teams offer a text messaging service for parents called **ChatHealth**. Parents and carers can text their message to a dedicated number which a health professional will respond to within one working day. For parents and carers of children under 5 years please text your message to 07520 615720 if you would like advice from a health visitor and for parents and carers of children 5 – 19 please text 07507 332417 for advice from a school nurse. The school nurse can offer advice and support about general health and wellbeing issues such as behaviour, toileting, sleep and healthy lifestyles. They will be able to signpost you to other services if necessary.

Text messages sent to the ChatHealth numbers will be charged at your normal call rate. The service is available from 9am – 4:30pm Monday -Thursday and 9am-4pm Friday inclusive of school holidays excluding bank holidays.

What will the School Nurse Service offer your child in School?

During your child's first year at school the School Nurse service offers a school entry health review which includes height and weight measurements as part of the National Child Measurement programme and Vision screening. Your child will also be offered the nasal flu vaccine by the dedicated Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust School-age Immunisation team. You will receive more information about these contacts closer to the time.



TOP TIPS helping your child be ready for school

Starting school is an important and exciting time for your child. To help prepare your child to enjoy school and be ready to learn you may find it helpful to look at the top tips and websites below. Your child's teacher is also a good source of support.

Information and resources to help you prepare your child for school

- **Pacey** – www.pacey.org.uk/schoolready
- **Hampshire Healthy families** - www.Hampshirehealthyfamilies.org.uk

Healthy Lifestyles

Allowing your child the opportunity to try a variety of healthy foods, sit at a table for meals and encouraging your child to use a knife, fork and spoon. This will give your child the confidence to face the new experiences during a school lunchtime period.

www.nhs.uk/change4life/about-change4life

www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes



Sleep Routines

This is a good time to review bedtime and sleep routines so that your child arrives at school with lots of energy and is more able to concentrate and enjoy the day.

www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/healthy-sleep-tips-for-children/

www.sleepcouncil.org.uk

Toileting

Your child will be more confident in using the toilet at school if they have had the opportunity to practice at home. They will need to be able to pull their underwear up and down and to attempt to wipe their own bottom. If your child is not fully toilet trained during the day and you would like support please contact us through the ChatHealth advice line.

'Poo goes home to Poland' app, available from app store

www.eric.org.uk

Good Hand Hygiene

Helping your child wash their hands before food and after using the toilet will make it easier for them to be independent during the school day and reduce the spread of infection. This is particularly important at the current time when they will be required to wash their hands more frequently. Washing hands for at least 20 seconds will help protect you and your family from infections.

www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands

Dressing Skills

Let your child practice putting their coat and shoes on and off. Encourage them to attempt to dress themselves in preparation for playtime and PE at school. By 4 years old your child should be able to take their clothes on and off independently but may not be able to manage fastenings (e.g. zips or buttons) for another year or two: to make this easier for them consider getting elasticated waistbands and Velcro fastening shoes.

www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/teaching-child-essentials

Road Safety

Rehearsing walking to school will help your child learn important road safety skills and is a good way of keeping the whole family healthy.

www.nidirect.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Parents-guide-to-road-safety-0-7years.pdf

Talking to your child about Coronavirus

Spending time talking to your child about coronavirus and how things will be for them in school is really important, they may be anxious about things that you are able to easily explain to them. Useful resources are available to help you with this.

Support for my child whilst off school - Information is available on the Hampshire County Council website about changes in services during the current Covid-19 situation can be found at

www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/coronavirus#impacted-services

➤ **Place2Be Talking to children about coronavirus** www.place2be.org.uk/coronavirus



Other resources and services available to support your family's wellbeing can be found at:

- **ChatHealth 11-19** – 07507332160 (for young people 11-19)
- **Hampshire Healthy Families**- www.hampshirehealthyfamilies.org.uk
- **Child & Adolescent Mental Health** - www.hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/help/young-people
- **Wessex Healthier together** – www.what0-18.nhs.uk
- **Every mind matters** - www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters
- **Hampshire Youth Access** www.hampshireyouthaccess.org.uk Tel: 02382 147755
- **Coronavirus sanity guide** - www.tenpercent.com/coronavirussanityguide
- **Anxiety UK** - advice and helpline – 03444 775774 (9:30am – 10pm Mon – Fri & 10am – 8pm Sat & Sun) or text support on 07537 416 905. There is also regular online support groups you can register for – www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronanxiety-support-resources
- **Mind** - Coronavirus and your wellbeing www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing
- **Mental Health Foundation** - Looking after your mental health during coronavirus outbreak www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus