

Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service
County Hall
Market Road
Chelmsford
Essex CM1 1QH
T: 0300 247 0014

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Academic Year 2025 – 2026 Height, weight and vision check 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 checks are carried out by our friendly and experienced NCMP Practitioners who will be visiting your child's school. Children are measured fully clothed (except for their coats and shoes) in a private area away from others.

The wellbeing of children and families is very important, and we ensure the process is discreet and sensitive to their needs. Individual feedback is not shared with your child or their school.

All our staff are fully trained in Safeguarding and are fully Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) cleared. The programme will be delivered following national guidance for schools and healthcare to make sure the programme is delivered safely and effectively.

School entry vision screening

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. Your child will be tested either using the logMAR test or the PlusoptiX vision screener (in partnership with Lions). 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 a more detailed assessment.

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

Why do we measure children

Children's height and weight measurements help build an 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.

*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.

What information is collected and why

- your child's height, weight, 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 ethnicity and address are collected to monitor difference in child growth and weight between ethnic groups, where children live and their backgrounds.
- your child's name, date of birth and NHS Number are collected to link their measurements in Reception and Year 6 to other information from health and education records held by NHS England, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department of Education, where it is legal to do so.
- 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.

Information about how personal information and data is collected and stored

You can read more about how the Department of Health and Social Care collects, stores and uses your child's information and data in the [National Child Measurement Programme privacy notice](#)

You can read more about how NHS England collects, stores and uses your child's information and data at [National Child Measurement Programme \(NCMP\): GDPR information](#)

At the NHS England [National Child Measurement Programme webpage](#) you can read more about:

- taking part in the programme
- how your data is collected
- how your data is used

For further information about Essex Child & Family Wellbeing Services visit: essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk

Our privacy policy can be found here: <https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/privacy-policy>

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
Healthy Weight Pathway Lead
Pre-birth -19 Services
Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Services

Further information, which you might find useful

The following animation explains the process of the NCMP and why it is important. It will guide you through what this involves, how your child's data is processed and what it is used for: [NCMP process animation](#)

You can find further information and fun ideas to help keep your children stay healthy at the NHS Better Health: healthier families webpage [Easy ways to eat well and move more](#)

Information on supporting your family to make positive lifestyle choices can be found at: [Child Lifestyle Service - Essex Wellbeing Service](#)

Another way to maintain a balanced diet and physical activity for your family is the NHS Healthy Steps email programme. Sign up for the 8-week Healthy Steps emails and you will be sent lots of low-cost easy tips, fun games, healthy swaps and tasty recipes on a budget. You can sign up to NHS [Healthy Steps - Step this way](#).

More information about The Lions Club International: [Home | Lions Clubs International](#)

