

Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor Seax House  
Victoria Road South  
Chelmsford  
Essex  
CM1 1QH  
T: 0300 2470014

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Re: Academic Year 2022 - 23 – Height, weight and vision checks for children in Reception**

Measuring the height and weight of children in Reception is part of Office of Health and Disparities (OHID) National Child Measurement Programme. Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service is contracted by Essex County Council, on behalf of OHID, to undertake these checks in your child's school. Your child's class will take part in this year's programme.

Our trained NCMP Practitioners will be visiting your child's school to undertake these measurements. Children are measured fully clothed, except for their coats and shoes.

All our staff have undergone Safeguarding Children training and are Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) cleared. The programme will be delivered following COVID-safe guidance.

Healthy eyes and vision are a critical part of children's overall development, including how they learn, play and communicate in the world around them. Children's eyes continue to develop until they reach the age of seven, meaning problems such as amblyopia (Lazy eye), if detected, corrective treatment can be offered. We take this opportunity to screen your child's vision. If your child passes the vision test you will not hear from us. If your child does not pass the vision test, we will contact you directly to discuss the results and offer an onward referral if the vision test indicates the need for further investigation. Please note that the vision test that we complete is a basic vision test and will not highlight stigmatism. This would be something a trained Ophthalmologists would have to screen for. Alongside our screening it is very important to take your child for annual appointments at your local opticians and dentists.

### **Maintaining the well-being of children in the NCMP**

The wellbeing of children and families is very important. Measurements are conducted in a sensitive way, in private and away from other children. If your child's measurements are within the expected parameters, you will not hear from us. If your child is outside the expected parameters, we will contact you with the results and discuss services available in your local area. It is your choice if you share the information with your child. Once screening has been completed, you are very welcome to request a copy of your child's height and weight measurements for your own records.

The emotional impact of the NCMP has been researched and studies show that body image, self-esteem, weight-related teasing, and restrictive eating behaviours do not change as a result of being measured or receiving feedback.

**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
- 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 Digital 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.

**All the data collected is also used for improving health, care and services through research and planning.**

**All this information is treated confidentially and held securely. No individual measurements will be given to school staff or other children.**

## How the data is used

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.

The information collected about your child will also be shared by NHS Digital with Office of Health and Disparities (OHID) but in a de-personalised form only. This means Office of Health and Disparities will not be able to identify your child. Office of Health and Disparities is responsible for working to protect and improve the nation's health.

Both NHS Digital and Office of Health and Disparities will use the information from the National Child Measurement Programme to better understand numbers and trends in child weight and body mass index (BMI). This helps with the planning of services to support healthy lifestyles in your area. No information will ever be published by NHS Digital or Office of Health and Disparities that identifies your child.

De-personalised information from the National Child Measurement Programme may also be shared by NHS Digital with other organisations, such as universities. This is to help improve health, care and services through research and planning. This information cannot be used to identify your child, and NHS Digital only ever shares information for research with the approval of an independent group of experts.

## **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 if you have any questions, please contact us within the next seven days on the above number. Children will not be made to take part if they do not want to.

Yours sincerely,

NCMP Team  
*Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service*

### **Further information, which you might find useful**

1. Further information about the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service can be found at:  
<https://www.essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk>
2. Further information about the National Child Measurement Programme can be found at  
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/national-child-measurement-programme>
3. Information about how NHS Digital and Office of Health Improvement and Disparities 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> and  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england/about/personal-information-charter>

Information about the organisations NHS Digital has shared information from the National Child Measurement Programme can be found at <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/national-child-measurement-programme>