

# PRACTITIONER GUIDE

## Agency Roles and Responsibilities – School Nursing

School Nursing is part of the 0-19 service in Southern Health Foundation Trust's Children and Family Services. School nurses are all registered nurses who have completed additional training in Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (SCPHN).

The School Nursing Teams are led by school nurses (SCPHN) and includes a mix of community staff nurses, community nursery nurses, school nurse assistants and administrative support. The School Nursing service lead on the [Healthy Child Programme](#) for school-aged children between the ages of 5-19. (The 0 to 5 element is led by health visiting services - for further information see Practitioner Guide: Health Visiting).

School nurses work in partnership with children, young people and their families to ensure that children and young people's health needs are supported within their school and their community, to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities.



### What is the role of a school nurse?

The [Healthy Child Programme](#) offers every family an evidence-based programme of interventions, including screening tests, immunisations, developmental reviews, and information and guidance to support parenting and healthy choices. The school nursing team lead on the Healthy Child Programme, to identify health needs early and provide early intervention to prevent issues escalating. School nurses will work in partnership with schools, children's social care professionals, GPs, health visitors, allied health professionals and voluntary services to meet the needs of children and young people.

As well as the Healthy Child Programme's universal offer, the School Nursing service also offer evidence-based interventions tailored to meet individual and family needs in the following areas:

### Promoting healthy lifestyles

- Provide support to children, young people and families regarding lifestyle concerns and changes to promote a healthy lifestyle. This might include preventative education about the misuse of tobacco, alcohol and other substances. It can also include targeted 1:1 support around maintaining a healthy weight and emotional health and wellbeing.
- Signpost to a variety of services providing advice and guidance regarding contraception and healthy relationships. School nurses can also advise on the delivery and development of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) in educational settings.
- School nurses can provide advice and signposting in respect of dental health and good oral hygiene.
- School nurses will provide screening and support to increase immunisation uptake.

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## Supporting children and young people who have additional needs

- Liaise with appropriate professionals to ensure children and young people who have complex and/or long-term health needs are supported. Long-term health conditions can include asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and anaphylaxis.

## Keeping children and young people safe and well

- Undertake a holistic assessment of children and young people's physical and emotional mental health and wellbeing needs. Alongside this assessment, school nurses can provide targeted 1:1 emotional health promotion and early intervention approaches to build resilience.
- Through undertaking health assessments, school nurses may identify risk-taking behaviours and support children to keep safe and address any risk-taking behaviours.
- Promoting safety and reducing accidental injuries.
- Support early identification of vulnerability that may impact on a child or young person's attendance. This vulnerability might include being a young carer, being a child in care, experiencing domestic or emotional abuse or parental substance misuse. The work undertaken by school nurses to support positive mental health also supports school attendance and attainment.
- Supporting the holistic health of looked after children.

## Helping children and young people make transitions

- Provide education and advice to support young people in developing their independence to manage their own self-care and access health services appropriately.
- Provide support around key transitions such as beginning school, moving to secondary school and other key life events or significant changes.

## Where might a school nurse be based?

School nurses are based centrally within NHS premises and can support children, young people and their families in a range of settings including families' own homes, local community or school settings as well as through [ChatHealth](#) (a confidential text support service) and via the [Hampshire Healthy Families portal](#). School nurses offer year-round support for children and young people both in and out of school settings.



## When will a school nurse be involved with a family?

The information below outlines specific contacts that school nurses will have with children and their families. Alongside these, school nurses undertake a range of activity to promote physical health and emotional wellbeing in schools and in the community. The School Nursing team can be contacted to access health advice to support children in making the most of their education.

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### Reception

When a child is in their Reception year (aged 4-5 years), the school nurse will review the child's general health. This includes measurements for height and weight as part of the National Child Measurement Programme. This provides a vehicle for engaging with children and families about healthy lifestyles, any weight issues and any concerns regarding growth.

### Immunisation programmes

School nurses support the School Age Immunisation Service in the delivery of immunisation programmes in school. Communication is sent to parents to provide information regarding any upcoming immunisation and to promote engagement with the immunisation programme.

### Year 6

The National Child Measurement Programme reviews the weight and height of children again in Year 6 (aged 10 – 11 years), providing a further opportunity for engagement with children and families about healthy lifestyles, any weight issues or concerns regarding growth. Read more about the [National Child Measurement Programme](#).



## The role of a school nurse in multi-agency safeguarding processes

School nurses' skills in holistic assessment of child and family wellbeing means that they are well placed to recognise where families may have additional needs and will refer for ongoing support as required.

### Early Help Hub

School nurses/health visitors will attend Early Help Hub meetings to provide a holistic view of the family and be an advocate for the children/young people.

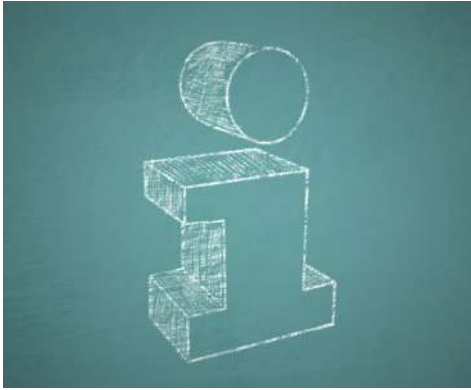
### Child in Need

School nurses will attend child in need meetings if there is an identified role for the service. The school nurse can be asked to become involved with the family plan at any point if a role is identified.

### Child Protection

School nurses will attend all initial child protection meetings and will assess if there is a role for the service. The school nurse will support the child, young person and/or family if they have actions on the family plan. The school nurse will attend all meetings when they have a role in the family plan. The school nurse will not attend any further meetings if there is no active role for the service on the family plan.

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### Further information

- [Practitioner Guide: Health Visiting Service](#)
- [Practitioner Guide: Hampshire Healthy Families](#)
- [Portal: Hampshire Healthy Families](#)
- [Healthy child programme - GOV.UK](#)
- [Guidance: Commissioning health visitors and school nurses for public health services for children aged 0 to 19 - GOV.UK](#)

### Contact details

- [Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust - Children and Family Services](#)
- ChatHealth (for parents/carers of children aged 0-5): Text 07520 615720
- ChatHealth (for parents/carers of children aged 11-19): 07507 332417
- ChatHealth (for children and young people aged 11-19): Text 07507 332160

