East Hampshire School Nursing Team
Alton Health Centre
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Alton
Hampshire
GU34 2QX

Tel: 02382 311221

Summer 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Starting school can be an exciting time, it can also bring on mixed feelings for children and their families. School readiness is about teaching your child the skills that they will need, at their pace, in order for them to cope independently and feel happy, safe and relaxed within the school environment.

In preparing for your child starting school, we would like to introduce ourselves and our service as the Public Health School Nursing Service from Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust (SHFT).

During the first year of school your child will be offered the following as part of the Healthy Child Programme:

The School Entry Health Review

Once your child starts school a health review will be offered this consists of a vision screen, height and weight measurements.

The vision screen is specifically designed for children to help detect early vision problems; it is not a full examination. You will be required to complete a consent form which will be given to you via school, please return the form to school. The vision screen involves your child naming and matching letters to check whether they can see from a set distance. If your child has difficulty seeing the letters, their eyes will need to be checked by an optician or orthoptist (eye specialist) for a further assessment. The school nurse team will inform you of the results and contact you should a possible concern be identified. The results of your child's vision screening will be held on your child's health record.

If you feel this is not required for your child please indicate this on the consent form, this may be because they are already seeing an optician, orthoptist at the eye hospital, wearing glasses or would not be able to complete this screen in school.

A separate letter will be sent to you via school from Hampshire County Council with information regarding the height and weight measurements as this is carried out as part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). You are able to opt your child out of NCMP and details about this will be in the NCMP letter.

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If you have concerns about your child's hearing such as, they frequently ask you to repeat yourself, respond inappropriately to questions, turn up the volume of the TV very high, please see https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hearing-loss/symptoms/ for more information on what to look out for and when to see your GP.

If your child has any health concerns or they are taking any regular medication, and this is required during a school day you are advised to inform the school of this at your earliest opportunity.

Immunisations

There has been a recent increase in measles cases in England, most cases have been in children under the age of 10 years with many outbreaks linked to nurseries and schools. Measles spreads easily among those who are unvaccinated. Having 2 doses of the Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine at the right time is the best way to protect your child and help prevent it spreading. 2 doses of the MMR vaccine will give you excellent lifelong protection. Your child should have received their 1st MMR at 12 months of age, and the 2nd dose with their pre-school vaccines from 3 years 4 months. If your child has not received these vaccinations, please contact your GP and book an appointment.

The School-age Immunisation team offer the nasal flu vaccination in school as part of the national childhood immunisation programme. You will receive information about the vaccination and how to complete an electronic consent form nearer the time. Please can you ensure all your child's contact details are up to date with your GP.

To find out what immunisation your child requires please access the link NHS vaccinations and when to have them - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

How to contact your 0-19 Public Health School Nursing Service

If you wish to contact your School Nursing Team for advice, you can do this using our text messaging service called ChatHealth 5-19. Parents and carers can text their query to a dedicated number, which a health professional will respond to within one working day. This text messaging service is an easy way for parents and carers to ask for help and information with a range of issues such as hearing, sleep, behaviour, transition to school. The support that we offer may include signposting you to other services, as necessary.

For parents with school age children: Text **07507 332417**.

Text messages sent to the ChatHealth numbers will be charged at your normal call rate.
The service is available from 8.30am – 4:30pm Monday - Friday
(including school holidays and excluding bank holidays.)

Alternatively, you can contact our school nurse service via email or telephone; the team contact details are at the top of this letter.

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PiP Parent Information Portal

SHFT have a Parent Information Portal where you can have access to view your child's immunisations. You are also now able to view your child's National Child Measurement Programme [NCMP] results via the portal. If you wish to register for the Parent Information Portal please e mail pip@southernhealth.nhs.uk

Further health information and school readiness information can also be found via our Hampshire Healthy Families website: http://www.hampshirehealthyfamilies.org.uk/ where you can also find the contact details of the local school nursing and immunisation teams.

Yours faithfully

0-19 Public Health School Nursing Service

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