

Public Health Dorset
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School Nurse Team: 01202 711538
Public Health Dorset: 01305 224400

Dear Parent/ Carer

Measuring the height and weight of children in Reception and Year 6

Each year in England, school children in Reception and Year 6 have their height and weight checked by Public Health School Nurses or other trained health care providers during the school day as part of the National Child Measurement Programme. It is important to have a good understanding of how children are growing, so that the best possible advice and support can be provided for them and their families locally. Helping children to achieve a healthy weight is a priority for all of us.

As in previous years, your school will take part in this year's programme, whereby the children are measured fully clothed, except for their coats and shoes, **in a private space away from other pupils in school**. Further information about the National Child Measurement Programme can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/national-child-measurement-programme>

The information collected for us by Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust (DHC), our Public Health School Nursing service providers, includes your child's height and weight measurements together with their name, date of birth, gender, home address and postcode, NHS Number and ethnicity. This information about your child is needed because their age, gender, ethnicity and the place they live are known to affect their height and weight. Their name, date of birth and NHS Number is needed to link your child's measurements to other information about your child. **All this information is treated confidentially and held securely by our service providers. It will not be shared with your child's school or with other children.**

Once measurements are completed, we may send you your child's measurements together with information about healthy eating and being active. Following the feedback letter, you will also receive a telephone call from a member of the school nursing service for you to talk over the measurement and what support and advice you may wish to have. If you receive a feedback letter, your child's BMI will be included on that.

It is important to us that after the measurement, you have the opportunity to discuss your child's result and for support to be given that is right for you and your child. There are three key points of contact following a measurement:

- a) If your child is identified as being underweight or very overweight you will receive a feedback letter followed by a telephone call to offer you advice and support.

The letter will be addressed to you as a parent or carer and it is for you to decide if it is appropriate to share this result with your child.

- b) If you do not receive a feedback letter but have any questions you wish to ask regarding your child's health, including lifestyle, please do contact your Public Health School Nurse team for support on the number at the top of this letter.



You are welcome to contact the Public Health School Nursing Service or your family GP for support at any point if you are concerned about your child's weight, you do not have to wait for the measurements to be completed or to receive feedback from a measurement result.

- c) The Public Health School Nurse service will also be working with schools in promoting healthy lifestyles, which may include additional activities for children and families. Look out at your school for any activities or signposting.

It is important to recognise that each child is different and their weight can change over time and as they grow. It is also important to recognise that being underweight or very overweight can lead to health problems, both as a child and in the future as an adult. A BMI calculating tool can be found on www.nhs.uk when typing National Child Measurement Programme in the search box. Information and fun ideas to help your children stay healthy can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life> and for information on healthy lifestyle tips for the whole family, including recipe ideas and snack swaps, follow the many different links at www.nhs.uk/change4life-beta/your-childs-weight/home

The information collected from all schools in the area will be gathered together and held securely by DHC. Your child's information will be stored on their local child health record on the child health information database. **No individual measurements will be given to school staff or other children, and all information will be treated confidentially.**

All the information collected about your child will be sent by DHC to NHS Digital. NHS Digital is responsible for collecting health and care information to check how the NHS and social care services are doing, and to use this to improve the care provided to people across England.

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

Further information about data collection, privacy policies and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) can be found at

- <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr>
- <https://www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/about-us/your-information/privacy-notice>
- <http://www.publichealthdorset.org.uk/privacy/>

Both NHS Digital and Public Health England 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 Public Health England that identifies your child.**

If your child was previously measured for the National Child Measurement Programme, NHS Digital may link your child's current and previous height and weight measurements. It may also link their measurements with other information it holds about your child such as their dental survey results or the reasons for any visits they may have made to hospital. Linking your child's information in this way helps better understand how and why the weight status of children is changing.



Information about how NHS Digital and Public Health England 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>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england/about/personal-information-charter>

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. 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>

Information about the Public Health School Nursing service and how to access services for children and young people through the service can be found at <https://www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/our-services-hospitals/physical-health/school-nursing>. Support and advice for adult healthy lifestyle and behaviour change can be found at LiveWell Dorset <https://www.livewelldorset.co.uk/>

Withdrawing your child from the National Child Measurement Programme:

If you are happy for your child to be weighed and measured at some point during this school year then you do not need to do anything. If you do not want your child to take part, please complete the opt-out slip at the end of this letter and return it to the school so that your child will not be measured. Children will not be made to participate if they do not want to.

If you have any questions about this letter please contact the school nurse team on the number above. Thank you for your support in this important work.

Yours faithfully



Sam Crowe
Acting Director of Public Health
Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole
Local Authorities



Jan Thurgood
Strategic Director
People Theme
Borough of Poole



FORM 1: Opt-out slip

Only return this form to your child's school if:

You **do not** want your child to be weighed and measured as part of the National Childhood Measurement Programme

Opt-out slip

I do not wish my child to be weighed and measured as part of the

National Child Measurement Programme

Child's name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

School year: _____

Class: _____

Child's School: _____

Parent's / Carer's name:

Parent's / Carer's signature:

Please return this part of the form to your child's school

